



Spotlight on the UNICEF HIV/AIDS Fund

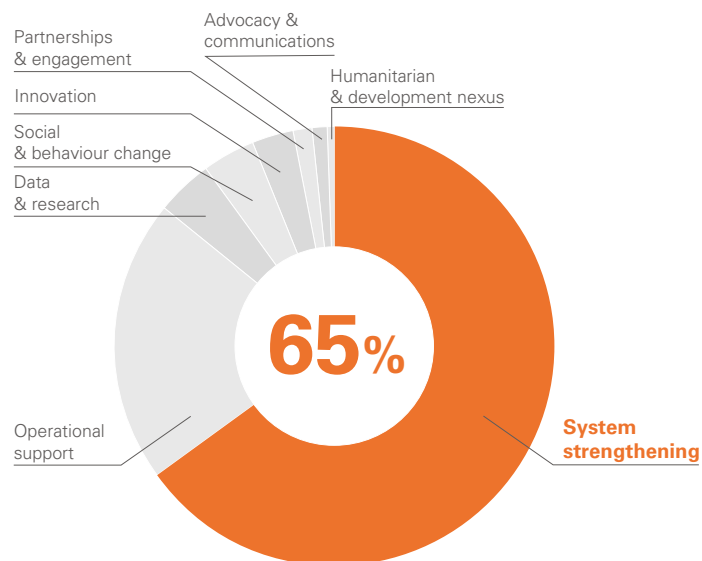
Results achieved in 2022 to achieve
an AIDS-free future for children and
adolescents

UNICEF's HIV/AIDS Thematic Fund is a global flexible funding pool. It enables us to **strengthen systems** to ensure an AIDS-free future for children and adolescents.

This offers donors an exciting opportunity to target your funding specifically to HIV/AIDS outcomes, while also giving UNICEF the flexibility to allocate funds based on where the need is greatest for children, including critically underfunded priorities at the country level, humanitarian response activities, and where funds will have the greatest impact.

Thanks to our generous donors UNICEF's Global HIV/AIDS Thematic Fund income in 2022 reached over \$5.7 million. We are so grateful for your kind support.

Partner Type	Partner	Total (US\$)
Private sector	Korean Committee for UNICEF	4,871,000
	Canadian UNICEF Committee	288,347
	Finnish Committee for UNICEF	260,803
	Dutch Committee for UNICEF	159,969
	German Committee for UNICEF	155,469
	Norwegian Committee for UNICEF	20,705
	Japan Committee for UNICEF	8,724
Grand Total		5,765,018



The chart above illustrates how thematic expenses at global, regional and country levels were apportioned across eight out of UNICEF's nine implementing strategies for HIV/AIDS-related programming. This includes thematic expenses for both development and humanitarian related activities. In 2022, system strengthening was the core focus of our HIV/AIDS work, accounting for 65 per cent of all expenses. For more information on expenses, refer to the [2022 Global Annual Results Report for HIV/AIDS](#).




Through this system strengthening work, we don't just respond to symptoms and challenges of living with HIV. We get to the root causes of the HIV epidemic by improving knowledge and practice for disease prevention, influencing laws and behaviours, and expanding access to health services. Working in this 'big picture' way is cost effective, sustainable, scalable and it works.

In this spotlight report, you will see how thematic funds enable this vital system strengthening work for the greatest impact – bringing together your passion with our mission to help create a safer and healthier world for every child.

What is thematic funding?

UNICEF has 11 global thematic funds. These are flexible funding pools which support specific cause areas. This enables donors to direct their funding to an area of their choice, while giving UNICEF the flexibility to distribute resources wherever they are needed most. UNICEF distributes around three quarters of global thematic funds to our country programmes, while also making allocations at the global level and in our seven regions of operation.

The 11 global thematic funds are:

- Health 
- HIV/AIDS** 
- Nutrition 
- Education 
- Child Protection 
- Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) 
- Climate, Energy, Environment, and Disaster Risk Reduction (CEED) 
- Social Policy and Social Protection 
- Gender Equality 
- Mental Health 
- Humanitarian Action 

The challenges



Thematic funding ensures that the spectrum of HIV-related challenges that women and children face are addressed at scale through strong systems.

A child was infected with HIV every two minutes in 2022. Although this represents progress, as compared with infection rates in previous years, it is still far too high, putting our efforts to end AIDS by 2030 at risk.

A variety of factors put children at risk from HIV/AIDS. But what unites these diverse challenges is that they are caused or exacerbated by weak systems.



Today, an estimated **2.58 million children and adolescents, aged 0-19, are living with HIV.**



Only 57 per cent of children living with HIV are receiving lifesaving treatment, compared to 77 per cent of all adults living with HIV.



Globally, **75 per cent of new HIV infections** among adolescents are among girls.



HIV is a leading cause of death among adolescents and young people in sub-Saharan Africa, even though we have the knowledge and tools to save their lives.



Uganda

Margret and her son Ronald, age 9, on their way to an HIV clinic for a health screening in Mubende, Uganda.

A key role of thematic funding – strengthening systems

System strengthening makes change happen at scale, creating a ripple effect across a district, country or region.

- 1** Every day, children around the world rely on local and national systems for HIV prevention and treatment, such as health, education and social protection. When these systems are stronger, children's lives are better.
- 2** When we strengthen these systems, we don't just help one child, we make large-scale changes for many children at the same time.
- 3** UNICEF can deliver this impact because we are uniquely placed to work with governments to improve systems for prevention and treatment of HIV/AIDS for children across an entire country.
- 4** Donors to the HIV/AIDS Thematic Fund support this work, helping to define and build this most sustainable way for UNICEF to create impact. Thank you so much for your support.

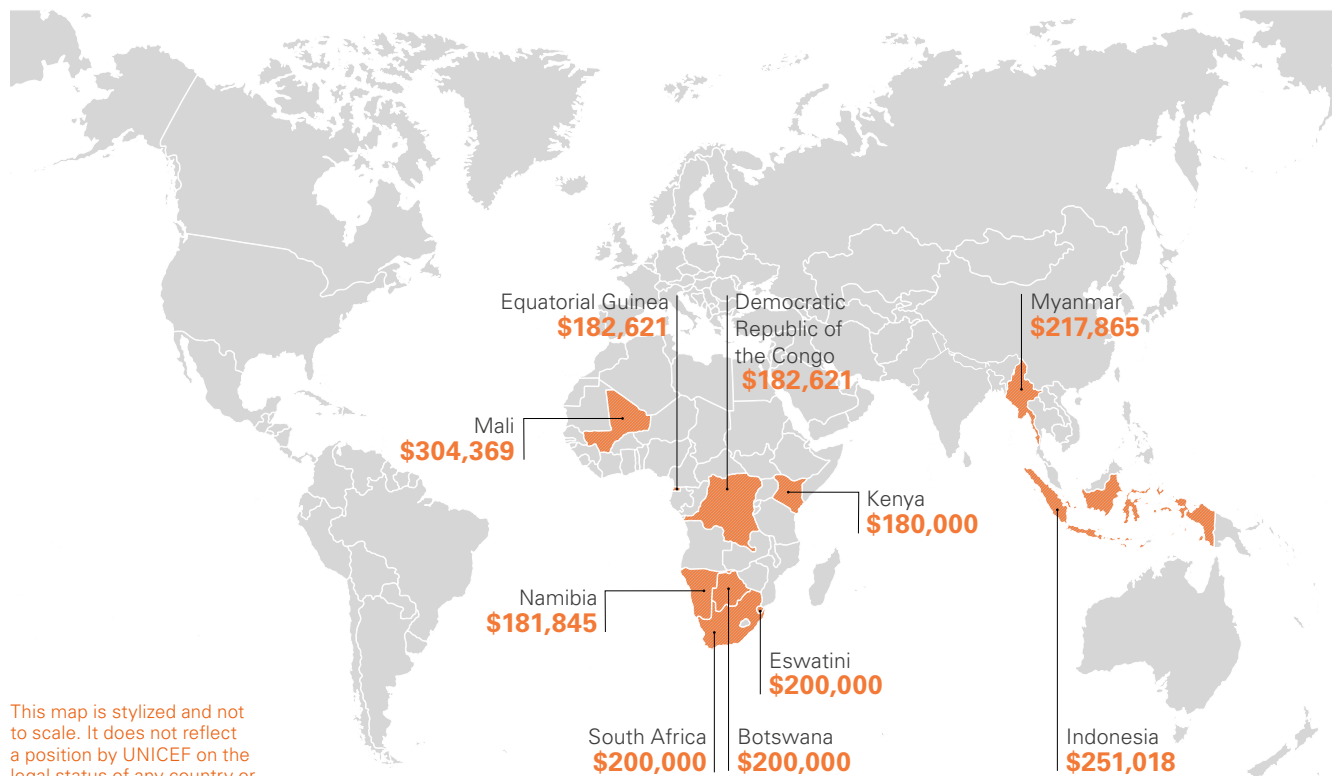
Based on our 75 years of experience working for and with children and women, we have seen **how powerful it can be to address cross-cutting issues by focusing on strengthening systems.**

When we strengthen systems to address HIV/AIDS, we don't just work around existing barriers. We get to the root of the structural barriers that might put some populations at greater risk of infection or limit their access to health care. Working in collaboration with governments and other influential partners helps us get to these root issues and to achieve long-lasting results at scale.

In 2022, supporters of the [HIV/AIDS Thematic Fund](#) enabled UNICEF to allocate resources to 45 countries and territories. The map shows the ten countries which received the highest allocations.

Funds were allocated to countries based on several measures determining the burden of HIV/AIDS on the population. These included the number of AIDS-related deaths in the country and the number of new infections among children and adolescents in the country.

Funds were also allocated to UNICEF's regional and global headquarters, supporting the vital work that allows thematic funding to unlock wide-scale results and impact the world over.



This map is stylized and not to scale. It does not reflect a position by UNICEF on the legal status of any country or area or the delimitation of any frontiers.

Regional and global programming

While more than three quarters of allocations from the HIV/AIDS Thematic Fund went directly to country programmes in 2022, resources were also used to support UNICEF's programming across wider regions and globally. These vital allocations of flexible funding are what enable the HIV/AIDS Thematic Fund to have an impact far beyond the countries that receive direct allocations.

Just over \$900,000 was allocated across UNICEF's seven regional offices, covering East Asia & the Pacific, Eastern & Southern Africa, Europe & Central Asia, Latin America & the

Caribbean, Middle East & North Africa, South Asia, and West & Central Africa. Regional offices play a critical role, helping to coordinate HIV/AIDS programmes in the countries of their region. For example, they leverage partnerships with other United Nations agencies, such as UNAIDS and the World Health Organization, helping to strengthen collaboration and cooperation for better results. In 2022, the Eastern & Southern Africa regional office and the West & Central Africa regional office received the most funds, with both receiving \$225,820.

HIV/AIDS Thematic Funds of over \$650,000 allocated to global level, enable UNICEF to provide the leadership and set

the priorities for the global HIV response. The funds allow us to invest in critical partnerships, leverage resources for national responses and provide technical expertise in data, programming and advocacy among other areas to ensure all children, adolescents and pregnant women living with and at-risk of HIV in all countries are reached. Our global HIV team also ensures that issues faced by women, children and adolescents affected by HIV remain visible through key advocacy moments including World AIDS Day (December 1), International Day of the Girl Child, and World Children's Day among others.

Achieving results for system strengthening

As the world's largest organization for children, UNICEF drives results for HIV/AIDS prevention and care at scale across 37 HIV high burden priority countries every year. Below are some headline sector-level results, to which thematic funding, as part of an overall portfolio of funding, was a key contributor to the long-term system strengthening work.



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Mali

Hawa, age 14, student at the Kalaban Bougou Extension School in Bamako, explains the preventive measures against HIV/AIDS in front of her classmates.

Workforce

A key element of our HIV/AIDS strategy is ensuring health services are friendly and welcoming for young people. For instance, UNICEF trains young people who are living with HIV to support peers to improve their drug adherence and ensure the HIV virus is suppressed.

- › In Uganda, UNICEF is implementing the young people and adolescent peer supporter programme. In south-western Uganda, 112 peer supporters have been recruited under the programme, with the aim of improving the quality of care for adolescents and addressing problems of poor retention in HIV care and low viral load suppression among HIV positive young adults.

Laws and policies

UNICEF works with governments to strengthen laws and policies on HIV/AIDS. One key priority is strengthening policies for elimination of mother-to-child transmission of both HIV and syphilis. This double-elimination initiative maximizes impact by addressing two issues at once.

- › In 2022, a total of 78 countries had a national plan for elimination of mother-to-child transmission of HIV, and 86 were implementing a 'treat all' policy for pregnant and breastfeeding women living with HIV.

Social and behavioural change

Social and behavioural change is any work that aims to shift knowledge and attitudes on key issues. For instance, knowing that gender inequality drives HIV/AIDS in many places, UNICEF works to shift gender norms that put some populations at risk, often through creative methods such as social media and radio dramas.

- › In West and Central Africa, UNICEF is deploying digital tools to provide young people with information on HIV prevention. For instance, the U-Test platform has reached over 5 million young people, linking over 100,000 of them with essential services.

Data

UNICEF helps ensure that disaggregated data are available for HIV/AIDS. That means data that can be subdivided based on characteristics such as age and sex. This enables UNICEF and other actors to better understand populations which are the most vulnerable and respond effectively.

- › In Mozambique, UNICEF is expanding upSCALE, a mobile platform for health staff to record data of their patients. In 2022, 1,406 community health workers were trained in upSCALE. Using this tool, they have managed or referred over 109,663 patients.

Supply chains

Supplies are a key part of our HIV/AIDS work. This includes rapid diagnostic tests and antiretroviral medicines. But we don't just deliver supplies. We also strengthen the supply chains themselves, so life-saving commodities can always be available for the countries that need them.

- › In 2022, UNICEF delivered 3.7 million HIV rapid diagnostic tests to 27 countries. Of these, about 1.3 million were dual HIV/syphilis diagnostic tests, and over 80,000 were HIV self-tests.

Targets

Thematic funds form a vital cornerstone of our system strengthening work, which unlocks the greatest impact for children. But this takes time. That is why resources from the HIV/AIDS Thematic Fund are spent over a four-year period, aligning with UNICEF's Strategic Plan (2022-2025). To measure our long-term impact in strengthening systems for HIV treatment and prevention, UNICEF monitors several key indicators, as illustrated on the table below.

Area	Baseline (2021)	Progress (2022)	Target (2025)
Workforce			
Number of countries implementing a comprehensive package of interventions for paediatric HIV treatment as part of primary health care	31 (HIV priority countries)	32 (HIV priority countries)	37 (HIV priority countries)
Laws and policies			
Number of countries with at least dual mother-to-child transmission of HIV and syphilis elimination policies and services	32 (HIV priority countries)	34 (HIV priority countries)	37 (HIV priority countries)
Supply chains			
Percentage of children living with HIV who receive antiretroviral therapy	52%	57%	95%
Social and behavioural change			
Number of countries in which UNICEF is supporting combination HIV-prevention interventions, including pre-exposure prophylaxis, targeting adolescent girls and young women and/or adolescent and young key populations	33 (HIV priority countries)	33 (HIV priority countries)	37 (HIV priority countries)

Strategy for Health



UNICEF's work in the fight against HIV/AIDS in 2022 was driven by the priorities outlined in our [Strategy for Health](#) (2016-2030).

The Strategy is aligned with the timeline of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, which aim to achieve a selection of targets by 2030. UNICEF's HIV/AIDS Thematic Fund is playing a critical role in driving progress to Sustainable Development Goal Target 3.3, which aims to end the AIDS epidemic by 2030.

Since the Sustainable Development Goals were established in 2015, the estimated number of annual HIV infections among adolescents has declined – from 160,000 for girls to 120,000, and from 54,000 for boys to 40,000. While this represents some progress, more investment is needed to achieve an AIDS-free world by 2030.

In 2022, UNICEF's work building stronger systems for prevention and treatment of HIV/AIDS focused on the following priorities:



GUIDANCE
and treatment for pregnant women who are living with HIV



PREVENTION
of mother-to-child transmission of HIV/AIDS



TREATMENT
of children living with HIV



PREVENTION
of HIV infection among adolescents.

By giving UNICEF the flexibility to support work at the country, regional and global levels, thematic funding achieves wide-scale results. And, by supporting work across the four years of our Strategic Plan (2022-2025), thematic funding enables us to address the root causes of HIV/AIDS and achieve real, long-term results.

Thematic funding around the world

The HIV/AIDS Thematic Fund supported UNICEF's work globally, in seven regions, and in 45 countries and territories in 2022. Here are six examples of UNICEF's HIV/AIDS work in countries that received allocations of global thematic funding.



Brazil

UNICEF supported the introduction and roll-out of a specialized chatbot in Brazil, which responds to common questions about HIV and other health and well-being issues. Our work in Brazil was supported by almost \$100,000 from the HIV/AIDS Thematic Fund in 2022.



Democratic Republic of the Congo

In the Democratic Republic of the Congo, UNICEF supported the All-In initiative in 2022. This programme helps young people to launch income-generating activities, while also providing them with access to services that help prevent and treat HIV. So far, UNICEF has supported more than 200 young people to launch income-generating businesses and helped 25,000 learn more about sexual and reproductive health.



Mozambique

UNICEF worked to improve HIV testing at health centres in Mozambique in 2022. During the year, 15 facilities were equipped with point-of-care testing platforms and reagents to enable site-based testing for HIV viral load and HIV infant diagnosis. Almost 5,000 individuals living with HIV had viral load tests performed.



South Africa

South Africa is home to the largest HIV epidemic in the world, and the largest HIV treatment programme. As part of our efforts, UNICEF helped initiate 40,000 adolescent girls and young women on PrEP (pre-exposure prophylaxis) in 2022. PrEP is an effective drug that reduces a person's risk of acquiring HIV.



Ukraine

UNICEF allocated over \$120,000 from the HIV/AIDS Thematic Fund to Ukraine in 2022. In the context of war, UNICEF worked to quickly procure essential HIV supplies, so that people living with HIV could continue to receive lifesaving treatment.



Zimbabwe

UNICEF supported programming to enable over 50,000 adolescents to access information and referrals for sexual and reproductive health, as well as substance use information through digital and school platforms. With this information in hand, adolescents can be better equipped to protect themselves from HIV infection.

From one mother to another in Malawi

Awema and Florence's story



Malawi

Florence has found hope in the UNICEF-supported mentor mother sessions and is now back in school after delivering an HIV-free baby.

Awema is a brave, resilient woman. She has been a mentor mother since 2019, helping other HIV-positive women deliver healthy HIV-negative babies just like she did.

As a mentor mother, she links HIV-positive young mothers to nearby health centres for medical care, sexual reproductive health services and information. She also provides psychological support, and her main goal is to reduce mother to child transmission of HIV to zero.

"I want young HIV-positive mothers to live full lives to raise healthy babies," says Awema.

Although she works at the health centre, where she facilitates health education talks, her primary work is deep in the communities where she follows up with teen mothers and supports newly pregnant mothers who have so many questions.

"I tell them my story and they get inspired to have hope for the future," says Awema

Florence is one of Awema's clients. The 18-year-old was five months pregnant when she joined the mentor-mothers club. At that time, she did not know what the future held for her and her unborn child. Florence was so anxious that she did not sleep at night but after interacting with her mentor, she found hope.

"I have lived with HIV all my life," explains Florence. "I have accepted that, but being pregnant while HIV-positive was a first. I didn't know what to do with myself and what the future held for me and my baby. I thought my health would deteriorate after giving birth and that my child would be born with HIV.

"Before this pregnancy, I did not take my ARVs [antiretroviral medication] faithfully," says Florence. "But after talking to the mentor mothers and seeing many other HIV-positive, teen pregnant girls in my community, things changed, and I take my medication every day. Now my daughter is still HIV negative two years later. I believe the information I got from the mentor mothers saved my life and my baby's."

As Florence's story illustrates, the work of mentors like Awema can make a life-changing and life-saving difference for HIV-positive mothers and their children. By removing the stigma associated with HIV and creating a space for open dialogue and information exchange, we can improve the lives of every mother and child living with HIV.



Malawi

Mentor mother Awema on duty, showing teen mother Florence that "it can be done, I did it."

Ending HIV stigma in Kazakhstan

While the highest burden of HIV is in Eastern & Southern Africa, this region has made progress in recent years in reducing new infections. But there are some regions where HIV is on the rise. Chief among these is Europe & Central Asia.

One of the biggest factors preventing young people in the region from accessing HIV testing and treatment is stigma. "At school, our teachers used to dedicate entire lessons to the topic of HIV," recalls Anastasia, a medical student at Karaganda State Medical University in Kazakhstan. "It was mostly portrayed in a negative light."

To help address HIV stigma in Kazakhstan, UNICEF supported the introduction of a new course to Anastasia's university. It teaches medical students how to provide psychosocial support for children living with HIV, helping them remain committed to treatment, prevent mental health issues, overcome social exclusion and boost their quality of life.

Anastasia is now confident she will be able to give the right support to children and adolescents living with HIV when she graduates and enters the medical profession. "We thoroughly discussed with our professors all the options of what to say, how to act, and now I have an understanding of how to treat a person in such moments," says Anastasia.

In 2022, UNICEF's work in Kazakhstan was supported with \$105,000 from the Global HIV/AIDS Thematic Fund. These funds are vital for helping to strengthen a new generation of health workers, like Anastasia, dedicated to treating children and adolescents without stigma. With their commitment, there is hope that we will see a decline in HIV infections in Kazakhstan.



Kazakhstan

Anastasia takes part in a class at university.

Bringing HIV prevention into the 21st century



Côte d'Ivoire

Bah, age 21, is a young man who opted for PrEP to protect himself against HIV in Man, western Côte d'Ivoire. "I feel lucky to have benefited from this U-Test programme," he says.

UNICEF's U-Test initiative is re-imagining traditional approaches to HIV prevention. It uses the latest technology to provide young people with easy-to-understand information about HIV and AIDS while also linking them with support and care. The goal is to connect at-risk youth with testing and services that prevent the spread of HIV.

U-Test's unique model—combining social media, digital outreach, and traditional HIV prevention methods—has the potential to reach millions. In addition to its youth-friendly approach, U-Test also adds accuracy and precision to HIV programming—targeting those at the highest risk. Through U-Test, UNICEF can help youth around the world learn about HIV and discover their HIV status.

U-Test is already creating impact in Côte d'Ivoire, where it has reached more than a million young people online and via health facilities. UNICEF worked with the

Government of Côte d'Ivoire to roll out the U-Test platform and, in total, 171 health providers were taught how to use digital technologies to link young people with HIV self-testing kits and PrEP (pre-exposure prophylaxis).

In 2022, UNICEF's work on U-Test in Cote d'Ivoire was technically supported from the Global HIV/AIDS Thematic Fund, enabling more than 10,000 young Ivoirians to self-test for HIV. The initiative had high uptake with first-time testers, giving them confidentiality and flexibility regarding when and where they tested.

Anurita Bains
Associate Director, HIV and AIDS
UNICEF Programme Group
New York, United States

www.unicef.org

Programme Coordination Unit
Private Fundraising and Partnerships Division, Geneva
Public Partnerships Division, New York
programmecoordination@unicef.org

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Cover page:

Mozambique

Zita (mother) and her children are beneficiaries of regular home visits from N'weti Mentor Mother Luisa in their home in the remote area of Panga, Mozambique.