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Global Challenges | Sex Workers in Bali Begin Working in Remote Villages, Increasing Risk of HIV Transmission, Report Says
 [Oct 28, 2008]

Commercial sex workers in Bali in response to strict monitoring by city officials have begun working in remote villages, increasing the risk of HIV transmission in the region, according to a report released Friday by the Bali Regional AIDS Commission, or KPA, the *Jakarta Post* reports.

The report was based on interviews and reports from local hospitals and found there were 2,323 documented HIV cases in Bali in September, with heterosexuals and people ages 20 to 29 accounting for the largest number of infections, followed by injection drug users and people ages 30 to 39, the *Post* reports. The report found that 20% of the estimated 3,000 sex workers in Bali use a condom during intercourse, which has contributed to new HIV cases in 840 male clients, KPA program coordinator Yahya Hanshori said.

According to Yahya, the rise of sex workers working in remote villages "increases the possibility of a wider spread of HIV because villagers are even less aware of sexually transmitted [infections] than city people." Yahya added that the high number of sex workers in villages is a "really troubling development." KPA plans to work with sex workers and "those key population groups who are most prone to HIV infection," Yahya said, adding that people "who feel like they need [HIV] counseling" should go to KPA. The group estimates that there are more than 4,000 people living with HIV/AIDS in Bali, according to the *Post* (Wisnu, *Jakarta Post*, 10/26).

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