



Combination Prevention Program for HIV in Central America

Combination Prevention Program for HIV in Central America Regional Fact Sheet 2019

Summary

Cooperative agreement beginning in October 2010 and ending in January 2020.

Countries

- Belize*
- Guatemala
- El Salvador
- Honduras**
- Nicaragua
- Costa Rica***
- Panama

*Belize ended in September 2016.

** Honduras began in May 2016.

***Costa Rica ended in June 2016.

Target populations

- Men who have sex with men (MSM), especially “hidden” and “difficult-access” MSM
- Transgender women
- Persons living with HIV (PHIV) and their partners

Implementing partners

- Population Services International (PSI) and the Pan American Social Marketing Organization (PASMO)
- Cicatelli Associates Inc.

Other key partners

- Ministries of Health and National AIDS Programs
- Private sector, especially private laboratories
- NGOs and civil society organizations
- Other organizations and associations

Key contacts

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Program Objectives

The overall objective of the Program is to support the USAID Regional Combination Prevention Strategy that focuses on providing cost-effective, sustainable interventions designed to achieve increased access to HIV prevention interventions by key populations and persons living with HIV (PHIV). Moreover, in response to 2018 guidelines from the President’s Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) and its plan to control the epidemic based on five action agendas: 1) Impact Action Agenda; 2) Efficiency Action Agenda; 3) Sustainability Action Agenda; 4) Partnership Action Agenda; and 5) Human Rights Action Agenda, in 2019, the Program incorporated a fifth component based on increased emphasis on direct implementation of PEPFAR projects by local organizations.

The Program’s interventions seek to achieve the following results:

- 1) Reduced prevalence of high-risk behaviors among key populations (KPs) and PHIV.
- 2) Increased effective interventions implemented to decrease hostility in social environments that foment and tolerate homophobia and stigma and discrimination attitudes related to sexual orientation, occupation or status.
- 3) Increased access by KPs to a minimum package of essential prevention and health services, especially HIV testing and counseling (HTC), emphasizing the involvement of private laboratories.
- 4) Strategic information obtained through research and monitoring to design or modify prevention activities.
- 5) Increased capacity of local NGOs to submit proposals and implement projects funded by international donors, as part of a broader sustainability efforts

Geographic Coverage

- **Guatemala:** Guatemala (Guatemala City, Villa Nueva), Escuintla, Izabal (Puerto Barrios), Quetzaltenango (Quetzaltenango and Coatepeque), San Marcos (Malacatán), Petén (San Benito), Sacatepéquez (San Lucía Milpas Altas), and Zacapa.
- **El Salvador:** San Salvador (San Salvador, Soyapango, and Mejicanos), San Miguel, Santa Ana, and La Libertad (Santa Tecla).
- **Honduras:** Francisco Morazán (Distrito Central), Cortés (San Pedro Sula), Atlántida (La Ceiba and Tela), and Choluteca.
- **Nicaragua:** Managua (Managua and Tipitapa), Chinandega, and Atlántico Norte (Puerto Cabezas).
- **Panama:** Panamá (Panamá Metro), Panamá Oeste (Arraiján and La Chorrera), San Miguelito, Colón, Chiriquí (David and San Felix).

Summary of Key Activities

- Focus on HIV diagnosis / case finding among KPs (mainly MSM and transgender women) and linkage to the HIV continuum of care, thus contributing to the first two pillars of the 90-90-90 goals.
- Provision of mobile HIV testing and counseling (HTC) services, especially in partnership with private laboratories who are sensitized to provide quality, KP-friendly services.
- Use of a unique identifier code (UIC) for confidential patient tracking along the HIV continuum of care.
- Accompaniment services for reactive individuals to confirmatory testing and linkage to care.
- Index testing services for the partners of reactive individuals.
- Cyber-educators conducting online interventions focused on reaching difficult access MSM and referring them to HTC services, in addition to online follow-up for linkage to care.
- Accompaniment and in-depth support for PHIV, especially around treatment adherence, through online patient advocates who also facilitate WhatsApp support groups.
- Mobilization of organizations, public institutions, volunteers, and private sector companies for the institutionalization of non-discrimination through the *Generación Cero* social movement.
- HIV self-testing (HIVST) assessment and pilot with KPs in Guatemala and El Salvador, including an HIVST market assessment and the development of recommended KP-oriented interventions.
- Rigorous monitoring, in addition to research, evidence and strategic information for decision-making.
- Inter-institutional coordination with USAID, USAID-partners in health, Ministry of Health and other public institutions, The Global Fund and its local projects, etc.
- Strengthening of local NGOs through technical assistance focused on building the capacity of local organizations to apply for, and implement projects funded by international donors.