



# CENTRAL AMERICA REGION

## CDC Division of Global HIV & TB's Strategic Focus

Since 2003, the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has collaborated with Ministries of Health (MOHs) to respond to the HIV epidemic in the region. CDC supports countries in Central America in achieving the UNAIDS 95-95-95 HIV testing, treatment, and viral load suppression targets.

In partnership with local governments, civil society, and other partners, CDC prioritizes interventions that directly impact the quality of services for people living with HIV (PLHIV) and people at greater risk of HIV. CDC supports the scale-up of evidence-based programs to close gaps in HIV prevention, active case finding, early antiretroviral therapy (ART) initiation, optimized treatment services, and viral load suppression. CDC uses a targeted approach to strengthen systems essential for a sustainable HIV response.

## Key Activities and Accomplishments

### Building Public Health Capacity

- Introduced the Extension for Community Healthcare Outcomes (Project ECHO) model, an innovative tele-mentoring initiative where expert teams lead virtual clinics, amplifying the capacity for providers to deliver best-in-practice care to underserved communities. Through Project ECHO, CDC has created virtual communities of practice in HIV treatment, prevention, and strategic information.
- Launched the Continuous Quality Improvement Training Initiative, where participants learned how to apply concepts of quality improvement in the clinical setting to improve service quality.
- Supported MOHs in HIV surveillance to enhance data collection and analysis capabilities for improved decision-making.
- Worked closely with MOHs to build local capacity to perform regular evaluations and ensure high-quality standards in the viral load process.
- Provided expertise to MOHs to update HIV service manuals, adapt communication materials and job aids to the Central American context, train health care workers in HIV combination prevention and viral load monitoring, and support integration of mobile populations with HIV into national health services.

### Strengthening Laboratory Systems and Networks

- Implemented recent HIV infection surveillance to identify areas of active transmission (i.e., PLHIV infected in the past 12 months) to guide case finding and prevention strategies.
- Supported the HIV National Reference Laboratory in Honduras to achieve viral load accreditation by the International Organization for Standardization (ISO) 15189 for medical laboratories.
- Supported specimen referral, supplies, information, quality management systems, and technology to enhance viral load coverage and suppression among PLHIV in supported health facilities.

# CDC DIVISION OF GLOBAL HIV & TB COUNTRY PROFILE

## HIV Prevention and Treatment

- Expanded surveillance, prevention, and control strategy, known as VICITS. VICITS provides a tailored HIV prevention and testing service package. This package includes risk-based counseling HIV testing, peer navigation for linkage to treatment, and a surveillance information system.
- Contributed to the scale-up of pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) as part of the VICITS package, including the introduction of on-demand PrEP.
- Provided a comprehensive treatment package to link newly diagnosed PLHIV to ART clinics and support rapid initiation and adherence.
- Increased ART access in hard-to-reach geographic areas.
- Supported a tailored HIV prevention and testing service package for mobile populations in Colombia and Peru.
- Improved access to HIV testing among undiagnosed PLHIV by supporting active case-finding plans in CDC-supported health facilities. These include testing as part of outreach strategies for people at greater risk of HIV, index testing services, social network testing, optimized provider-initiated testing, self-testing, and testing among mobile populations.

		Colombia	El Salvador	Guatemala	Honduras	Nicaragua	Panama	Peru
Global HIV Epidemic	Estimated HIV Prevalence (Age 15–49) (2023)	0.6%	0.5%	0.2%	0.2%	0.3%	1.0%	0.5%
	Estimated HIV Deaths (Age ≥15) (2023)	3,500	<500	<500	<500	<200	<500	<1,000
	Reported Number of Adults Receiving ART (Age ≥15) (2023)	N/A	15,533	24,690	13,116	6,859	20,026	90,030

Source: <http://aidsinfo.unaids.org/>

## Tuberculosis Prevention and Treatment

- Promoted active referrals for TB treatment and managing other chronic conditions.

		Colombia	El Salvador	Guatemala	Honduras	Nicaragua	Panama	Peru
Global TB Epidemic	Estimated TB Incidence (Per 100,000 Population) (2023)	46	84	33	31	43	58	173
	Reported Percent of People with TB and HIV (2023)	11%	6.1%	8.1%	6.2%	6.6%	17%	6.0%
	Treatment Success Rate (2022)	74%	86%	88%	86%	86%	74%	84%

Source: <http://www.who.int/teams/global-tuberculosis-programme/data>