

Concept Note

World AIDS Day 2020

WHO Theme: “Global solidarity – shared responsibility.”

Call to Action: Support the global effort to revive and maintain essential HIV/STI services in COVID 19 and beyond

- HIV continues to be a major global public health issue, despite significant progress since the late 1990s. Progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) targets objectives had already slowed before the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic. Disruptions to services - particularly in countries with fragile health systems - during the pandemic threaten to set the clock back decades, undermining efforts to achieve the SDGs and causing untold human suffering.
- The ongoing COVID-19 pandemic poses a clear threat to HIV/STI prevention, testing, treatment, and care services, particularly in countries with fragile health systems. Any slowing down in providing these services will leave many vulnerable populations at greater risk of HIV and STI infection and AIDS-related death.
- The pandemic is also challenging countries’ ability to provide care in the way it needs to be given - ensuring that “key populations” can easily access the services they need and that care is provided in a way that takes account of each individual’s situation.

Latin America and the Caribbean context

- Latin America was estimated to have achieved “77-78-88” of the 90/90/90 targets by the end of 2019. While more persons living with HIV have been diagnosed, the proportion of those in treatment has decreased since 2015. For those on antiretrovirals (ART), a higher level of viral suppression is being achieved over time. New HIV infections have increased by 21% since 2010 in Latin America, but ART coverage has increased, leading to a reduction of 8% in AIDS-related mortality. New infections have disproportionately affected members of key populations, with an estimated 44% occurring among gay men and other men who have sex with men (MSM) and 6% among transgender women (TGW). The estimated number of new infections has decreased by 29% since 2010, and AIDS-related mortality by 37%.
- In the Caribbean, antiretroviral coverage reached 63% of estimated People Living With HIV/AIDS, while only 50% of them have achieved viral suppression. In the Caribbean, MSM, female sex workers, and TGW are also significantly affected, representing 26%, 6%, and 5% of new infections in 2019, respectively.

General objective

Considering the unprecedented COVID-19 pandemic, the campaign will focus on the importance of protecting the gains towards Ending AIDS and some STIs, explicitly focusing on the interventions to achieve adequate access to testing and STI and HIV early diagnosis in key population groups while addressing the pandemic.

World Aids Day 2020 aims to:

- Highlight best practices of service delivery adaptations and technology innovations to ensure the continuity of services and sustain the response during the COVID-19 pandemic
- Encourage countries to protect the gains achieved and minimize the negative impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on their progress towards Ending AIDS and STIs
- Advocate and encourage people in the Region of the Americas, especially key populations, to get tested for HIV and STIs
- Report on the use of HIV Self-Testing in the Americas
- Reorganizing HIV care, either from hospitals to health centers or from health centers to community-based care, to facilitate access to HIV services

PAHO/WHO representatives and staff are encouraged to collaborate with Ministries of Health, UN agencies, regional, national, and community partners to support advocacy and communication activities for World AIDS Day 2020.

HIV self-testing in Latin America

Access to HIV testing is typically through a health care facility, a community center, or other facilities most of the time defined by working hours and geographical location. Healthcare workers or other providers are usually tasked to carry out the tests. Therefore, HIV and STI testing depends on their availability. Since the outbreak of the pandemic, access to health services is affected by COVID-19.

HIV Self-Testing has become available in the Region, offering beneficiaries with the possibility to perform a screening HIV at the time and in the location that is most suitable to them. Self-testing alone is not enough to establish an HIV diagnosis. A positive result would still require a combination of laboratory-based tests to confirm HIV diagnosis. However, this is the first step from the screening process to diagnosis.

Specific objectives

- To support the introduction of HIV self-testing and STI tests as part of testing services by countries in the Region
- Adopt HIV self-testing and Rapid STI tests as part of HIV/STI testing services, and link it with the primary care for HIV/STI follow up, prevention and treatment

- Prioritize diagnostic algorithms based solely on rapid tests offered at flexible hours by providers

PAHO Theme: *It's in your hands. Get tested wherever & whenever you want.*

Target audiences

Authorities from ministries of health, national AIDS managers, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) working with HIV and donors, and health care providers, and the general public.

Specific Target audiences

Key population groups such as gay men and other men who have sex with men, sex workers, transgender women, people who inject drugs, and prisoners.

They are classified as such because their behaviors place them at greater risk of acquiring HIV. People in key population groups often experience human rights violations, systematic deprivation of rights, social and economic marginalization, and in some settings, criminalization.

Campaign identity and materials

The campaign and visual identities reflect the 2020 theme.

The following materials will be disseminated before World AIDS Day jointly by PAHO and UNAIDS:

- A Facebook Live organized by PAHO and UNAIDS on December 1st with the participation of one NGO representing most affected communities
- One set of PowerPoint presentations with 2019 data for distribution to PWRs before the WAD
- Dedicated webpage
- Press-release
- Visual and social media materials outreach materials, including:
 - Four videos on HIV self-testing focused on the voice from Key Population from LAC
 - 4 Infographics on the importance, benefits, and use of self-testing and rapid STI tests
 - Infographic on HIV & COVID-19
 - Three animated GIFs
 - Eight cards and messages for social networks on Self-testing and What you need to know on HIV & COVID-19 (FB, Instagram, LinkedIn, Twitter)

Hashtags:

#WorldAIDSDay

#inyourhands

#GetTested