

SOUTHEAST ASIA REGION

STRATEGIC FOCUS

Located at the Thailand Ministry of Public Health (MOPH) in Nonthaburi, the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)/U.S President’s Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) Southeast Asia Regional Office (SARO) collaborates with and provides technical assistance to government and non-governmental partners in Lao PDR and Thailand, including civil society organizations (CSOs) and multilateral organizations to discover, evaluate, and implement new tools and programs to combat HIV, sexually transmitted infections (STIs), and tuberculosis (TB). It supports the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) 90-90-90 goals (90 percent of all people living with HIV know their HIV status; 90 percent of all people with a diagnosed HIV infection receive ART; and 90 percent of all people receiving ART are virally suppressed). The SARO aims to catalyze broad sustained HIV epidemic control in Lao PDR, Thailand and across the region by working with partners to evaluate, pilot and scale-up effective approaches to reach, test, treat, and retain priority populations in settings with the greatest burden of HIV.

SARO activities are focused in 13 provinces in Thailand and three provinces in Lao PDR with high HIV prevalence. In Thailand, the SARO works through two cooperative agreements - one with the MOPH, and a second with the Bangkok Metropolitan Administration (BMA). In Lao PDR, the SARO provides technical assistance through its cooperative agreements with the Ministry of Health (MOH) and the World Health Organization (WHO).

SARO initiatives focus on key populations that include men who have sex with men (MSM) and transgender women. SARO initiatives promote and demonstrate sustainable epidemic-control solutions that can be replicated, integrated, and/or scaled-up into existing health systems by national governments. SARO also supports the establishment of domestic financing mechanisms for non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and provides technical assistance and facilitates knowledge sharing to countries in the region and beyond.

SARO’s health systems’ strengthening sections (laboratory capacity building, care and treatment, and strategic information) provide the foundation for much of the program’s technical work.

The strategic information section works with the Royal Thai Government to develop health information systems that generate evidence to support and strengthen national public health policies, inform national guidelines, and help sub-national and national public health officers and health care providers to effectively plan and implement programs and make timely clinical-care decisions. SARO’s care and treatment and laboratory sections support the integration of HIV quality improvement programs into the MOPH’s national health facility accreditation system and laboratory quality management system.

CDC-Southeast Asia Regional Office Staff: 43

Locally Employed Staff: 39

Direct Hires: 4

Fellows & Contractors: 0

Southeast Asia Region Includes:

Lao People's Democratic Republic (PDR) (Laos) and Thailand

		COUNTRIES	
		Lao PDR	Thailand
Country Quick Facts	GNI Per Capita (2016)	\$2,150	\$5,640
	Population (2016)	6.76 Million	68.86 Million
	Under 5 Mortality (Per 1,000 Live Births) (2016)	64	12
	Life Expectancy (2016)	67	75

Source: <http://www.worldbank.org/en/country>

Global HIV/AIDS Epidemic (2016)	Estimated HIV Prevalence (Age 15–49)	0.3%	1.1%
	Estimated AIDS Deaths (Age ≥15)	<500	16,000
	Estimated Orphans Due to AIDS	3,000	180,000
	Reported Number Receiving Antiretroviral Therapy (ART) (Age ≥15)	4,400	304,000

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

Global Tuberculosis Epidemic	Estimated TB Incidence (Per 100,000 Population) (2016)	175	172
	TB patients with known HIV-status who are HIV-positive (2016)	6%	11%
	Treatment Success Rate (2015)	88%	79%

Source: <http://www.who.int/tb/country/data/profiles/en/>

KEY ACTIVITIES AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS

THAILAND

JULY 2018 | 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



In Thailand, the SARO supports the national “Ending AIDS” strategy (less than 1,000 new HIV-infections a year by 2030). It regularly provides technical support to revise national HIV prevention and treatment guidelines as well as develop and implement HIV-related policies, such as the national HIV Test and Treat and same-day test results policies. It continues to collaborate with partners to develop and implement “Test and Start” initiatives, which promote access to quality, rapid HIV testing and diagnosis, and provide immediate links to sustained prevention and treatment interventions, including pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) and anti-retroviral therapy.

In collaboration with the Government of Thailand and other government, multilateral partners (e.g. UNAIDS, United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund [UNICEF]) and non-government partners, SARO's key activities and accomplishments during the past year were:

- Expanded the demonstration projects that have developed effective “reach and recruit” outreach models which - using target mapping, mobile testing clinics, community-facility referral networks and facility-based services - successfully increased testing rates among key populations. The model has since been integrated into Thailand's National HIV/AIDS Treatment and Prevention Guidelines;
- Developed an intervention program to reach, test, treat, and retain HIV-positive young men who have sex with men and transgender women using social media, peer outreach, and public private partnership;
- Expanded HIV pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) – a new prevention intervention – in combination with same-day testing, as part of routine medical services to 12 BMA health facilities and 13 hospitals in seven of the 13 focus provinces;
- Expanded the disease specific certification (DSC) programs for HIV and STIs (including those for testing and counselling), and promoted adherence to quality standards for healthcare facilities to 50 hospitals in 29 provinces;
- Promoted quality improvement (QI) activities and built capacities of lab staff, resulting in five BMA hospital laboratories receiving accreditation from Thailand Medical Technology Council, and established a web-based TB external quality assurance (EQA) program for registration, data analysis, and reporting for 72 TB molecular laboratories;
- Expanded the stigma and discrimination reduction intervention program to 50 health facilities in 13 provinces in Thailand and will share these experiences through an international training program of Thai MOPH;
- Conducted integrated behavioral and biological assessment surveillance (IBBS), size estimations of people living with HIV and among key populations, and HIV program impact evaluations that have contributed to Thailand's national HIV policies, and continue to guide national and sub-national strategic plans for ending AIDS by 2030;
- Built technical capacity of national and provincial public health staff in 13 provinces to use strategic information to develop provincial targets and operation plans to end AIDS;
- Strengthened the quality and utilization of service delivery, surveillance, and survey data at national and sub-national levels to improve monitoring of outcomes among people living with HIV and amongst key populations;
- Provided technical assistance to China and Malaysia to prepare for WHO validation of elimination of mother-to-child transmission (EMTCT)
- Conducted a national training on TB contact investigation to improve TB case finding; and
- Conducted operations research to assess the effectiveness and impact of various TB infection control interventions.

LAO PDR

In Lao PDR, SARO initiatives improve access to and retention in high-quality HIV care, promote continuous quality improvement activities for HIV testing, treatment and laboratory services, strengthen and streamline surveillance to monitor the HIV epidemic and risk behaviors among key populations, and support the utilization of strategic information for program monitoring and evaluation. SARO's accomplishments include:

- Successfully improved the quality of HIV counseling, testing, care and treatment services and contributed to the development of updated standard operational procedures.
- Conducted trainings to build capacity on epidemiologic methods, data quality assurance, and data analysis and interpretation among national, provincial, and local staff to increase the use of monitoring and surveillance data for program planning and development.
- Provided technical assistance to design, implement, standardize, and improve the quality of HIV surveillance, which in turn contributed to Lao PDR's HIV policy and program planning by streamlining program monitoring between the national, provincial, and hospital levels.

