

# HIV/AIDS

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## What You Should Know

**AIDS deaths have declined, due in large part to U.S. investment.** Deaths from AIDS have declined by 68% since their peak in 2004.<sup>1</sup> Much of the improvement can be traced to U.S. investments in the U.S. President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) and the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, TB, and Malaria. In 2021, PEPFAR supported 20 million people on antiretroviral treatment (ART). Since PEPFAR's inception, 5.5 million babies have been born HIV-free as a result of the program.<sup>2</sup> Additionally, new HIV diagnoses among adolescent girls and young women have decreased by over 25% in 96% of regions where

PEPFAR's DREAMS program has been implemented. A subset of these regions (62 percent) has seen an even greater (40 percent) reduction of new HIV infections.<sup>3</sup>

**Lack of access to treatment persists.** However, 24% of adults and 48% of children still lack access to treatment. An estimated 5.9 million people still do not know they are living with HIV and currently 10.2 million people are not on treatment who need it.<sup>4</sup> Africa alone accounts for almost two-thirds of new HIV infections globally and 470,000 of the 650,000 global AIDS-related deaths.<sup>5</sup>

## Congressional Calls to Action

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### **Increase funding levels for global HIV/AIDS programs, including PEPFAR.**

Global HIV/AIDS programs funded by the United States have shown a consistently high return on investment—measured in lives saved, infections prevented, subsequent costs avoided, and goodwill generated among global partners. However, funding for PEPFAR has remained stagnant for over a decade in dollar amounts, resulting in an effective decrease in purchasing power from 2009 to 2021.

### **Support scientific research for the eradication of HIV/AIDS.**

A vaccine or a cure could be on the horizon, and new technologies, prevention methods, and treatment options are game changers. U.S. support for HIV/AIDS research is crucial, not just for those suffering from and at risk for HIV/AIDS around the world, but also for the 1.2 million people currently living with HIV in the United States.

### **Continue to support the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis, and Malaria.**

Multilateral funding complements bilateral funding by leveraging investments from other donors, building country-level commitments, and strengthening capacity at all levels to implement programs. U.S. leadership is the most important tool for making investments from other countries available to the Global Fund.

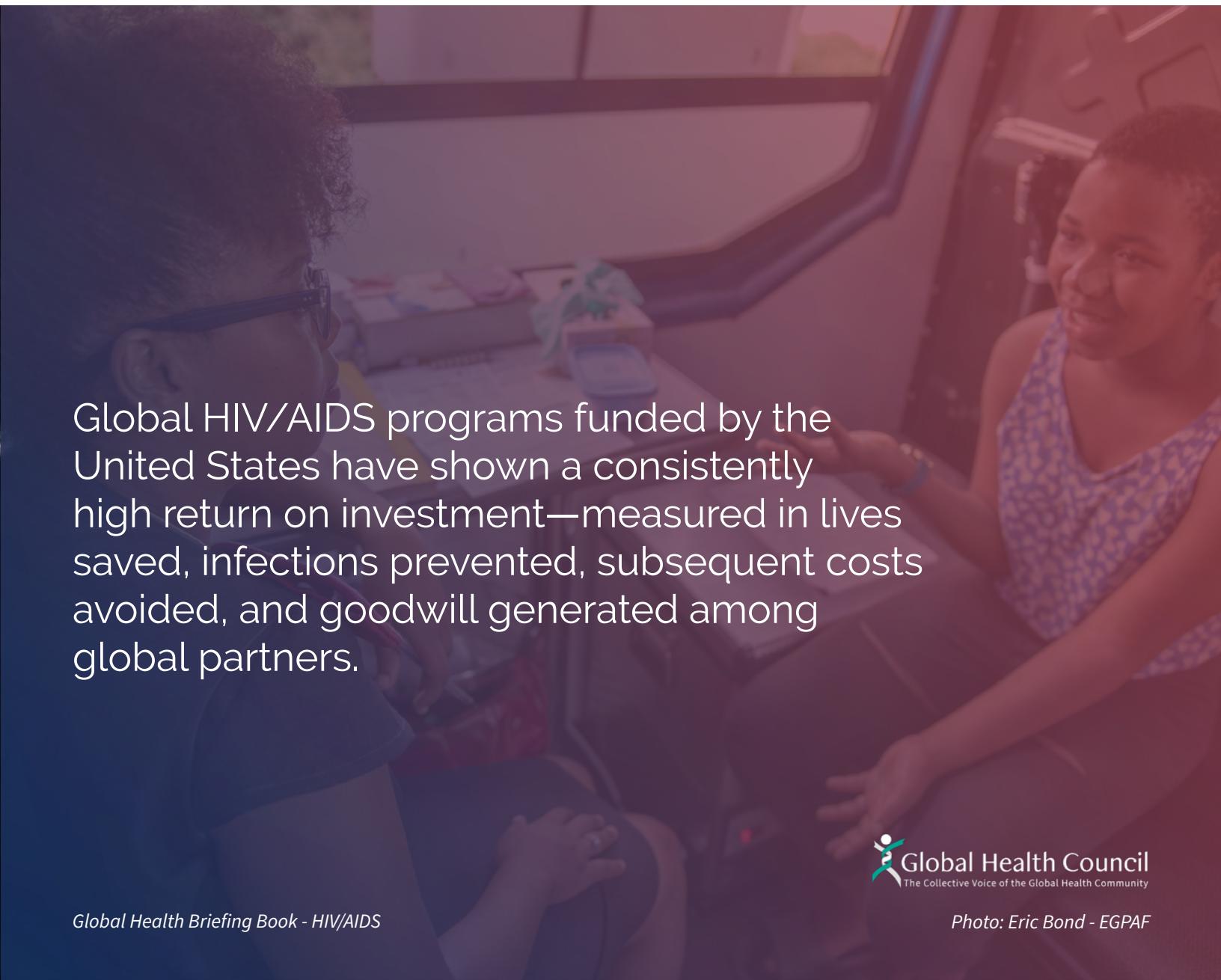
## Why is this investment important?

U.S. support of global HIV/AIDS programming is leading the world toward remarkable progress. Linking people living with HIV to care and treatment services is essential for continuing this progress, as scientific research has conclusively shown that putting individuals on treatment is not only good for their own health, but also reduces the likelihood of transmission to others. Additionally, current and former U.S. ambassadors report that these investments allowed for greater U.S. engagement with partner countries and strengthened diplomatic relationships.

PEPFAR represents the largest commitment ever made by a single nation to combat a specific disease

at more than \$85 billion in bilateral HIV/AIDS programs. As of March 2022, U.S. assistance supports more than 20 million patients on lifelong antiretroviral treatment.<sup>6</sup>

As a program dedicated to scientific innovation, PEPFAR has shown great resilience and dexterity in the face of challenges to program implementation, like the COVID-19 pandemic. In response to limitations on traditional programming methods, PEPFAR expanded distribution points and multi-month dispensing of lifesaving antiretroviral medications by 480% and scaled up self-testing by 200% since Fiscal Year 2019, with 4.3 million people using HIV self-tests in Fiscal Year 2021.<sup>7</sup>

A photograph showing a woman with dark hair and glasses smiling while holding a young child in her arms. They are inside a vehicle, with a window and interior visible in the background. The woman is wearing a blue patterned top.

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## Contributors

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## Citations

1. UNAIDS. Global HIV & AIDS statistics. <https://www.unaids.org/en/resources/fact-sheet>
2. U.S. Department of State. Pepfar shows impact with 5.5 million babies born HIV-free due to comprehensive program efforts. July 23, 2022. <https://www.state.gov/pepfar-shows-impact-with-5-5-million-babies-born-hiv-free-due-to-comprehensive-program-efforts/>
3. Ibid
4. UNAIDS. Global HIV & AIDS statistics. <https://www.unaids.org/en/resources/fact-sheet>
5. World Health Organization Regional Office for Africa. “HIV/AIDS.” <https://www.afro.who.int/health-topics/hivaids#:~:text=The%20WHO%20African%20Region%20is,HIV%20in%20the%20African%20Region>
6. U.S. Department of State. “PEPFAR shows impact with 5.5 million babies born HIV-free due to comprehensive program efforts.” July 23, 2022. <https://www.state.gov/pepfar-shows-impact-with-5-5-million-babies-born-hiv-free-due-to-comprehensive-program-efforts/>
7. Ibid.