

# ZAMBIA

## STRATEGIC FOCUS

The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) office in Zambia has a long-standing partnership with the Ministry of Health (MOH) and its provincial health offices to build a robust national HIV/AIDS response. Over the past 20 years, CDC supported the MOH to scale-up key HIV programs to turn the tide against the HIV epidemic in Zambia. Over the last year, CDC has focused on improving case identification for people living with HIV (PLHIV) and immediate linkage to treatment, improving quality of HIV services in a sustainable way, and building capacity of Zambian staff to detect and respond to public health threats.

## KEY ACTIVITIES AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS

**HIV Epidemic Control:** With over 1.2 million PLHIV, Zambia is one of the countries most affected by HIV globally. As a key U.S. President’s Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) implementing agency, CDC focuses on helping meet the Joint United Nations Program on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) 95-95-95 targets (95% diagnosed among all people living with HIV (PLHIV), 95% on antiretroviral therapy (ART) among diagnosed, and 95% virally suppressed (VS) among treated) for HIV epidemic control. According to PEPFAR data, by the end of March 2021, 1,157,668 (91%) PLHIV in Zambia were on antiretroviral therapy (ART). Overall viral load (VL) suppression among patients on ART was over 90%.

CDC Zambia is a leading partner in the validation and roll out of HIV screening tools, being used to improve HIV testing efficiency to identify silent transfers of HIV in high volume urban districts. As of March 2021, CDC partners reached 80,513 males with Voluntary Medical Male Circumcision (VMMC) services, 65,389 HIV uninfected people with pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP), 47,906 key populations heard prevention messages and 65% received PrEP and 18,437 adolescent girls and young women received DREAMS (Determined, Resilient, Empowered, AIDS-free, Mentored, and Safe) and Orphan and Vulnerable Children (OVC) services and 84% completed the primary DREAMS package (PEPFAR data). CDC plays a leading role in the implementation of index testing, resulting in a positivity yield of 24% with 47% of positives in Zambia being identified at the end of March 2021 (PEPFAR data). CDC Zambia successfully provided multi-month ART dispensation to 88% of recipients with 51% receiving six-month scripts. As of March 2021, 74% of recipients received Dolutegravir based regimens to improve treatment success. CDC is in a lead role in the implementation of several surveillance programs to improve understanding of the epidemic and to contribute to the achievement and maintenance of epidemic control.

**Human Resource for Health (HRH):** To support the HIV response in Zambia, CDC supports a total of 8,263 health care workers, including 1,188 clinical staff, 5,077 community health workers, 1,998 laboratorians, pharmacists, data management personnel and administrators. Targeted HRH support is a key strategy in sustaining the Zambian HIV program and achieving PEPFAR goals (PEPFAR data, 2020).

**PHIA Survey:** CDC is supporting the MOH to undertake its second Population-based HIV Impact Assessment (PHIA) and measure the reach and impact of the country’s HIV prevention and treatment services. This national household survey aims to estimate HIV incidence, prevalence, and VL suppression among adults. ZAMPHIA will benchmark Zambia’s progress towards the UNAIDS targets of 95-95-95.

**TB/HIV:** Increase in access to TB preventive treatment (TPT) expanded dramatically since 2017, with an estimated 54% of eligible PLHIV having successfully completed TPT through 2021 (PEPFAR data). Access to TPT has contributed to a reduction in TB/HIV co-infection rates from 60% to 46% between 2015 and 2019. Despite the COVID-19 pandemic, Zambia accelerated TPT initiations and completions and is 7% above target for TB case finding due to a national campaign to mitigate the impact of COVID-19 on access to TB services. Zambia is also expanding the use of child-friendly diagnostics like Urine LAM and stool-based testing on GeneXpert. CDC continues to support the Zambia national TB program through technical support and quality improvement activities.

**Project ECHO (Extension of Community Healthcare Outcomes):** The Zambia Ministry of Health HIV ECHO program has expanded to 260 health facilities across all 10 provinces in three years. The program has had 4,609 health care workers participate in an ECHO session with an average of 250 participating in weekly ECHO sessions. In April 2021, Zambia launched an Advanced HIV Disease ECHO and in July 2021 a Cervical Cancer ECHO was launched. Tele-mentoring is a valuable resource during the COVID-19 global pandemic to protect the gains on HIV/TB prevention, treatment, and care.

**Zambia Field Epidemiology Training Program (FETP):** Twenty-four Zambians have completed two-years of advanced field epidemiology training and 110 have completed the frontline training program. During their training, the residents investigated HIV clusters and COVID-19. They continue to support the MOH to strengthen surveillance and investigate outbreaks of priority diseases all over Zambia.

## Key Country Leadership

President:  
Hakainde Hichilema

Minister of Health:  
Kennedy Malama

U.S. Charge d’Affaires:  
David Young

CDC/DGHT Director:  
Simon G. Agolory

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

Per Capita GNI:  
\$1,190 (2020)

Population (millions):  
18.38 (2020)

Under 5 Mortality:  
62/1,000 live births (2019)

Life Expectancy:  
64 years (2019)

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

Estimated HIV Prevalence  
(Ages 15-49): 11.1% (2020)

Estimated AIDS Deaths  
(Age ≥15): 19,000 (2020)

Estimated Orphans Due to  
AIDS: 700,000 (2020)

Reported Number  
Receiving Antiretroviral  
Therapy (ART) (Age ≥15):  
1,179,031 (2020)

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

Estimated TB Incidence:  
331/100,000 population  
(2019)

TB patients with known HIV  
status who are HIV-positive:  
46% (2019)

TB Treatment Success Rate:  
90% (2018)

Estimated TB Mortality:  
86/100,000 population  
(2019)

**DGHT Country Staff: 77**  
Locally Employed Staff: 62  
Direct Hires: 14  
Fellows & Contractors: 1

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

September 2021 | 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

