



HIV/AIDS

Strengthening the health workforce is critical in the fight against HIV and AIDS, especially in sub-Saharan Africa where health worker shortages and the impact of AIDS threaten the ability of national health systems to function. A resurgence of tuberculosis, a common HIV co-infection, is making the situation worse in many developing countries. IntraHealth International builds the capacity of health care leaders, health workers, and communities to increase access to quality HIV/AIDS prevention, treatment, and care services.

During the past year, 913,592 people around the world received HIV testing, and 408,376 pregnant women received services related to prevention of mother-to-child transmission of HIV, through health workers supported by IntraHealth. More than 3,000 HIV-positive pregnant women in sub-Saharan Africa received antiretroviral therapy (ART) through our support in 2011.

Key Approaches

Building on more than 30 years of experience in assisting countries to strengthen their capacity to plan, manage, and support health workers, IntraHealth's key competencies and approaches in HIV/AIDS include:

■ **Supporting** comprehensive HIV/AIDS clinical services through strategies such as integrating HIV/AIDS and tuberculosis services with other health care, including family planning and maternal and child health services; increasing access to voluntary HIV counseling and testing (VCT) and prevention of mother-to-child transmission (PMTCT) services; bringing ART services to hard-to-reach populations and offering palliative care; and addressing gender inequalities in health care and stigma and discrimination against people living with HIV.

■ **Building** capacity and bringing innovations to strengthen and expand the health workforce, including designing national strategies to rapidly recruit and deploy health workers to deliver HIV/AIDS services; improving workplace safety to protect health workers against HIV and other blood-borne risks; supplying health sector leaders with information to track, manage, and plan the health workforce using IntraHealth's free, open source iHRIS software; and strengthening national policies and guidelines that support HIV-related service delivery.

■ **Optimizing** the performance of health workers, organizations, and systems for quality service delivery by applying IntraHealth's highly successful *Performance Improvement* and *Optimizing Performance and Quality* tools.

Current Projects

IntraHealth is supporting HIV/AIDS and tuberculosis clinical services through 13 projects funded by USAID and the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) in Africa (Ethiopia, Kenya, Namibia, Rwanda, Tanzania, South Sudan, Uganda, Zambia) and Central America (Belize, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Panama).



Highlights of Recent Work

- In **Tanzania**, IntraHealth has reached more than 574,000 people with an innovative provider-initiated testing and counseling approach at hospitals, health centers, and dispensaries, and reached 37,900 Tanzanian men and boys with male circumcision services for HIV prevention, far exceeding project goals.
- IntraHealth has played a catalytic role in scaling-up PMTCT services in **Ethiopia**, including advocating for the integration of PMTCT within maternal and child health and antenatal care services. In addition, IntraHealth introduced mothers' support groups for HIV-positive mothers based on the Mothers2Mothers model from South Africa; the groups have proven highly successful in increasing antiretroviral prophylaxis uptake (98% among pregnant members and 96% among infants).
- In **Rwanda**, IntraHealth has been at the forefront of integrating family planning and safe motherhood into HIV/AIDS services, supported the rapid roll-out of an improved PMTCT protocol, and played a key role in the realization of the country's palliative care policy and first pediatric palliative care center.
- IntraHealth has applied innovative mHealth solutions in **Costa Rica**, **El Salvador**, and **Guatemala**, to train health workers for HIV/AIDS services using eLearning and mobile devices, and in **Uganda**, to use health provider records available via iHRIS software to launch a mobile directory that Ugandans can access via their cell phones to verify health professionals' credentials and cut down on unqualified practitioners.
- As part of its work in **Namibia** to build the capacity of indigenous organizations to carry out country-owned HIV/AIDS programs, IntraHealth trained district health staff in using the *Performance Improvement* approach to identify and address a gap in pregnant women knowing their HIV status, lowering the number of women not knowing their status at delivery from 21% to 6% over a year.
- To increase access to HIV counseling and testing in rural areas of **Zambia** where health workers are in short supply, IntraHealth has trained community members as "lay counselors," providing them with bicycles, rapid test kits, related testing supplies, and data collection forms to provide door-to-door VCT in remote villages. With 128 lay counselors now functioning across five districts, VCT has been provided to 150,395 individuals during the past three years.



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