

**HIV/AIDS is posing an ever greater threat to the health and welfare of people in the highlands of Papua**

**Antoine Lemaire and Carole Reckinger**

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Across the more than 17,000 islands of Indonesia, more than 380,000 people have been tested HIV positive (with a population of over 242 million). The worst affected region is the two most easternmost provinces Papua and West Papua, where a generalised epidemic is underway. With only 1.5 per cent of Indonesia's population, the two provinces account for over 15 per cent of all Indonesia's new HIV cases in 2011. The HIV prevalence rate is 11 times higher than the national average and has reached 3.5 per cent. In 2006, AusAid expected 3.61 per cent of the population in Papua to be HIV positive by 2025. In fact it has reached this level more than ten years earlier than predicted. The highlands of Papua is one of the worst affected regions. Due to lack of awareness, poor health services, stigma and misinformation, the number of undetected HIV cases is thought to be many times the 2700 detected cases that were already detected by January 2013.

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