

FACT SHEET

THE GLOBAL HIV/AIDS EPIDEMIC

THE GLOBAL EPIDEMIC

- Approximately 33 million people are living with HIV/AIDS.¹
- There were 2.7 million new HIV infections in 2007.¹
- Two million children are living with HIV/AIDS, and more than 15 million have been orphaned by the death of one or both parents to AIDS.^{1,3}
- Women represent half of all adults living with HIV/AIDS, and 59 percent in sub-Saharan Africa.¹
- Young people aged 15–24 account for an estimated 45 percent of new HIV infections.¹
- Only 10 percent of people in low- and middle-income countries have ever been tested for HIV and received their results.²
- Nearly 70 percent of people in low- and middle-income countries who need antiretroviral therapy do not have access to treatment.²

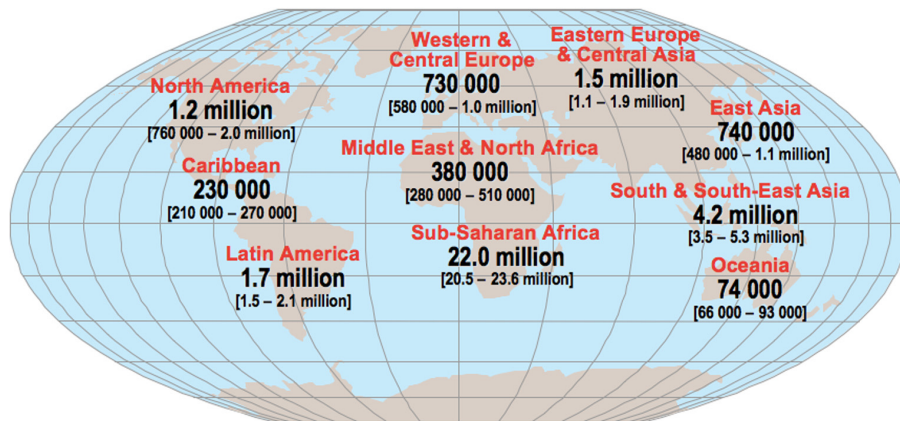
GLOBAL TRENDS

The HIV epidemic is the most serious infectious disease challenge to public health worldwide. Every day, nearly 7,400 people become infected with HIV, and many have inadequate access to HIV prevention and treatment services.¹ Nonetheless, there are some encouraging trends:

- Global prevalence of HIV has stabilized in recent years, although the number of people living with HIV has increased because people are living longer with the disease.
- The number of AIDS-related deaths has decreased, partly as a result of increased access to life-saving medications.
- The number of people living with HIV has decreased in some countries.



Adults and children estimated to be living with HIV, 2007



Adults: 30.8 million
Children under 15 years: 2 million
Total: 33 million (30 – 36 million)

[Source: UNAIDS, Report on the global AIDS epidemic, 2008]

There are two major manifestations of the epidemic globally:

- Generalized epidemics within a region, such as in sub-Saharan Africa; and
- Concentrated epidemics among certain vulnerable groups, e.g., men who have sex with men (MSM), injection drug users, sex workers, migrant workers, etc.

THE HIV/AIDS EPIDEMIC BY REGION¹

Sub-Saharan Africa

22 million people living with HIV/AIDS

1.9 million newly infected in 2007

More than two-thirds (67 percent) of all people living with HIV, and 90 percent of children with the virus, live in sub-Saharan Africa. Seven countries in the region reported an adult prevalence higher than 15 percent, and seven other countries had a prevalence above five percent. Swaziland has the highest prevalence rate in the world: 26 percent of adults are infected with HIV.

Asia and the Pacific

5 million people living with HIV/AIDS

395,000 newly infected in 2007

There are wide variations in the epidemic across Asia and the Pacific. Cambodia and Thailand have shown recent declines in HIV prevalence, but Indonesia, Pakistan, and Vietnam are experiencing increased prevalence. There are several common modes of transmission, including injection drug use, sex work, and sex between men. In Oceania, the majority of cases have occurred in Papua New Guinea, where new HIV diagnoses doubled between 2002 and 2006.

Caribbean

230,000 people living with HIV/AIDS

20,000 newly infected in 2007

With an adult HIV prevalence of 1.1 percent, the Caribbean is the second hardest hit region in the world after sub-Saharan Africa. Although heterosexual intercourse is the primary mode of HIV transmission in the region, approximately one in eight reported infections resulted from sex between men.

Eastern Europe and Central Asia

1.5 million people living with HIV/AIDS

110,000 newly infected in 2007

Nearly two-thirds of all new HIV infections in the region are attributable to injection drug use.

Latin America

1.7 million people living with HIV/AIDS

140,000 newly infected in 2007

In Latin America, MSM, sex workers, and injection drug users continue to be disproportionately affected by the epidemic. Several cities in the region reported a prevalence higher than 15 percent among MSM.

North Africa and the Middle East

380,000 people living with HIV/AIDS

40,000 people newly infected in 2007

The main risk factors associated with HIV infection in this region are unprotected paid sex and injection drug use.

North America

1.2 million people living with HIV/AIDS

54,000 newly infected in 2007

The total number of people living with HIV/AIDS in this region continues to increase, due in part to the success of antiretroviral treatment in extending the life span of people with the disease. The infection rate has largely stabilized, but racial and ethnic minorities and MSM continue to be disproportionately affected by the epidemic.

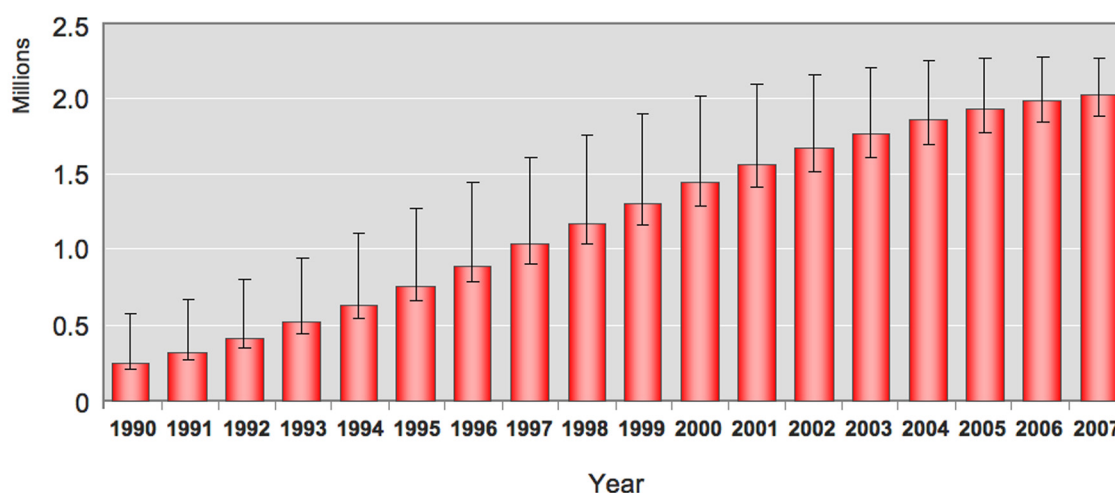
Western and Central Europe

730,000 people living with HIV/AIDS

27,000 newly infected in 2007

As in North America, successful antiretroviral treatment has led to an increase in the number of people living with the virus. However, the number of new diagnoses is also increasing in this region.

Children living with HIV globally, 1990–2007



This bar indicates the range



[Source: UNAIDS, *Report on the global AIDS epidemic*, 2008]

VULNERABLE POPULATIONS

Women¹

In sub-Saharan Africa, women account for nearly 60 percent of people living with HIV/AIDS, and the proportion of women living with HIV/AIDS in Latin America, Asia, and Eastern Europe has been growing. Gender inequalities in social and economic status and in access to prevention, treatment services, and care increase women's vulnerability to HIV. Sexual violence also increases women's risk. Additionally, women, especially young women, are biologically more susceptible to HIV infection than men. In sub-Saharan Africa, prevalence among young women aged 15–24 is nearly three times as high as among males of the same age.

Children

Two million children under the age of 15 are currently living with HIV/AIDS, and more than 15 million children have been orphaned by the loss of one or both parents to AIDS. Children infected and affected by HIV/AIDS are more likely to experience

poverty, homelessness, and discrimination.^{1,3} Of the estimated two million people who died of AIDS-related illnesses in 2007, 270,000 were under 15 years of age.¹

Men Who Have Sex with Men (MSM)

MSM are increasingly vulnerable to HIV/AIDS. Yet only 5–10 percent of MSM have access to targeted prevention and care services.⁴ Stigma and discrimination associated with male-male sex, which in many countries is criminalized, create significant barriers to accessing treatment and prevention services.⁵

Injection Drug Users (IDUs)

On average, one out of every 10 new HIV infections is caused by injection drug use. In some countries and regions, this percentage is much higher: more than 60 percent of all new HIV infections in Eastern Europe and Central Asia in 2006 were related to drug use.¹ People who inject drugs are largely stigmatized and often disenfranchised, making it difficult to reach them with prevention, outreach, testing, and treatment programs.

THE GLOBAL RESPONSE

Increased attention to the AIDS pandemic in recent years has led to the establishment of several important initiatives, including:

- U.S. President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) and the Global AIDS Coordinator in the U.S. Department of State
- The Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria
- The United Nations General Assembly Special Session on HIV/AIDS and Declaration of Commitment
- The United Nations Universal Access Campaign for Prevention, Care, Treatment, and Support of HIV/AIDS

Global funding for HIV/AIDS programs has increased significantly during the past decade, although resources fall short of the projected needs. Most people living with and at risk for HIV/AIDS do not have access to prevention, care, and treatment. UNAIDS estimates that spending on HIV/AIDS rose from about \$300 million in 1996 to \$10 billion in 2007, and that U.S. funding accounts for more than 40 percent of the total contribution.⁶ Nonetheless, there is an urgent need for greater financial commitment from the U.S. and other nations to stem the tide of this devastating epidemic.

Sources:

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3. UNICEF/UNAIDS/WHO. *Children and AIDS: Second Stocktaking Report*. New York: UNICEF; 2008.
4. amfAR. *MSM, HIV, and the Road to Universal Access—How Far Have We Come?* New York: amfAR; 2008.
5. Baral S, Sifakis F, Cleghorn F, Beyrer C (2007) "Elevated Risk for HIV Infection Among Men Who Have Sex with Men in Low- and Middle-Income Countries 2000–2006: A Systematic Review." *PLoS Med* 4(12).
6. The Kaiser Family Foundation/UNAIDS. *Financing the response to AIDS in low- and middle-income countries: International assistance from the G8, European Commission and other donor Governments, 2007*. The Kaiser Family Foundation; 2008.



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