

Sheila Omom<sup>1</sup>, A. John Sinclair<sup>2</sup> and Harry Spaling<sup>3</sup>

## Study Rationale

Since the emergence of HIV/AIDS on the shores of Lake Victoria, Kenya in 1985, HIV/AIDS related illness and mortality has remained highest among fishing communities in this region compared to the rest of the population.

The primary purpose of this research was to understand the impact of HIV/AIDS in the Lake Victoria region on artisanal fishery practices and management. This was achieved by considering the impact of HIV/AIDS on the artisanal fishery, and the coping strategies being adopted.



Kolunga fishing village – on shore fishing



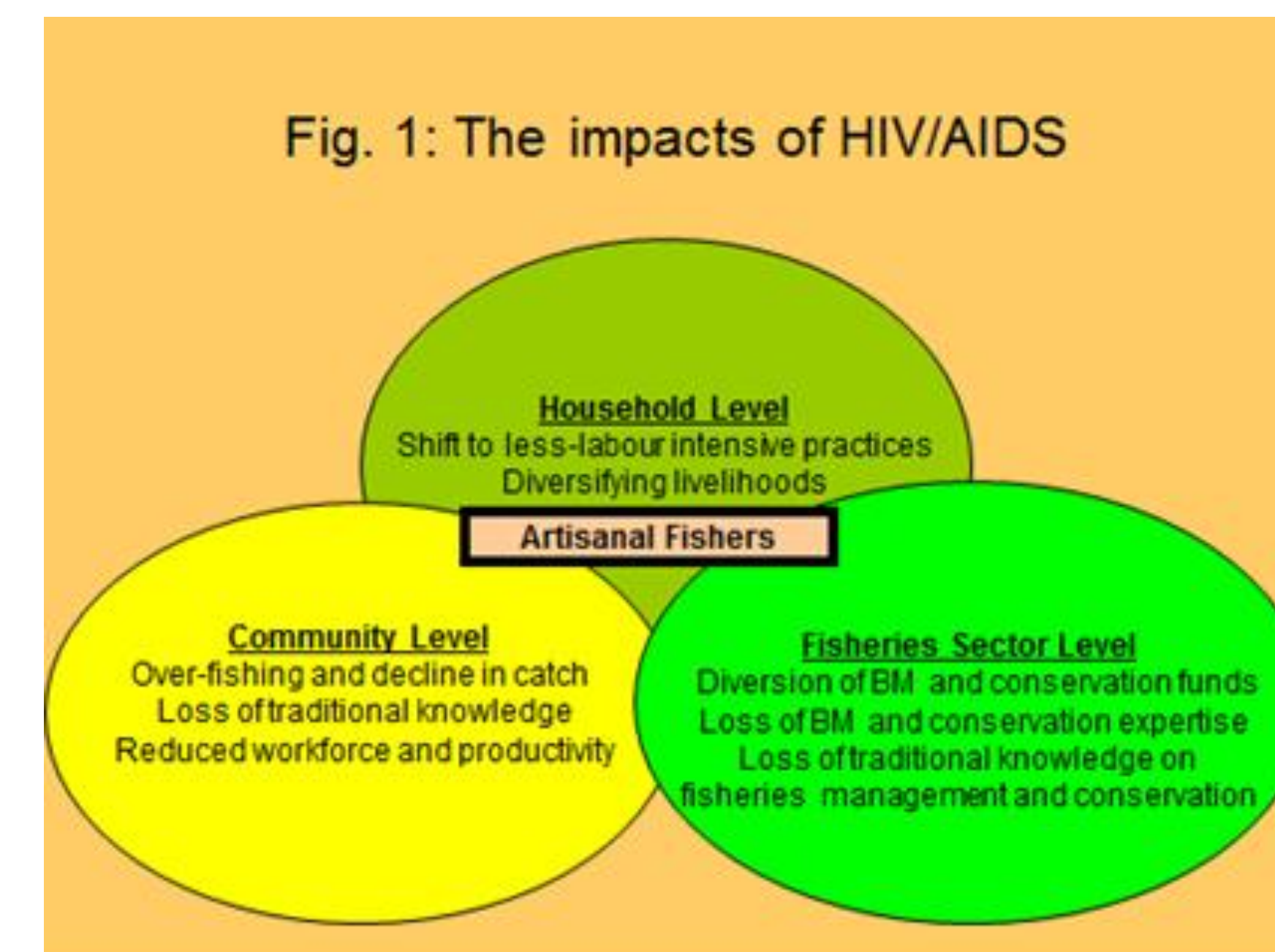
Kaswanga fishing village – Landing site

## Study Methodology

- This research used a qualitative approach, implementing a case study strategy.
- A total of 50 respondents from Kaswanga and Kolunga fishing communities in Lake Victoria Kenya participated in the study.

## Study Findings

The type of fishery played a role in increasing the fishing communities' vulnerability to HIV/AIDS.



Emerging issues such as; conservational and management regulations/policies, climate variability, social and political marginalization, sex-for-fish, sex-for-customer, and a perceived tilapia-aphrodisiac phenomenon, contributed to fishing communities' susceptibility and vulnerability to HIV/AIDS, and changing management of the artisanal fishery.

Both communities used coping mechanisms in response to HIV/AIDS, some which mitigated the impact of HIV/AIDS while others aggravated the situation.

Fish processors and traders negotiating fish catch with fishers at Kaswanga village

The coping mechanisms were learnt in a variety of ways, such as individual, peer to peer (social), and community (social learning) (Fig. 2).

Fig. 2 Impacts of HIV/AIDS, coping strategies and channels of learning

Impacts of HIV/AIDS	Coping strategy	Channels of learning
- Loss of income (in household)	Livelihood diversification	Community and peer-to-peer (social) learning
- Loss of income (fishers & fish processors)	Merry-go-round groups	Community and peer-to-peer (social) learning
- Increased number of child-led households, high HIV vulnerability (community)	Social support schemes	Community (social) learning
- Loss of fishing and fish processing expertise (fishers and fish processors)	Training new entrants: fishers and fish processors	Community and peer-to-peer (social) learning
- Illness and caring of the sick (fishers & fish processors)	Shift to less labour intensive jobs	Individual, peer-to-peer and community (social) learning
- Loss of workforce and productivity, loss of income (fishers)	Engaging in multiple fishing trips	Individual and peer-to-peer (social) learning
- Loss of income (in household)	Withdrawing children from school	Individual and peer-to-peer (social) learning
- Meet medical expenses, loss	Selling of fishing gear	



Fish processor sun-drying fish in Kolunga village

## Conclusions

- The fishing communities of Kaswanga and Kolunga have been significantly impacted by HIV/AIDS; this is well reflected in the state of their fishery and their resulting livelihood security.
- As there is very little empirical evidence showing the linkage between HIV/AIDS and artisanal fishery sector, this study has provided data showing this linkage.
- The findings help us to understand the most significant long-term consequences of HIV/AIDS and provide the basis for new improved responses to positively deal with HIV/AIDS in the artisanal fishery sector.



Beach Management Centre in Kaswanga village

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1. Sheila Omom, Masters Research Student University of Manitoba  
 2. A. John Sinclair, Research Advisor University of Manitoba  
 3. Harry Spaling, Research Co-advisor Kings University

## For further information