

LAO PEOPLE'S DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC (LAOS)

STRATEGIC FOCUS

The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has collaborated with multilateral, governmental, non-governmental, and civil society organizations to adapt, evaluate and implement new tools, programs, and policies to combat HIV, sexually transmitted infections, and tuberculosis (TB) in Laos since 2009. CDC initiatives promote and demonstrate sustainable epidemic control solutions that have been adopted, integrated, and scaled up into existing health systems by the government and stakeholders. CDC supports activities for persons living with HIV (PLHIV) by working with the Lao People's Democratic Republic Ministry of Health (MOH), World Health Organization (WHO), and partners in five high-burden provinces to

- Increase detection of undiagnosed HIV patients through HIV index testing and other case-finding strategies.
- Improve antiretroviral therapy (ART) literacy, linkage from voluntary counseling and testing sites to ART facilities, same-day/rapid ART initiation, adherence, retention to care, and viral suppression among PLHIV by promoting data utilization for quality improvement and coaching.
- Expand ART access by decentralizing HIV treatment services to point-of-care (POC) ART sites.
- Strengthen TB/HIV co-infection and opportunistic infections management.
- Improve national laboratory quality, coverage, and data monitoring of existing HIV rapid test, HIV-1 viral load test, and HIV recent infection test external quality assurance programs.
- Reduce HIV stigma and discrimination in healthcare settings.
- Strengthen healthcare workforce capacity on HIV prevention, treatment, laboratory, and strategic information.
- Strengthen strategic information systems and local human resource capacity to monitor and evaluate the national HIV program.
- Support a phased transition to a sustainable government-led response.

KEY ACTIVITIES AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS

CDC initiatives in Laos have improved access to and retention in HIV care; promoted continuous quality improvement activities for HIV testing, treatment, and laboratory services; strengthened and streamlined surveillance to monitor the HIV epidemic and risk behaviors among key populations; and supported the utilization of strategic information for improving quality of services and program monitoring and evaluation.

Expansion of HIV prevention, care, and treatment services:

- Successfully improved the quality of HIV counseling, testing, care, and treatment services and contributed to the development and revision of standard operational procedures: HIV and opportunistic infections treatment and management guidelines, HIV retention guidelines, enhanced adherence counseling manuals and flipchart, guidelines for the expansion of HIV treatment and care services to ART-point of contact sites.
- Developed index testing implementation guidelines, trained health providers, and expanded index testing service and monitoring systems to 11 ART sites, selected ART- point of contact, and community-based sites.
- Supported national HIV quality improvement workshops, trainings, and HIV quality improvement activities; implementation at ART site level to promote same-day and rapid ART initiation; reduction of interruption in treatment; promotion of Tenofovir-Lamivudine-Dolutegravir (TLD) transition; and increased uptake of viral load testing coverage, TB preventive treatment, and multi-month dispensing.
- Collaborated with the Center for HIV/AIDS/STI - Lao PDR to provide technical support for establishing and expanding point-of-care ART sites.
- Supported HIV viral load decentralization and established an external quality assurance program to improve access and quality of viral load testing services.

Health system strengthening and policy development:

- Implemented the index testing monitoring system and integrated index testing and recency testing variables into the national HIV monitoring system.
- Established the national recent infection surveillance system with real-time reporting.
- Developed monitoring and evaluation (M&E) training course for healthcare workers and public health officers to develop local capacity for (M&E) and data use. Established national external quality assurance programs on HIV rapid test, HIV-1 viral load test, and HIV recent infection test.
- Provide technical support in implementing Laboratory Information Management System.

Key Country Leadership

President:
Thongloun Sisoulith

Prime Minister:
Sonesay Siphandone

Minister of Health:
Bounfeng Phoummalaysith

U.S. Ambassador:
Peter Haymond

CDC Country Representative:
Viengphone Khanthamaly

DGHT Program Director:
Sanny Northbrook

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

Per Capita GNI:
\$2,360 (2022)

Population (millions):
7.52 (2022)

Under 5 Mortality:
42.5/1,000 live births (2021)

Life Expectancy:
68 years (2021)

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

Estimated HIV Prevalence
(Ages 15-49): 0.4% (2022)

Estimated AIDS Deaths
(Age ≥15): <500 (2022)

Estimated Orphans Due to
AIDS: 7,000 (2022)

Reported Number Receiving
Antiretroviral Therapy (ART)
(Age ≥15): 9,755 (2022)

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

Estimated TB Incidence:
143/100,000 population (2021)

TB Patients with Known HIV
Status who are HIV-Positive:
5.8% (2021)

TB Treatment Success Rate:
89% (2020)

DGHT Country Staff: 1
Locally Employed Staff: 1
Direct Hires: 0
Fellows & Contractors: 0

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

