

CDC *in* THAILAND



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The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has worked with Thailand's Ministry of Public Health (MOPH) since 1980 when CDC established the first Field Epidemiology Training Program outside of North America to train the next generation of public health leaders in Thailand and the region. CDC and MOPH have collaborated to prevent and control HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis, influenza, and other infectious diseases; combat emerging infectious diseases through preparation, surveillance, and control; translate local research into global advances; improve refugee and migrant health; and share important lessons and knowledge from Thailand's experience with other countries. The current COVID-19 response is a hallmark example of how this collaboration has been key to building a successful response to a global pandemic.



CDC provided 6 trainings for more than 140 Thai laboratorians on COVID-19 testing, proper use of PPE, and biosafety and sample collection



CDC's lab in Thailand performed over 10,000 COVID-19 diagnostic tests in support of Thai government partners, the International Rescue Committee, and the US Embassy community



CDC developed an enhanced surveillance program that is active in 9 camps on Thai-Myanmar border which has detected 3 COVID-19 outbreaks and helped mitigate widespread epidemics in a high-risk environment



CDC provided N95 fit-testing to nearly 200 Thai public health workers to ensure they could work safely and prevent work-place associated transmission of COVID-19



In 2016, Thailand, with support from CDC, was the first Asian country to receive World Health Organization (WHO) certification for the elimination of mother-to-child transmission of HIV and syphilis



By 2020, 97% of people living with HIV in Thailand had achieved undetectable viral suppression. This means they cannot transmit HIV to their sexual partners. This percentage is near the top of all PEPFAR countries



Thailand collaborated with CDC on the first clinical trial in the world evaluating HIV Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis in people who inject drugs. This kind of groundbreaking research helps improve HIV prevention and treatment in Thailand and globally



CDC supports strengthening Thailand's Emergency Operations Center (EOC) and has set up Rapid Response Teams (RRT) to support COVID-19 response



Thailand is an active member of the Global Health Security Agenda, having completed a Joint External Evaluation in 2017, a National Action Plan for Health Security in 2019, and chairing the GHSA Steering Committee in 2021



Thailand is home to the first FETP outside of North America and since 1980 the Thai FETP has graduated 257 epidemiologists – including 56 non-Thai epidemiologists from nine Asian countries



CDC and Thailand have worked to support and sustain sentinel and event-based surveillance to monitor circulating influenza and respiratory pathogens; this work supported the growth of the Thailand National Influenza Center as a regional leader



CDC's regional influenza program in Thailand worked with Thailand's ministry of public health to deliver emergency supplies of the influenza antiviral drug oseltamivir to Laos in less than 24 hours to address a devastating outbreak of seasonal influenza in 2019

COVID-19

The goals of CDC's global health response to COVID-19 are to limit person-to-person spread of COVID-19, minimize the impact of COVID-19 in under-resourced countries with limited preparedness capacity, and reduce specific threats to global health security.

Through partnership with key Royal Thai Government and non-governmental partners in Thailand, CDC has:

- Provided laboratory technical assistance for genetic sequencing of SARS-CoV-2
- Supported COVID-19 testing in Bangkok and in refugee camps at the Thai-Myanmar border
- Helped to integrate COVID-19 surveillance into the influenza sentinel surveillance system
- Published findings on clinical management of COVID-19 patients that led to changes in the national discharge criteria
- Collaborated on border health strengthening measures before and during the pandemic
- Provided leadership into contact tracing, mitigation and control efforts in Bangkok
- Supported sero-surveillance in healthcare workers and the general public to monitor the spread of the disease
- Led the epidemiologic and laboratory components of a WHO intra-pandemic review of the Thai response
- Supported vaccine preparedness efforts
- Developed tools, materials, and guidance on how to safely continue HIV testing and treatment during the pandemic

HIV and Tuberculosis

HIV is a leading cause of death and a health threat to millions worldwide. CDC is a key implementer of the U.S. President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) and works with ministries of health, local and international partners to help build country capacity for sustainable, country-owned programs. CDC's activities are focused in 13 high-HIV burden provinces in Thailand.

CDC activities support surveillance and systems strengthening, laboratory capacity, HIV pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) and case finding strategies, adult HIV care and treatment, stigma and discrimination reduction interventions, and continuous quality improvement activities targeting the HIV continuum of care. In 2016, Thailand was the first Asian country to receive World Health Organization (WHO) certification for the elimination of mother-to-child transmission of HIV and syphilis. This achievement was accomplished with support from CDC Thailand.

In 2020, an estimated 94% of people with HIV knew their status, 84% of people diagnosed with HIV were on treatment, and 97% of people with HIV who were on treatment had suppressed viral loads putting Thailand on track to achieve UNAIDS global targets to control the HIV epidemic by the year 2025. Overall HIV incidence has decreased, but it remains high among at-risk populations.

During 2018-2019, the Office of the Global AIDS Coordinator (OGAC) consolidated 11 PEPFAR countries to form the Asia Regional Program (ARP) Operating Unit (OU). OGAC also established the PEPFAR Asia Region Coordination Unit (PARCU), based in Bangkok, to help coordinate and translate best practices quickly and efficiently for program impact across the region. Currently, CDC supports PEPFAR activities in the following nine ARP countries: Cambodia, India, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz Republic, Lao PDR, Myanmar, Philippines, Tajikistan and Thailand.



Healthcare providers from Kumpawapee Hospital, in northeastern Thailand, prepare antiretroviral medication packages to mail to people living with HIV during the COVID-19 pandemic. The ministry instituted this policy to maintain patients' medication supplies while the country was in lockdown, 2020.

Global HIV Research

CDC also conducts high quality biomedical HIV prevention research aimed at protecting both Thai and American citizens from becoming infected. Current research activities include injectable long-acting HIV prevention medicine, identification of new strategies including non-daily PrEP and new antibiotics for sexually transmitted infections. Current research activities include injectable long-acting HIV prevention medicine, identification of new strategies including non-daily PrEP and new antibiotics for sexually transmitted infections.

In January 2022, CDC will evaluate the acceptability of home-based oral PrEP and home-based point-of-care urine testing to monitor PrEP adherence in young men who have sex with men.

Global Health Protection

CDC's global health security efforts strengthen countries' abilities to prevent, detect, and respond to infectious disease outbreaks before they become global epidemics. CDC works with local, regional, and global organizations to support disease outbreak response, surveillance, laboratory systems, and workforce development. These efforts aim to help Thailand reach the targets outlined in the Global Health Security Agenda (GHSA), a global partnership launched in 2014 to make the world safer and more secure. Thailand is a member country of GHSA, permanent member of the GHSA Steering Group, and served as the Chair of the GHSA Steering Group in 2021. CDC-Thailand supports Thailand in its role as a co-lead of the National Laboratory Systems and Workforce Development Action Packages and the country's participation in the Antimicrobial Resistance Action Package.

In collaboration with WHO and the Ministry of Public Health, CDC helps Thailand strengthen its core global health security requirements for implementation of the International Health Regulations. Thailand completed a Joint External Evaluation (JEE) in June 2017 and has published its report online. The country completed a National Action Plan for Health Security in 2019.

Field Epidemiology Training Program

CDC supports strengthening workforce capacity to investigate and respond to disease outbreaks through Thailand's Field Epidemiology Training Programs (FETP). FETP provides field epidemiologists the skills to identify and contain outbreaks before they become epidemics. In Thailand, CDC established the first FETP outside of North America in 1980. Graduates of Thailand's FETP have the necessary skills to collect, analyze and interpret data and contribute to evidence-based decisions during outbreak responses. In 2020, the Thai FETP and CDC-Thailand established the FETP-EID track for residents to gain experience working with CDC staff for 10 months each year to build capacity focused on emerging infectious diseases. Thai FETP graduates have been integral to staffing Thailand's Emergency Operations Center since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic as well as providing support to provincial efforts to respond to control and prevent COVID-19 infection.

Influenza

CDC's International Influenza Program is a global network, designed to guard against, monitor, and reduce the devastating impacts of a pandemic. CDC and its global partners closely monitor and respond to influenza and respiratory viruses with pandemic potential, including SARS-CoV-2. CDC's international influenza program also makes critical contributions to U.S. and global prevention and control of seasonal influenza epidemics, through global surveillance, applied science to support vaccine and prevention policies, and to inform the best selection of seasonal influenza vaccine components. Supporting countries to develop effective, seasonal influenza vaccination programs with well-established regulatory, decision-making, and delivery systems enhances global pandemic preparedness. As countries build capacity to deliver seasonal influenza vaccines every year, they develop the infrastructure to deliver life-saving vaccines early and efficiently during the current and future pandemics.

Understanding the risk of continued and unprecedented pandemic threats, the primary objectives of the CDC-Thailand Influenza Program are to:

- Support influenza detection, response, and prevention activities in Southeast Asia through epidemiologic and laboratory-based technical assistance,
- Grow the evidence-base for sound policy decisions for influenza vaccination programs and other prevention and control programs, and
- Provide support to pandemic preparedness and the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic in partner countries.

CDC's Influenza program provides sub-regional support and coordination not only to Thailand, but also to Bangladesh, Indonesia, Lao PDR, and Myanmar.



An FETP investigation of hand, foot, and mouth disease in the hill tribe villages in northern Thailand. Photo credit: Tawatchai Apidechkul and TEPHINET

Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR)

The Thai National Strategic Plan on AMR (2017-2021) aims to reduce AMR-related morbidity by 50%. The CDC Office in Thailand supports this plan by providing technical assistance to hospital-based AMR surveillance.

Immigrant, Refugee, and Migrant Health

CDC provides technical assistance to the Thai MOPH and Laos MOH to stop the spread of infectious diseases among travelers and mobile populations crossing international borders. The program ensures that health examinations of immigrants and refugees throughout the region follow CDC's regulations for detecting and preventing important communicable diseases like tuberculosis and supports disease surveillance and outbreak response in refugee camps along the Thai-Myanmar border.

Noncommunicable Diseases

CDC has assisted Thailand on several critical noncommunicable disease (NCD) initiatives. CDC worked with Thai partners to implement aspects of WHO's Global Hearts Initiative to reduce the burden of uncontrolled hypertension and decrease morbidity and mortality associated with cardiovascular disease. CDC supported the Thai FETP to conduct a cardiovascular surveillance system evaluation in Saraburi province and has worked with the Thai National Cancer Institute on screening programs for colorectal and cervical cancer.



CDC STAFF

16 U.S. Assignees
141 Locally Employed



AT A GLANCE

Population: > 69,790,000
Per capita income: > \$17,650
Life expectancy: F 80 / M 73 years
Infant mortality rate: 7/1,000 live births

Source:
World Bank 2020, Thailand
Population Reference Bureau 2020, Thailand



TOP 10 CAUSES OF DEATH

1. Cardiovascular diseases
2. Neoplasms
3. Diabetes & kidney diseases
4. Respiratory infections
5. Digestive diseases
6. Neurological disorders
7. Chronic respiratory diseases
8. Transport injury
9. HIV/AIDS & STIs
10. Unintentional injury

Source:
GBD Compare 2019, Thailand



For more country information
www.cdc.gov/globalhealth/countries/thailand