Country progress report - Seychelles

Global AIDS Monitoring 2018

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Overall

Fast-track targets

Progress summary

The HIV epidemic is concentrated among key populations, namely: people who inject drugs (PWID); men who have sex with men (MSM); and female sex workers (FSW); at the moment the main driver of the epidemic is injecting drug use. There were 112 (26F/86M) newly diagnosed cases of HIV in 2017, representing a 33% rise from the 75 cases detected in 2016. The number of new AIDS cases recorded in 2017 was 18, doubling the 9 cases recorded in 2016, and 16 people died from AIDS. Only 62% of persons known to be living with HIV were receiving antiretroviral therapy (ART) at the end of 2017.

(THE HEALTH OF OUR NATION, Annual Health Sector Report, 2017)

HIV testing and treatment cascade

Ensure that 30 million people living with HIV have access to treatment through meeting the 90-90-90 targets by 2020

Progress summary

A total of 434 or 62% of persons known to be living with HIV were receiving antiretroviral therapy (ART) at the end of 2017. Of those, 91% were virally suppressed.

Policy questions (2017)

Is there a law, regulation or policy specifying that HIV testing:

a) Is solely performed based on voluntary and informed consent

Yes

b) Is mandatory before marriage

No

c) Is mandatory to obtain a work or residence permit

Yes

d) Is mandatory for certain groups

Yes

What is the recommended CD4 threshold for initiating antiretroviral therapy in adults and adolescents who are asymptomatic, as per MoH guidelines or directive, and what it the implementation status?

No threshold; TREAT ALL regardless of CD4 count; Implemented countrywide

Does your country have a current national policy on routine viral load testing for monitoring antiretroviral therapy and to what extent is it implemented?

a) For adults and adolescents

Yes, fully implemented

b) For children

Yes, fully implemented

Prevention of mother-to-child transmission

Eliminate new HIV infections among children by 2020 while ensuring that 1.6 million children have access to HIV treatment by 2018

Progress summary

Of 10 mothers testing positive for HIV during pregnancy, only one child tested positive for HIV.

Policy questions (2016)

Does your country have a national plan for the elimination of mother-to-child transmission of HIV?

Yes

Target(s) for the mother-to-child transmission rate and year: 0; 2015

Elimination target(s) (such as the number of cases/population) and year: 0; 2015

Do the national guidelines recommend treating all infants and children living with HIV irrespective of symptoms and if so, what is the implementation status of the cut-off?

Treat All; Not implemented in practice

HIV prevention; Key populations

Ensure access to combination prevention options, including pre-exposure prophylaxis, voluntary medical male circumcision, harm reduction and condoms, to at least 90%% of people by 2020, especially young women and adolescent girls in high-prevalence countries and key populations—gay men and other men who have sex with men, transgender people, sex workers and their clients, people who inject drugs and prisoners

Progress summary

Pre-Exposure prophylaxis is accessible to all health workers and other service providers exposed to potential HIV positive material; and victims of rape and sexual violence.

A total of 535 male condoms and 2000 female condoms were distributed in 2017.

The NSP programme was scaled up to 21550 syringes/needles distributed, but the number of IDUs increased to 2500.

I addition to the traditional health premises and retail outlets, over 80,00 male condoms were distributed in non-traditional non-health outlets. Furthermore, for the first time, a stock of 100,000 sachets of lubricant gel were procured by the Health Care Agency, of which 11,500 were distributed.

Policy questions: Key populations (2016)

Criminalization and/or prosecution of key populations

Transgender people

Neither criminalized nor prosecuted

Sex workers

Selling and buying sexual services is criminalized

Men who have sex with men

No specific legislation

Is drug use or possession for personal use an offence in your country?

Drug use or consumption is a specific offence in law

Legal protections for key populations

Transgender people

No

Sex workers

No

Men who have sex with men

Constitutional prohibition of discrimination based on sexual orientation

People who inject drugs

No

Policy questions: PrEP (2017)

Has the WHO recommendation on oral PrEP been adopted in your country's national guidelines?

Yes, PrEP guidelines have been developed and are being implemented

Gender; Stigma and discrimination

Eliminate gender inequalities and end all forms of violence and discrimination against women and girls, people living with HIV and key populations by 2020

Progress summary

A study on intimate partner violence was conducted in 2017 but did not address key issues raised in the GAM.

Policy questions (2016)

Does your country have a national plan or strategy to address gender-based violence and violence against women that includes HIV

Yes

Does your country have legislation on domestic violence*?

No

What protections, if any, does your country have for key populations and people living with HIV from violence?

General criminal laws prohibiting violence

Programmes to address intimate partner violence*

Does your country have policies in place requiring healthcare settings to provide timely and quality health care regardless of gender, nationality, age, disability, ethnic origin, sexual orientation, religion, language, socio-economic status, HIV or other health status, or because of selling sex, using drugs, living in prison or any other grounds?

Yes, policies exists and are consistently implemented

Knowledge of HIV and access to sexual reproductive health services

Ensure that 90%% of young people have the skills, knowledge and capacity to protect themselves from HIV and have access to sexual and reproductive health services by 2020, in order to reduce the number of new HIV infections among adolescent girls and young women to below 100 000 per year

Progress summary

Results of a youth survey conducted in 2015 were discussed at national level.

A new KAP survey on adolescent sexual behaviour needs to be conducted in the foreseeable future.

Policy questions (2016)

Does your country have education policies that guide the delivery of life skills-based HIV and sexuality education, according to international standards, in:

a) Primary school

Yes

b) Secondary school

Yes

c) Teacher training

Yes

Social protection

Ensure that 75%% of people living with, at risk of and affected by HIV benefit from HIV-sensitive social protection by 2020

Progress summary

Social protection is readily available for vulnerable populations.

Policy questions (2016/2017)

Yes and it is being implemented

a) Does it refer to HIV?

No

b) Does it recognize people living with HIV as key beneficiaries?

No

c) Does it recognize key populations (sex workers, gay men and other men who have sex with men, people who inject drugs, transgender people, prisoners) as key beneficiaries?

No

d) Does it recognize adolescent girls and young women as key beneficiaries?

No

e) Does it recognize people affected by HIV (children and families) as key beneficiaries?

No

f) Does it address the issue of unpaid care work in the context of HIV?

No

What barriers, if any, limit access to social protection programmes in your country?

Lack of information available on the programmesFear of stigma and discrimination

Community-led service delivery

Ensure that at least 30%% of all service delivery is community-led by 2020

Progress summary

A review of the National HIV and AIDS Strategic Plan was conducted in 2017 by a local consultant. Key programmatic gaps were identified.

A national HIV forum was conducted in September 2017. Community leaders were main participants of the 300 persons attending.

A number of community activities were organized to commemorate World AIDS Day 2017.

The community led approach will be a key strategy in implementation of services and other interventions in the new HIV and AIDS Strategic Plan 2018-2022.

Policy questions (2017)

Does your country have a national policy promoting community delivery of antiretroviral therapy?

No

What safeguards in laws, regulations and policies, if any, provide for the operation of CSOs/CBOs in your country?

Registration of HIV CSOs is possible

Registration of CSOs/CBOs working with key populations is possible

HIV services can be provided by CSOs/CBOs

Services to key populations can be provided by CSOs/CBOs

Reporting requirements for CSOs/CBOs delivering HIV services are streamlined

Number of condoms and lubricants distributed by NGOs in the previous year

a) Male condoms:

-

b) Female condoms:

-

c) Lubricants:

-

HIV expenditure

Ensure that HIV investments increase to US$ 26 billion by 2020, including a quarter for HIV prevention and 6%% for social enablers

Progress summary

Over 95% of HIV and AIDS interventions are funded from domestic sources.

Empowerment and access to justice

Empower people living with, at risk of and affected by HIV to know their rights and to access justice and legal services to prevent and challenge violations of human rights

Progress summary

Human rights and reduction of violence, stigma and discrimination are main interventions in the "National Action Plan to remove legal barriers" developed with the assistance of ARASA and UNDP in February 2017.

Subsequently, a workshop funded by ARASA and the national AIDS Council was held with key populations and an operational plan was drafted.

Policy questions (2016)

In the past two years have there been training and/or capacity building programmes for people living with HIV and key populations to educate them and raise their awareness concerning their rights (in the context of HIV) in your country?

Yes, at scale at the national level

Are there mechanisms in place to record and address cases of HIV-related discrimination (based on perceived HIV status and/or belonging to any key population)?

Ombudsman, Human right commission, Citizen advisory bureau

What accountability mechanisms in relation to discrimination and violations of human rights in healthcare settings does your country have, if any?

Complaints procedure

Procedures or systems to protect and respect patient privacy or confidentiality

What barriers in accessing accountability mechanisms does your country have, if any?

Mechanisms are not sensitive to HIV

Affordability constraints for people from marginalized and affected groups

Awareness or knowledge of how to use such mechanisms is limited

AIDS out of isolation

Commit to taking AIDS out of isolation through people-centred systems to improve universal health coverage, including treatment for tuberculosis, cervical cancer and hepatitis B and C

Progress summary

All persons testing positive are tested for TB and vice-versa.

All HIV positive women are offered a Pap Smear.

All HIV positive persons are asked about drug use and tested for Hepatitis B and C accordingly. Newly diagnosed cases of both HIV and HCV are on the rise. Injecting drug use appears to be driving both epidemics. A series of integrated bio-behavioural surveys (IBBS) were conducted in the last 10 years to understand risk and health seeking behaviours linked to HIV and HCV. The IBBS done in 2017 among PWIDS revealed an increase from 1700 to 2500 PWIDs. Past surveys among MSM and FSW, and also the KAPB study revealed early sexual debut and low condom use during sex with casual and steady partners by both general and key populations.

(THE HEALTH OF OUR NATION, Annual Health Sector Report, 2017)

Policy questions (2016)

Is cervical cancer screening and treatment for women living with HIV recommended in:

a) The national strategy, policy, plan or guidelines for cancer, cervical cancer or the broader response to non-communicable diseases (NCDs)

No

b) The national strategic plan governing the AIDS response

No

c) National HIV-treatment guidelines

Yes

What coinfection policies are in place in the country for adults, adolescents and children?

Hepatitis C screening and management in antiretroviral therapy clinics

Hepatitis C treatment (direct-acting antiviral agents) provided in antiretroviral therapy clinics