

WHAT THE DATA TELL US: Projections for the HIV epidemic in eastern and southern Africa in 2030

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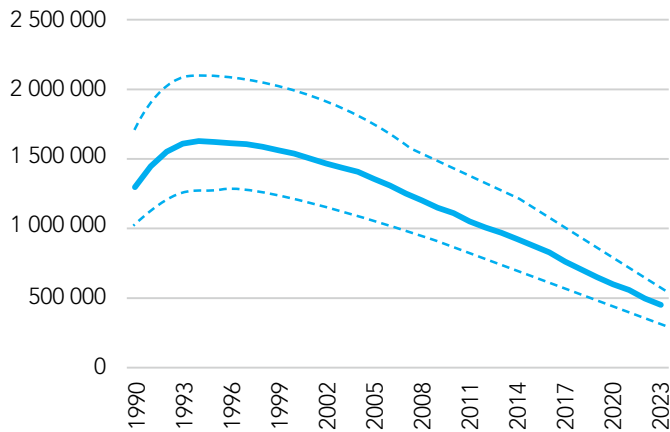
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Where are we now?

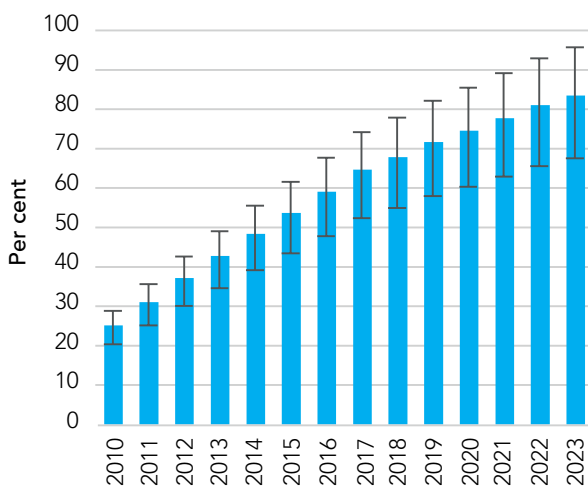
Estimated number of new HIV infections, 1990–2023



New HIV infections have decreased notably in the eastern and southern Africa region, reaching an estimated 1.1 million (880 000–1.4 million) by 2023—a 59% decrease from 2010. Antiretroviral treatment coverage among people living with HIV reached 83% (68–96%) in 2023, putting the region well on track to reach the treatment targets set for 2025.¹

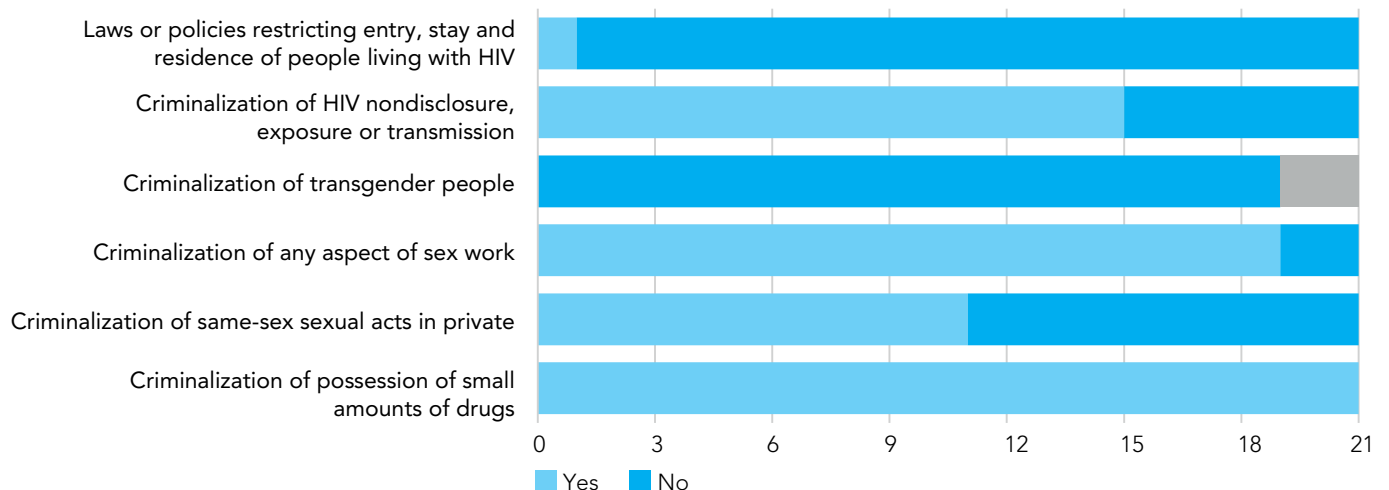
Out of 21 countries in the region, 19 still criminalize sex work, all 21 criminalize possession of small amounts of drugs, 15 criminalize HIV nondisclosure, exposure or transmission based on either HIV-specific or general criminal laws, and 11 criminalize same-sex sexual acts. These persisting discriminatory and punitive laws expose certain communities to stigma, discrimination and violence and lead to poor health outcomes. Stigma and discrimination in the past 6 months were reportedly experienced by 54% of people who inject drugs in Comoros and 56% in Zambia; 26% of gay men and other men who have sex with men in Zambia and 34% in Eswatini; and 56% of sex workers in Zimbabwe and 62% in Zambia.

Treatment coverage, 2010–2023



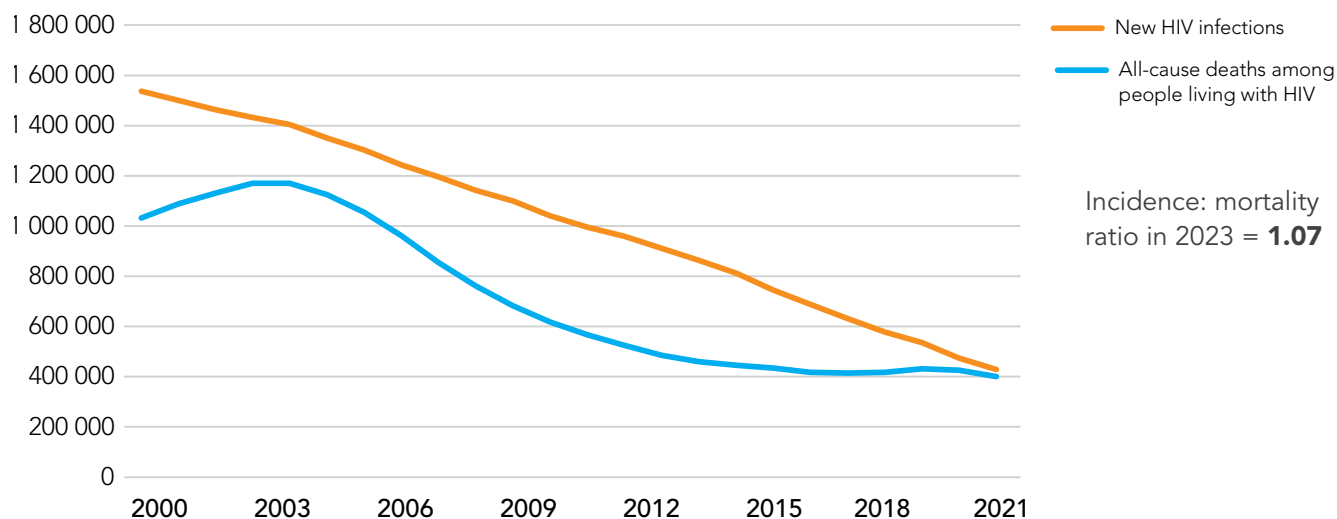
¹ Note: the 2025 targets are for 95% of people living with HIV to know their HIV status, 95% of these people to be receiving HIV treatment, and 95% of these people to have viral suppression. For further explanation see https://www.unaids.org/sites/default/files/media_asset/progress-towards-95-95-95_en.pdf

Countries with HIV-related discriminatory and punitive laws, 2024



What factors might contribute to epidemic control?

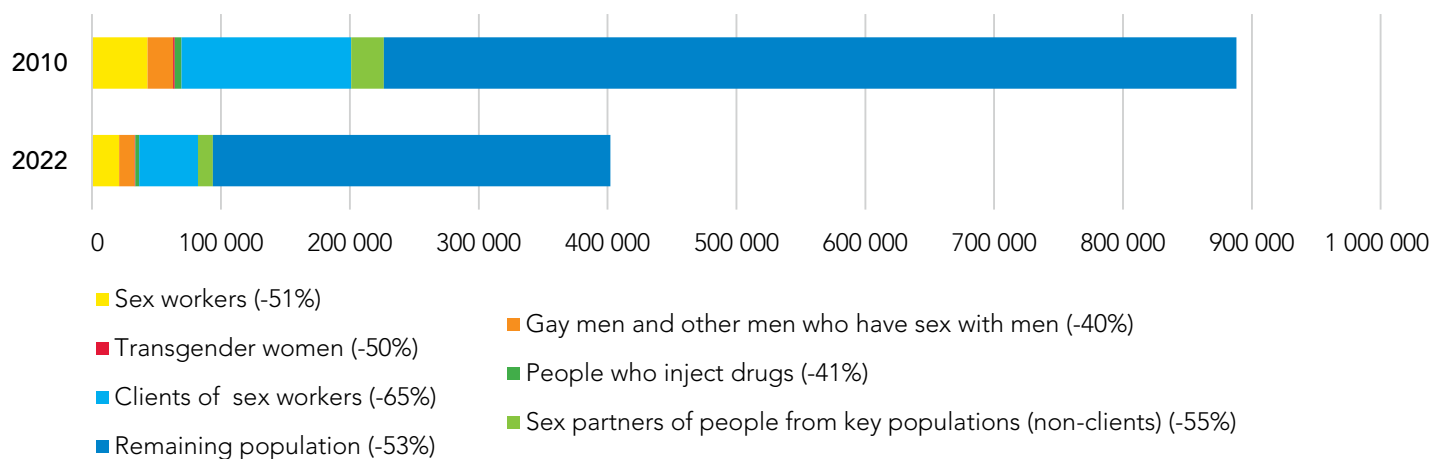
Estimated HIV incidence to mortality ratio, 2000–2023



An estimated incidence: mortality ratio (IMR) of 1.07, which is slightly above the benchmark of 1, suggests that new infections are still slightly outpacing deaths, which underscores the need to boost and sustain prevention interventions including ensuring that people living with HIV receive treatment. When the IMR is less than 1, the size of the population living with HIV decreases, contracting the epidemic and lowering costs of antiretroviral therapy and services.

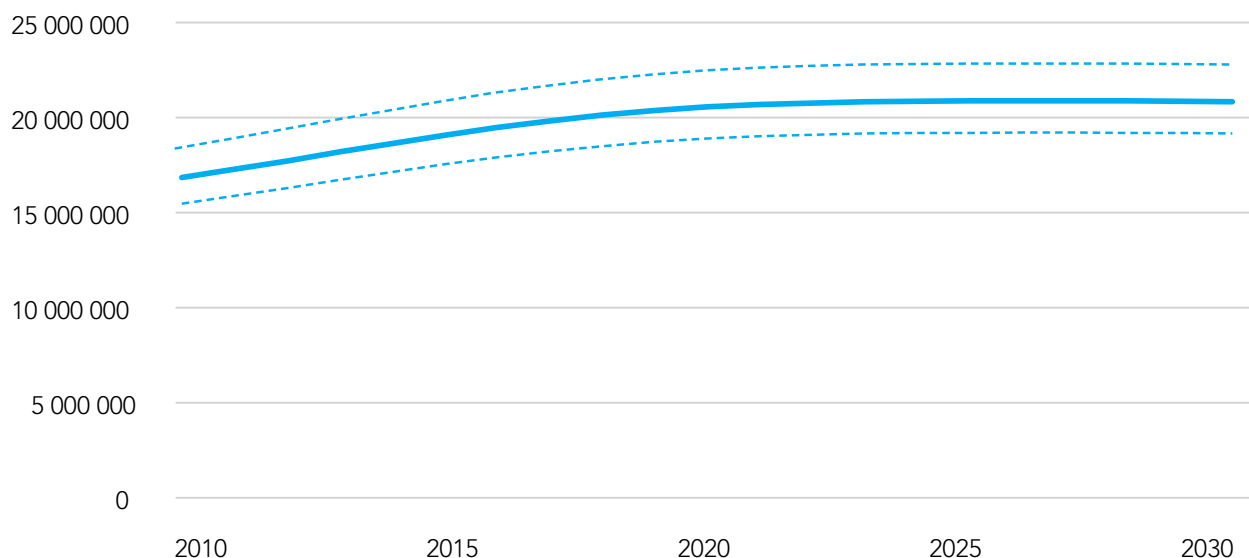
Prevention interventions are particularly important among vulnerable populations, such as adolescent girls and young women who in 2023 accounted for over a quarter (27%) of all new infections in the region. HIV incidence decreased among all key populations from 2010 to 2022, but at slower rates among gay men and other men who have sex with men and people who inject drugs.

Distribution of new HIV infections and percentage change among adults, 2010 and 2022

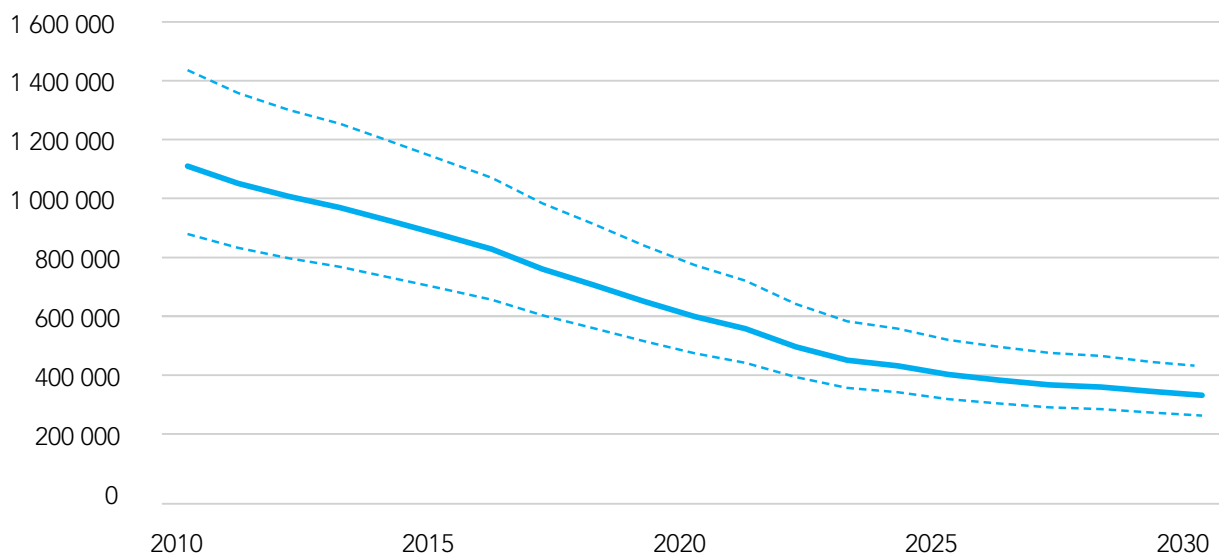


What is projected to happen in the future if coverage remains at the 2023 level for treatment and prevention?

Projections of numbers of people living with HIV by 2030

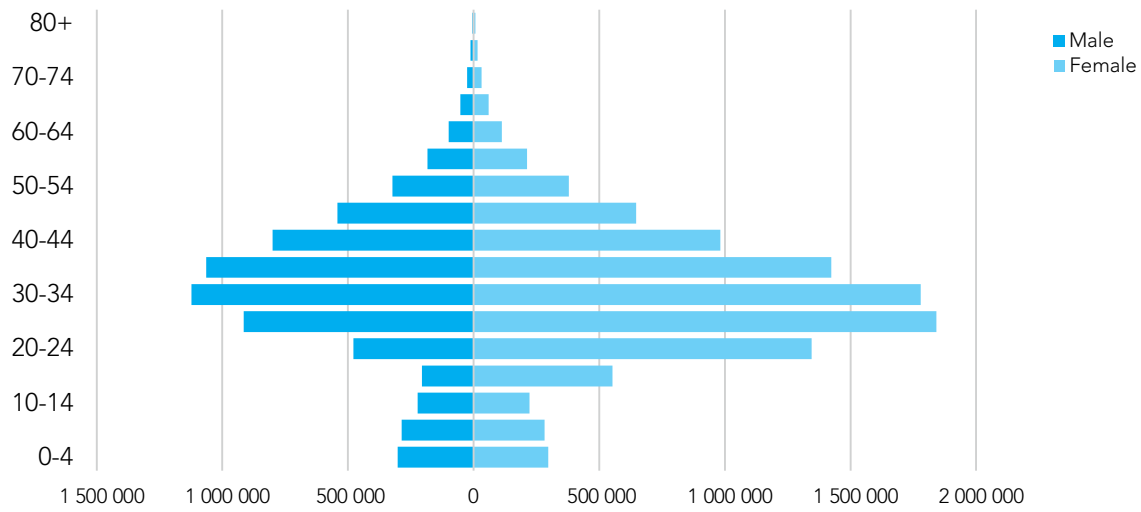


Projections of numbers of new HIV infections by 2030

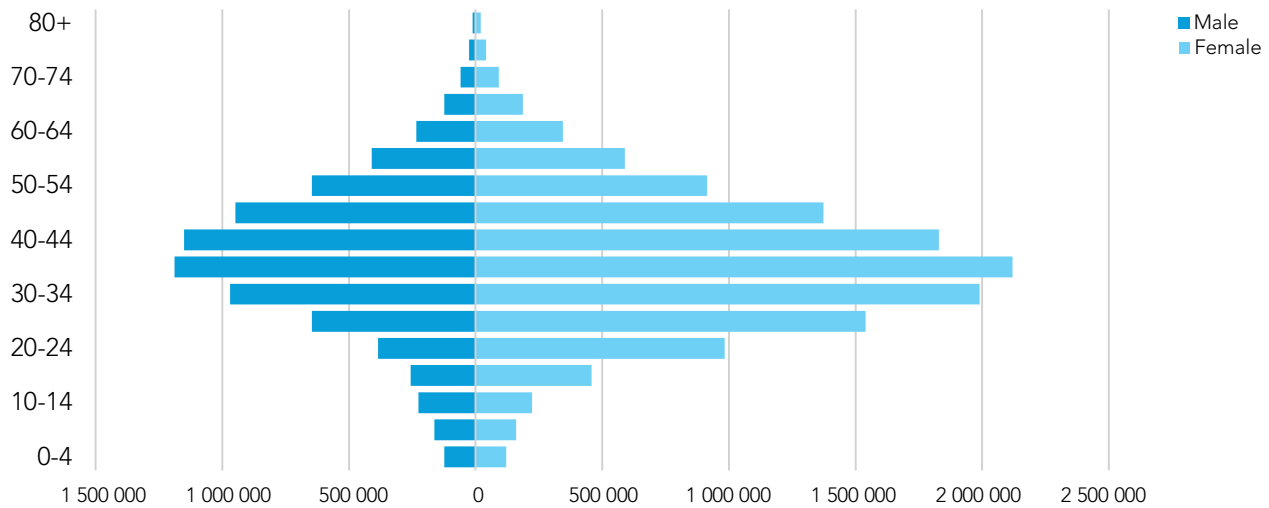


By 2030, without accelerated scale-up of prevention and treatment coverage, there may be an estimated 330 000 new HIV infections and 21.8 million people living with HIV in eastern and southern Africa. The population of people living with HIV is projected to age considerably. By 2030, the number of people aged 40 years and over will account for nearly two-thirds (64%) of people living with HIV. Gender disparity among people living with HIV in the region is projected to persist, with girls and women accounting for 61% of people living with HIV in 2010, 63% in 2020, and 65% by 2030. The population of women living with HIV aged 40 and above is projected to increase from 26% in 2020 to 41% by 2030.

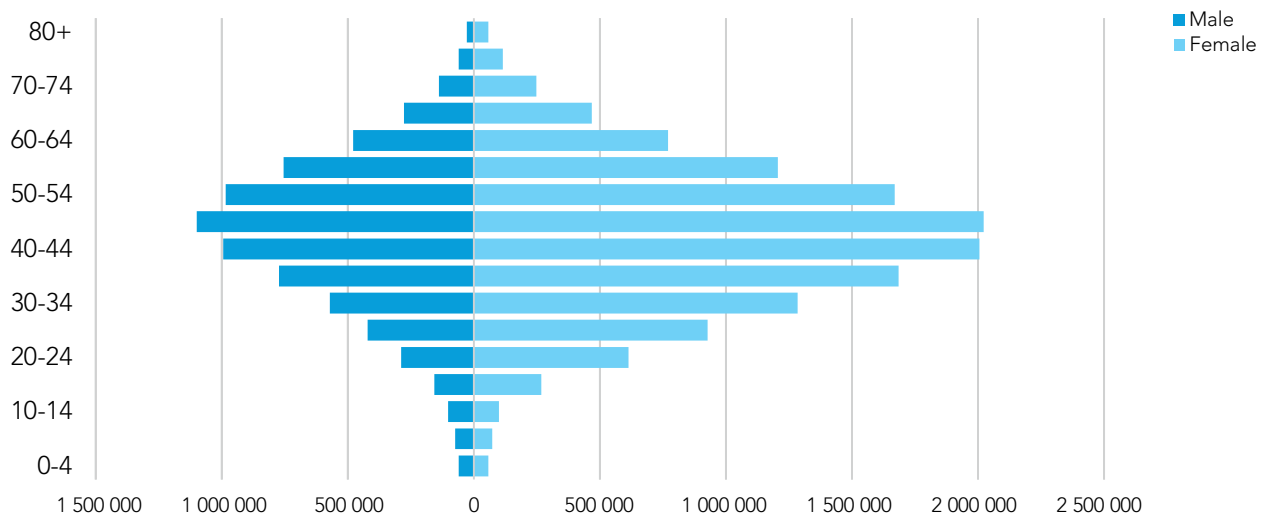
Age distribution of people living with HIV, 2010



Age distribution of people living with HIV, 2020



Age distribution of people living with HIV, 2030



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