



# Do men who have sex with men in sub-Saharan Africa have lower knowledge of HIV status than the national average for all men?

A meta-analysis of estimates in 22 countries

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# Background and Methods

## Important barriers to prevention among MSM

### Background

- Knowledge of HIV Status among those living with HIV (KOS) is a necessary precursor to treatment and viral suppression.
- MSM in Africa may face additional barriers to HIV testing that may affect KOS (e.g. stigma, anti-LGBT legislation).
- **Aim: Measure the relative gap in KOS and lifetime HIV testing between MSM and the national average for all men, in sub-Saharan Africa.**

### Methods

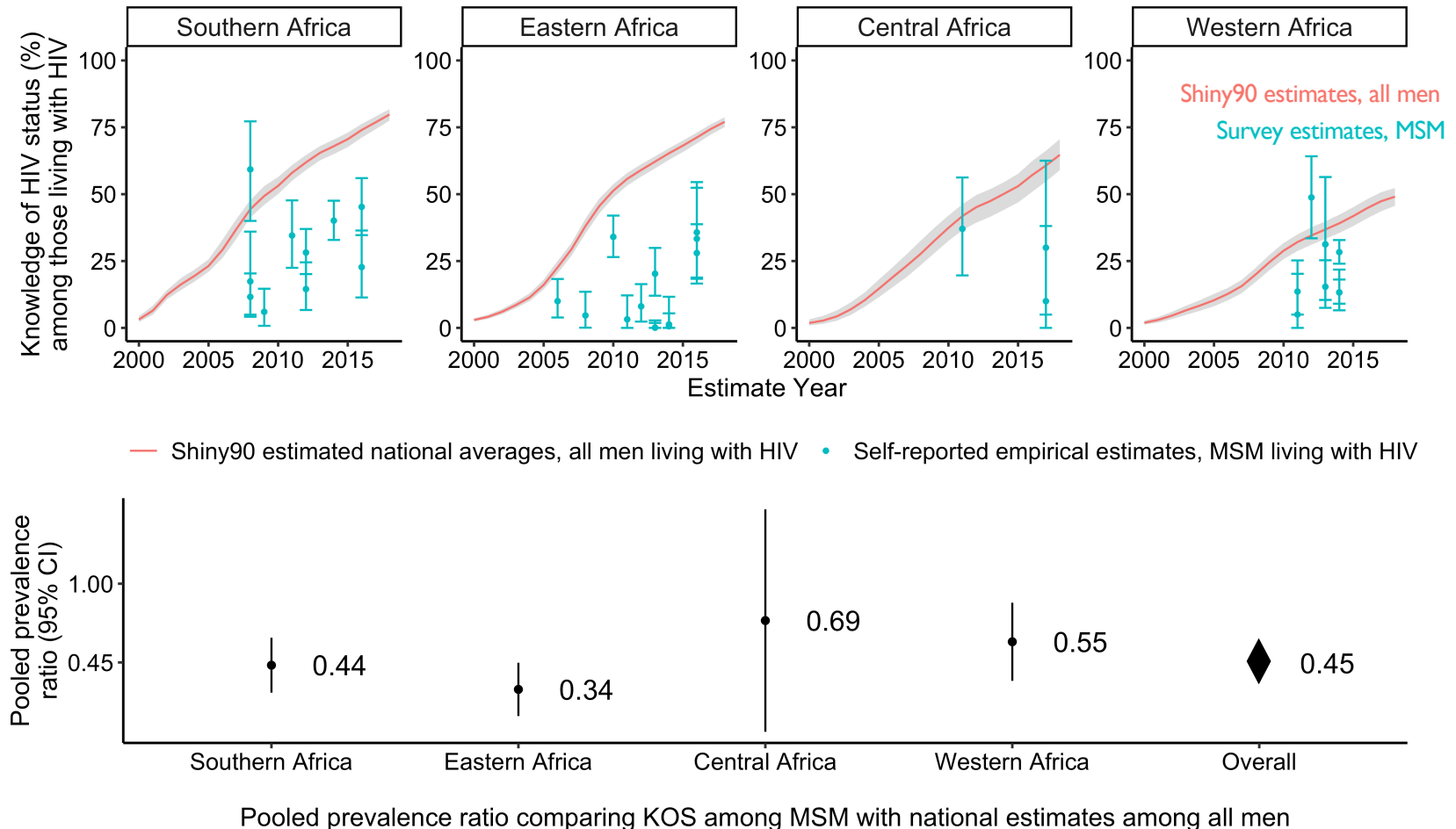
- KOS among MSM from our recent systematic review (Stannah 2019, Lancet HIV)\*.
- KOS among all men (15+) produced using our UNAIDS-supported Shiny90 model†.
- Estimated pooled prevalence ratios‡ (PR) comparing self-reported KOS among MSM with KOS among all men, by year and region of Africa.
  - Analyses then repeated for lifetime HIV testing.



# Knowledge Of Status (KOS)

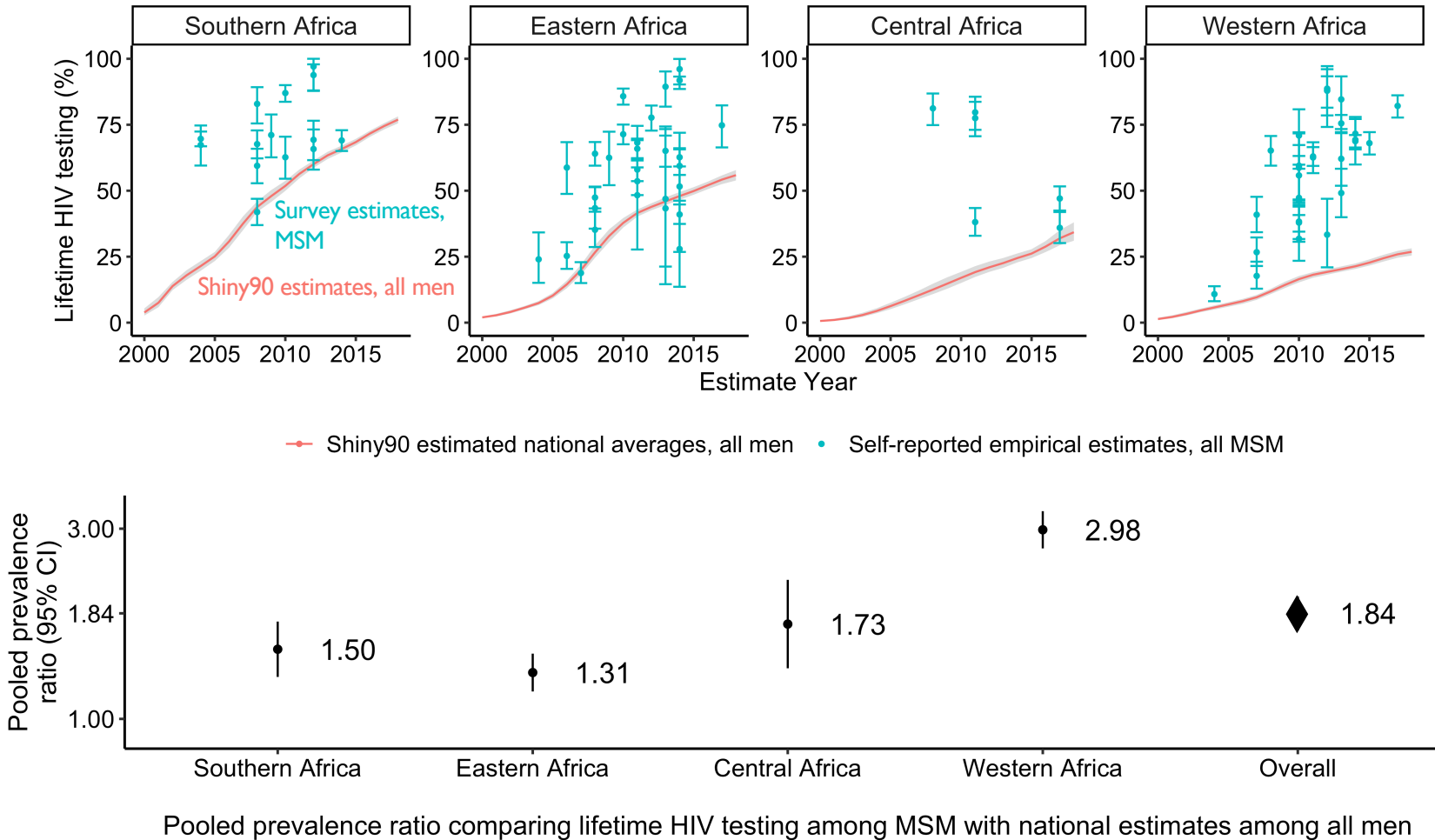
## MSM are less likely to report knowing their status

- KOS was twice as low among MSM living with HIV compared to all men\*:
  - Overall pooled PR=0.45 (95% CI 0.37–0.54), N=35.
- Observed in all African regions. Most pronounced in Eastern Africa:
  - Pooled PR=0.34 (0.26–0.45), N=13.



# Lifetime HIV Testing

MSM are also more likely to report having ever been tested



- Lifetime testing among all MSM was higher than for all men\*:
  - Overall pooled PR = 1.84 (1.67–2.03), N=78.
- Observed in all African regions. Greatest difference in Western Africa:
  - Pooled PR = 2.98 (2.68–3.32), N=29.

# Interpretation

## Closing gaps in unmet prevention needs

### Limitations

- Self-reports of KOS are known to have poor sensitivity and be affected by non-disclosure of HIV status.
- MSM in surveys tend to be young – not representative of all MSM
- Surveys on MSM mostly in urban areas with better access to testing. National averages based on both rural and urban data.

### Conclusions

- MSM in sub-Saharan Africa may have lower KOS than men in the general population, despite more MSM having ever been tested.
- Lower KOS among MSM may also be explained by higher HIV incidence due to unmet prevention needs.
- Nevertheless, addressing unmet needs is essential to increasing KOS among this priority population.

## Funding

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