

# Children, HIV and AIDS

## Regional snapshot: West and Central Africa

DECEMBER 2018

West and Central Africa is the region with the world's second-highest HIV burden. While progress in the HIV response has been slow, political will is positioned to tackle the challenges. Less than half of pregnant and breastfeeding women were covered by prevention of mother-to-child transmission (PMTCT) services in 2017. An estimated 69,000 adolescents aged 10–19 years were newly infected with HIV in 2017, a number only 1 per cent lower than in 2010. About the same number (67,000) of estimated new HIV infections occurred among children aged 0–9 years in 2017. Paediatric HIV treatment coverage in 2017 was just 26 per cent.

FIGURE 1. Number of new HIV infections among children aged 0–9, by period of transmission, 2010–2017

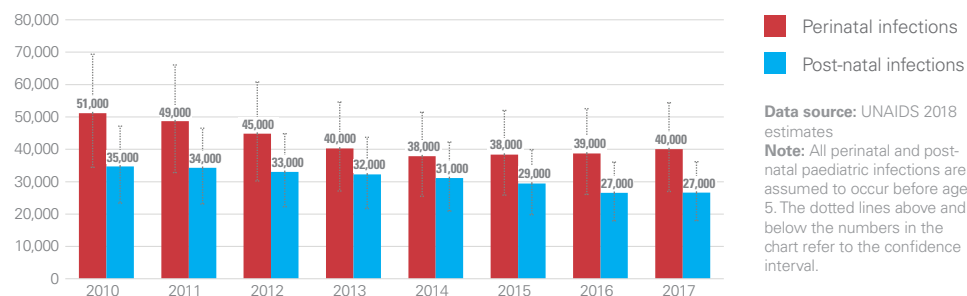


FIGURE 2. Annual number of new HIV infections among adolescents aged 10–19, by sex, West and Central Africa 2010–2017

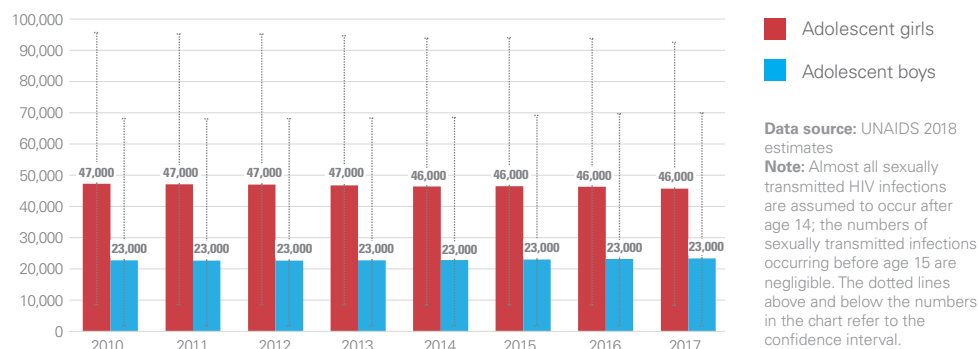
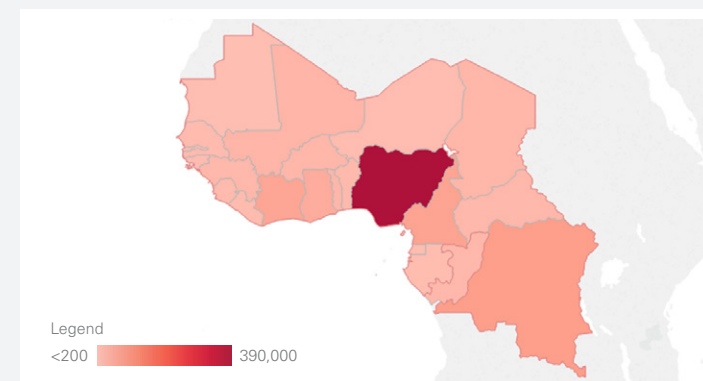


FIGURE 3. Number of children and adolescents aged 0–19 living with HIV, by country, 2017



Country	Estimate	Lower	Upper
Nigeria	390,000	190,000	630,000
Democratic Republic of Congo	71,000	48,000	91,000
Cameroon	59,000	38,000	74,000
Côte d'Ivoire	55,000	33,000	80,000
Ghana	39,000	26,000	50,000
Mali	21,000	17,000	26,000
Chad	17,000	12,000	22,000
Burkina Faso	16,000	10,000	21,000
Togo	16,000	8,000	24,000
Guinea	15,000	9,800	19,000
Central African Republic	14,000	9,100	17,000
Congo	13,000	8,300	17,000
Benin	9,700	4,900	16,000
Sierra Leone	8,200	5,500	11,000
Senegal	6,700	5,300	8,200
Liberia	6,000	3,900	8,200
Guinea-Bissau	5,200	3,300	6,600
Niger	4,900	4,000	5,900
Equatorial Guinea	4,300	2,800	5,700
Gabon	4,300	2,700	5,600
Gambia	2,000	1,600	2,400
Mauritania	<1,000	<1,000	1,200
Cape Verde	<200	<100	<200
<b>West and Central Africa</b>	<b>780,000</b>	<b>440,000</b>	<b>1,140,000</b>

**Data source:** UNAIDS 2018 estimates.  
**Note:** Due to rounding, estimates may not add up to the total. This map does not claim any official position by the United Nations. Countries are classified according to the West and Central Africa geographical region. Countries with no data and countries outside of the geographical region are shown in grey.

## KEY FACTS:

### Children, HIV and AIDS in West and Central Africa, 2017

Epidemiology	Estimate	Lower	Upper
Number of children and adolescents living with HIV	780,000	440,000	1,140,000
Children aged 0–9	350,000	220,000	480,000
Adolescents aged 10–19	430,000	220,000	660,000
Number of new HIV infections, children and adolescents	140,000	51,000	250,000
Children aged 0–9	67,000	36,000	100,000
Adolescents aged 10–19	69,000	15,000	140,000
Adolescent girls	46,000	8,400	93,000
Adolescent boys	23,000	1,800	70,000
New HIV infections per 1,000 adolescents aged 15–19	1.32	0.29	2.74
Adolescent girls	1.78	0.33	3.61
Adolescent boys	0.88	0.07	2.64
Number of AIDS-related deaths, children and adolescents	51,000	27,000	82,000
Children aged 0–9	39,000	21,000	60,000
Adolescents aged 10–19	13,000	6,400	22,000
Number of pregnant women living with HIV	330,000	220,000	450,000
Mother-to-child transmission rate of HIV, final	20.3	15.9	23.4
Perinatal transmission	12.2	9.0	18.1
Post-natal transmission	8.1	6.0	12.0
HIV response	Estimate	Lower	Upper
PMTCT coverage (ART) (%)	47	32	64
Early infant diagnosis (%)	21	16	31
ART coverage, children aged 0–14 (%)	26	15	38

**Note:** Due to rounding, estimates may not add up to the total.

**Indicator definitions:** **Mother-to-child transmission (MTCT) rate:** Number of new HIV infections among children under 5 per 100 pregnant women living with HIV in the last year. **New HIV infections per 1,000 adolescents:** Number of new HIV infections among adolescents age 15–19 per 1,000 adolescents. **PMTCT coverage:** Percentage of pregnant women living with HIV who received lifelong ART to prevent mother-to-child transmission of HIV. **Early infant diagnosis:** Percentage of infants born to HIV-positive mothers who were tested for HIV within two months of birth. **ART coverage among children aged 0–14:** Percentage of children aged 0–14 living with HIV who are receiving antiretroviral therapy.



Almost all gains in prevention of mother-to-child transmission

**occurred before 2015**



Girls account for about

**two thirds of new HIV infections**

each year among adolescents



The number of children aged 0–14 years receiving HIV treatment

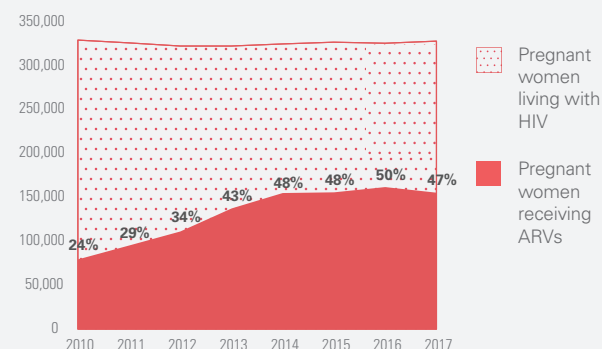
**has tripled since 2010**

## Analysis

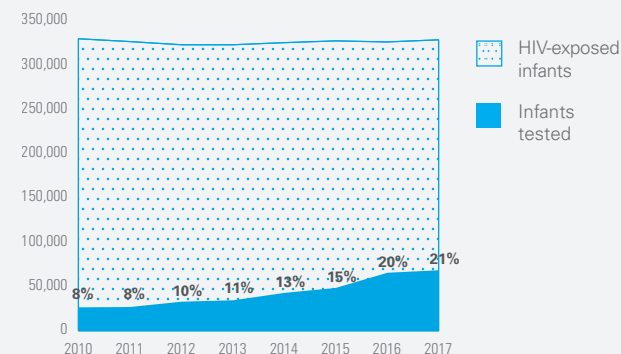
West and Central Africa is home to 6 per cent of the global population, but has the second largest HIV burden; this share is likely to increase because of relatively high HIV incidence among adolescents and overall fertility in several countries. Renewed political commitment to fast-track the children and HIV response is evidenced by the launch of the Treatment Catch-Up Plans in 12 countries. The plans provide opportunities to address HIV testing as a major barrier to treatment scale-up for children, through such innovative approaches as point-of-care HIV diagnosis, family HIV testing and dual HIV/syphilis test integration.

In 2017 alone, Nigeria accounted for half of all children and adolescents living with HIV in the region, with four other countries – the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Cameroon, Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana – accounting for an additional 30 per cent of the total. The widely varying impact from country to country highlights the need for a differentiated response to improve region-wide PMTCT programming and other HIV prevention and treatment responses among children and adolescents.

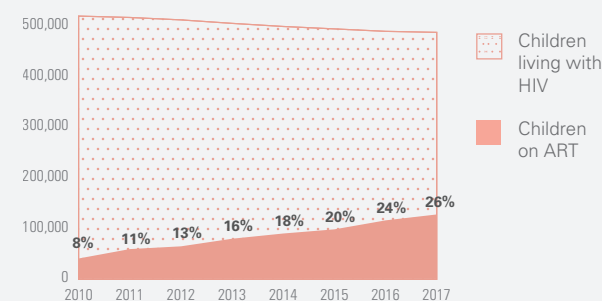
**FIGURE 4. Number of pregnant women living with HIV and number receiving antiretrovirals for the prevention of mother-to-child transmission, 2010–2017**



**FIGURE 5. Number of HIV-exposed infants and number tested for HIV within two months of birth, 2010–2017**



**FIGURE 6. Number of children aged 0–14 living with HIV and number receiving ART, 2010–2017**



**Data source:** Global AIDS Monitoring 2018 and UNAIDS 2018 estimates.

**Note:** PMTCT coverage includes most effective antiretroviral regimens, excluding single-dose nevirapine. The percentages in the figures refer to coverage rates.