

## STRATEGIC FOCUS

The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) officially opened its new country office in Manila, Philippines, in April 2022. In April 2023, the Government of the Philippines granted CDC approval to fully implement its program under the U.S. President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR).

The Philippines is experiencing the fastest growing HIV epidemic in the Western Pacific region, with a 411% increase in daily HIV incidence between 2012 and 2023. It is also among the countries that have the highest rates of tuberculosis (TB), which is the leading cause of death among people living with HIV (PLHIV). Through PEPFAR and CDC's Division of Global HIV & TB (DGHT), CDC Philippines addresses the HIV and TB epidemics by focusing on key prevention and treatment service delivery gaps in public and community sites as well as on policies to strengthen public health surveillance and laboratory systems in high-burden regions of the Philippines, primarily in Region VI (Western Visayas) and Region VII (Central Visayas) with implications for the national level. CDC and its implementing partners collaborate closely with other PEPFAR agencies, the Philippines Department of Health (DOH) and other country government agencies, multilateral organizations, non-governmental organizations, stakeholders, civil society, and other partners to ensure CDC's PEPFAR program activities are aligned with the Philippines' national strategies, priorities, and needs.

## KEY ACTIVITIES AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS

### Strengthening Public Health and HIV Testing, Treatment, and Retention Services.

CDC Philippines implements comprehensive, evidence-based prevention services and targeted HIV testing interventions tailored to Key Populations (KPs), including community-based index testing and social network strategy. CDC Philippines supports pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) demand creation.

CDC Philippines leveraged CDC HQ HIV treatment expertise through evidence-based HIV treatment symposiums for regional and national infectious diseases stakeholders in the Philippines with the goal of optimizing comprehensive HIV care and treatment services among young men who have sex with men (MSM) living with HIV.

### Strengthening Laboratory Systems and Networks

CDC-Philippines provided technical leadership to contribute to DOH's ambitious plan to rapidly scale up the number of rapid HIV diagnostic algorithm certified testing sites from 40 to 1300 nationwide by the end of 2023. CDC Philippines conducted training in 2023 on Rapid Test for Recent Infection (RTRI) for almost 700 health workers, and 36 facilities have been activated for RTRI. RTRI can improve our understanding of the HIV epidemic by demonstrating shifting dynamics in the HIV epidemic over time, allowing public health officials and providers to identify HIV transmission hotspots and target HIV testing and prevention strategies. CDC Philippines is providing technical leadership and funding for the Multi-Disease Network Optimization project in order to improve the performance efficiency and reliability of the Philippines DOH's laboratory network infrastructure affecting HIV and TB diagnosis, treatment, and retention.

### Strengthening Disease Surveillance and Health Information Systems

CDC-Philippines co-led bio-behavioral surveillance and population size estimation workshops in order to increase the capacity of the DOH Epidemiology Bureau to triangulate data from these sources to estimate the number of people needing to be diagnosed and tested for HIV in Regions 6 & 7 as a form of gap analysis. Further analysis of these data sources along with the One HIV, AIDS, and STI Information System (OHASIS), the national reporting platform of HIV/AIDS in the Philippines will provide unique analytical perspectives on the HIV epidemic and the response such as assessing barriers and facilitators among MSM and transgender women and correlates of mortality among PLHIV in the last 12 months with implications for public health policies and programmatic biomedical interventions necessary to achieve 95-95-95. CDC Philippines is providing support to 36 health facilities to implement strategic information and quality improvement/quality assurance activities to strengthen performance management, improve data quality, and use for program improvement by training health facilities on how to utilize online data dashboards to improve HIV cascade.

### Scaling the HIV Response Sustainably by Forging Transformative Partnerships

CDC Philippines uses peer navigators for linkage to care from CSO community-based testing sites. CDC supported peer navigators help to promote messaging for U=U (Undetectable=Untransmittable) and stigma reduction for KP. CDC Philippines is building management capacity of locally formed KP and PLHIV led community-based organizations in order to enable them to receive future Philippines local government funding.

## Key Country Leadership

President:  
Ferdinand R. Marcos, Jr.

Secretary of Health:  
Teodoro Herbosa

U.S. Ambassador:  
MaryKay Carlson

CDC/DGHT Director:  
Romel Lacson

[Country Quick Facts](https://worldbank.org/en/where-we-work)  
(worldbank.org/en/where-we-work)

Per Capita GNI:  
\$3,950 (2022)

Population (millions):  
115.55 (2022)

Under 5 Mortality:  
25.7/1,000 live births (2021)

Life Expectancy:  
69.3 years (2021)

[Global HIV/AIDS Epidemic](https://aidsinfo.unaids.org)  
(aidsinfo.unaids.org)

Estimated HIV Prevalence  
(Ages 15-49): 0.3% (2022)

Estimated AIDS Deaths  
(Age ≥15): 1,300 (2022)

Estimated Orphans Due to  
AIDS: 11,000 (2022)

Reported Number Receiving  
Antiretroviral Therapy (ART)  
(Age ≥15): 67,998 (2022)

[Global Tuberculosis  
\(TB\) Epidemic](https://who.int/tb/country/data/profiles/en)  
(who.int/tb/country/data/profiles/en)

Estimated TB Incidence:  
650/100,000 population  
(2021)

TB Patients with Known HIV-  
Status who are HIV-Positive:  
1.2% (2021)

TB Treatment Success Rate:  
76% (2020)

## DGHT Country Staff: 5

Locally Employed Staff: 3  
Direct Hires: 2  
Fellows & Contractors: 00

Our success is built on the backbone of science and strong partnerships.

September 2023 | The CDC Division of Global HIV & TB activities are implemented as part of the U.S. President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR); non-HIV related TB activities are supported by non-PEPFAR funding.

