

Country progress report - Seychelles

Global AIDS Monitoring 2020



the 1990s, the number of people in the world who are under 15 years of age has increased from 1.1 billion to 1.6 billion, and the number of people aged 65 and over has increased from 0.2 billion to 0.5 billion (United Nations, 2002). The number of people aged 65 and over is projected to increase to 1.1 billion by 2050 (United Nations, 2002).

There is a growing awareness of the need to address the needs of older people in the workplace. The World Health Organization (WHO) has identified the need for a 'new paradigm' in the management of older people in the workplace (WHO, 1999). The WHO has identified the need for a 'new paradigm' in the management of older people in the workplace (WHO, 1999).

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- XI. AIDS out of isolation - Commit to taking AIDS out of isolation through people-centred systems to improve universal health coverage, including treatment for tuberculosis, cervical cancer and hepatitis B and C

Overall

Fast-track targets

Progress summary

In 2019 most of the indicators: show promising results: 109 new HIV cases compared to 120 in 2018, 18 new AIDS cases compared with 23 in 2018, AIDS mortality has gone down from 19 to 16. More PLHIV than ever before were started on ART in 2019. Only one baby (3 in 2018) was diagnosed HIV+ despite an increase number of HIV pregnancies by about 50% compared to 2018. Hepatitis C went down from 87 in 2018 to 67 in 2019. However, the number of new Hepatitis B increased compared to 2018 (from 23 to 44).

More HIV cases are being detected from the wards showing improvement in provider-initiated testing and a door to door campaign was organized by HIV/AIDS Support Organization (HASO) in collaboration with NAC user friendly rapid tests (INSTI) were used. OST program is now offered to prisoners since 2019 and needle & syringes programs have been decentralised to Hot Spots (ghettos).

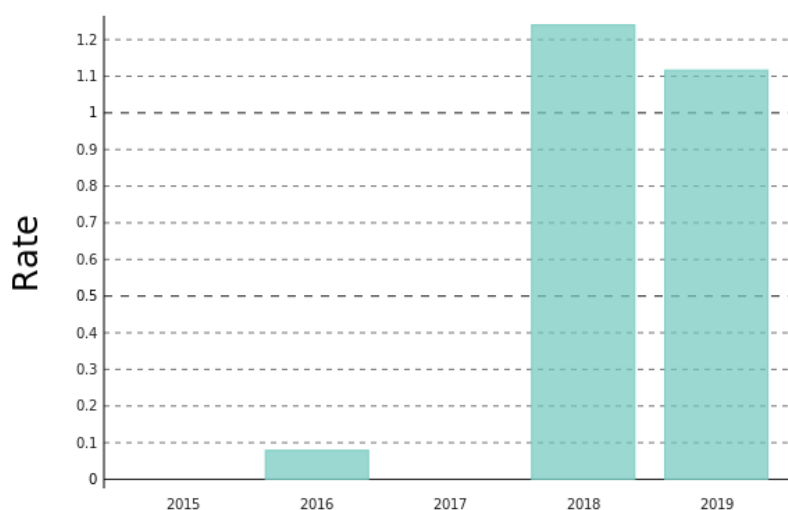
In 2019 guidelines for all aspects of Testing and Treatment were reviewed and developed with the help of WHO.

In 2019 the main mode of HIV Transmission was Heterosexual, followed by the IDU and MSM. It is possible that interventions targetting IDUs are more effective and that heterosexual may still be thinking that HIV is still mainly affecting the key populations. Stigma and Discrimination are still our main enemies in the fight against AIDS and we urgently need the assistance of UNAIDS to establish a Stigma Index in the Seychelles.

Despite some good results we still envisage difficulty in reaching the 90/90/90 targets in 2020. We are still disabled by lack of knowledge of the first 90 and absence of estimation of the number of PLHIV in Seychelles. More surveys will be needed in the coming years to verify the status of our M&E indicators. In 2019, under the HIV Health Technical Advisory Committee, a sub-committee on HIV Data Management was established to address data collection and support the Decision Making Process. Data from Private Sector are especially difficult to collect. With the emphasis on the covid-19 most of our stakeholders were busy saving lives so it was not easy to complete the GAM.

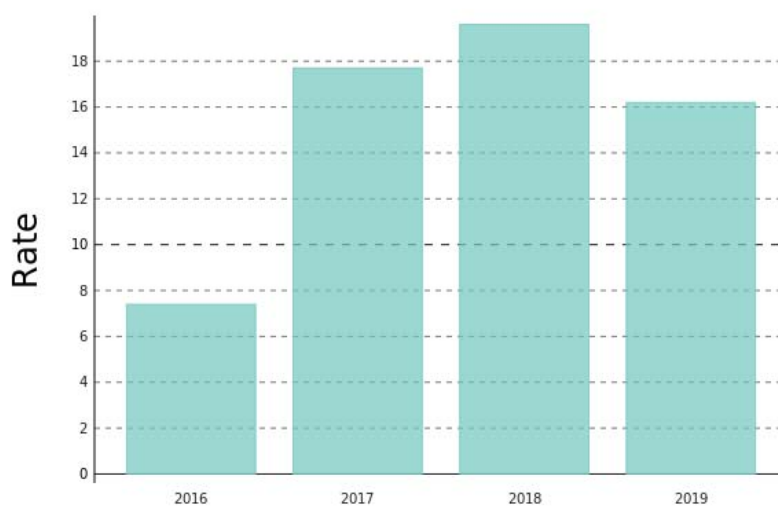
3.1 HIV incidence rate per 1000, Seychelles (2015-2019)

Number of people newly infected with HIV in the reporting period per 1000 uninfected population



1.7 AIDS mortality per 100 000, Seychelles (2016-2019)

Total number of people who have died from AIDS-related causes per 100 000 population



HIV testing and treatment cascade

Ensure that 30 million people living with HIV have access to treatment through meeting the 90-90-90 targets by 2020

Progress summary

All HIV/AIDS services are offered free of charge by the Government of Seychelles.

While 755 patients were on antiretroviral therapy (ART), a total of 699 or 81% of known PLHIV were ART at the end of 2019. Of those, 91% were virally suppressed. In 2019 we had 18 cases of drop-out recorded and 49 lost to follow-up. In a very small society like Seychelles of less than 100,000 people where everyone knows each other and want to know all each other's life, many PLHIV feel it very difficult to follow their treatment without their status becoming public knowledge. Only two persons have ever revealed their status in public and it was more than 10 years ago. Some prefer to test and follow treatment overseas to keep it confidential. Stigma and discrimination are our worst enemies.

Policy questions (2019)

Is there a law, regulation or policy specifying that HIV testing:

a) Is mandatory before marriage

No

b) Is mandatory to obtain a work or residence permit

No

c) Is mandatory for certain groups

No

What is the recommended CD4 threshold for initiating antiretroviral therapy in adults and adolescents who are asymptomatic, as per MoH guidelines or directive, and what is the implementation status?

No threshold; treat all regardless of CD4 count; Implemented countrywide (>95% of treatment sites)

Does your country have a current national policy on routine viral load testing for monitoring antiretroviral therapy and to what extent is it implemented?

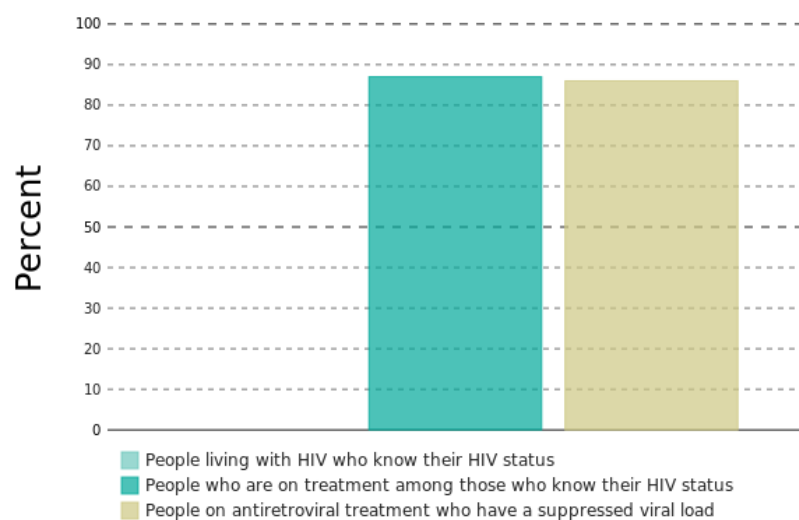
a) For adults and adolescents

Yes; Implemented countrywide (>95% of treatment sites)

b) For children

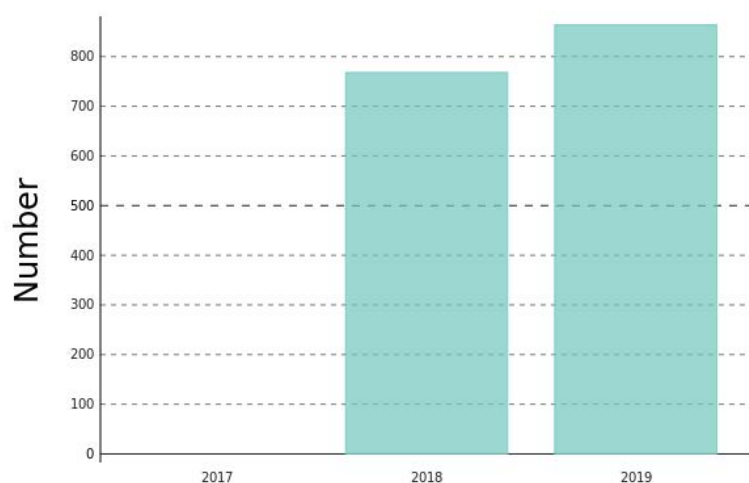
Yes; Implemented countrywide (>95% of treatment sites)

Progress towards 90-90-90 target, Seychelles (2019)



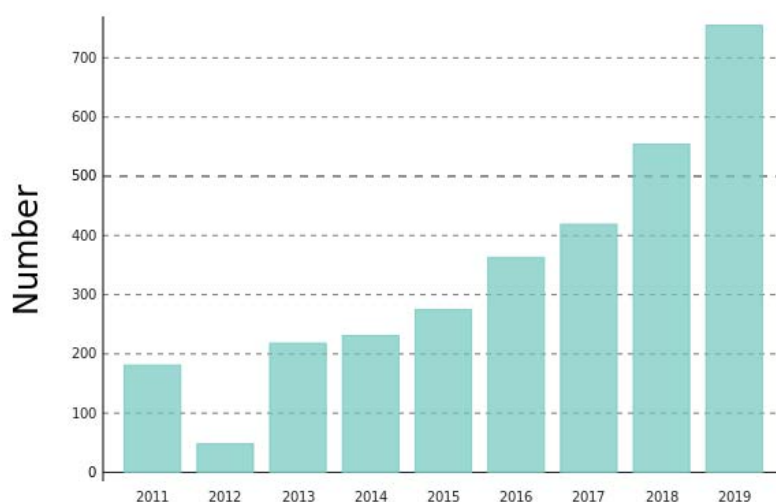
1.1 People living with HIV who know their HIV status, Seychelles (2017-2019)

Number of people living with HIV who know their HIV status



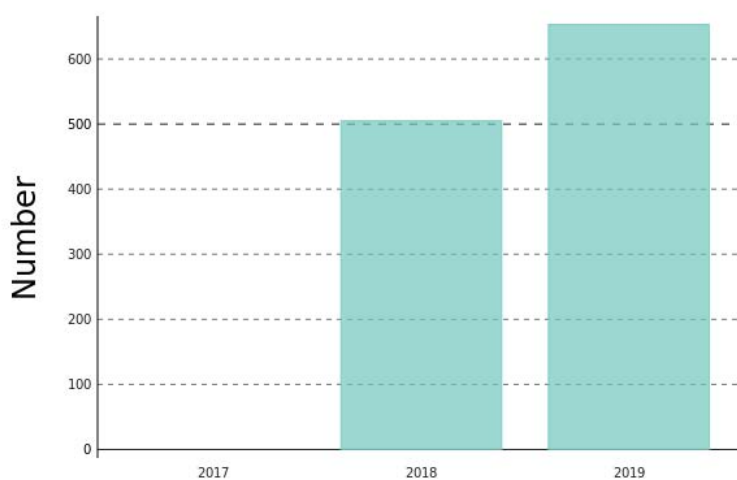
1.2 People living with HIV on antiretroviral therapy, Seychelles (2011-2019)

Number of people on antiretroviral therapy



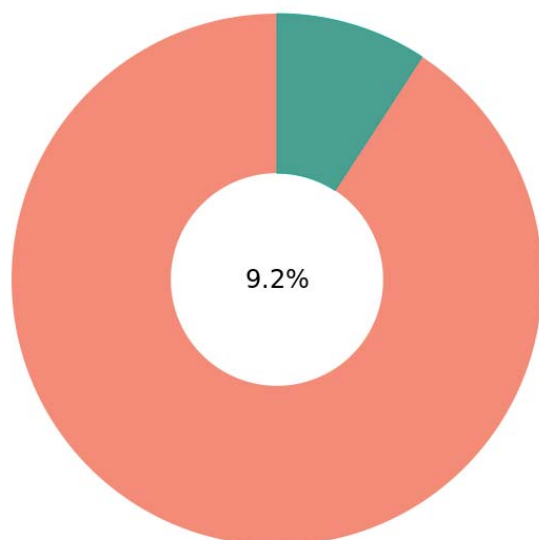
1.3 People living with HIV on antiretroviral treatment who have suppressed viral load, Seychelles (2017-2019)

Number of people living with HIV with suppressed viral loads



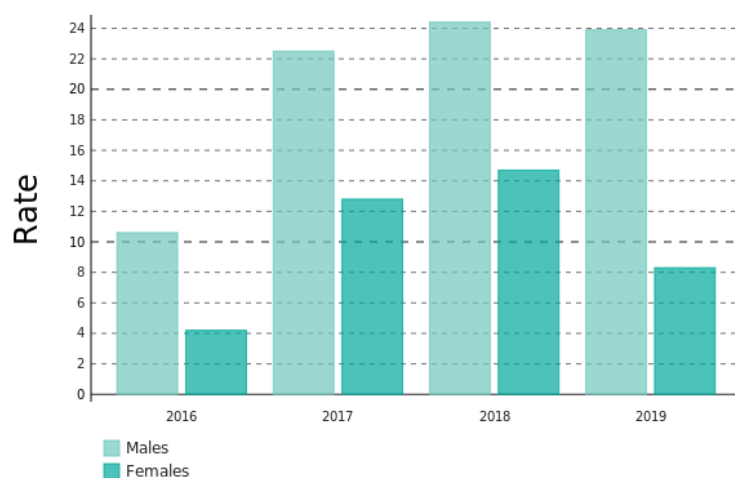
1.4 Late HIV diagnosis, Seychelles (2019)

Percentage of people living with HIV with the initial CD4 cell count <200 cells/mm3 during the reporting period



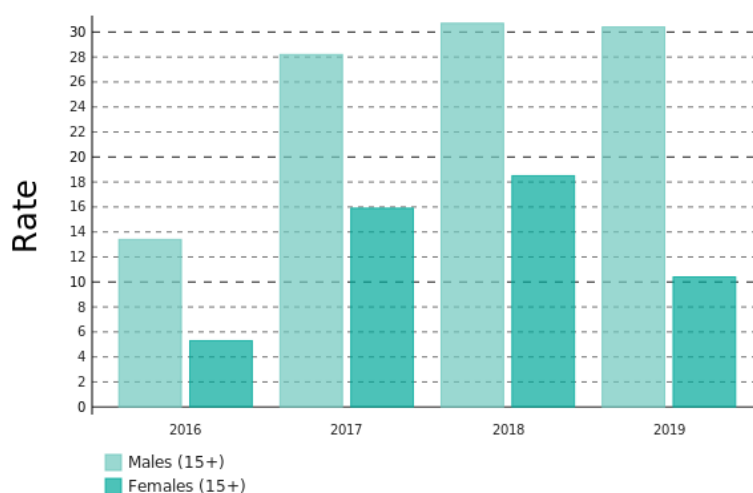
1.6 AIDS mortality rate per 100 000, Seychelles (2016-2019)

Total number of people who have died from AIDS-related causes per 100 000 population



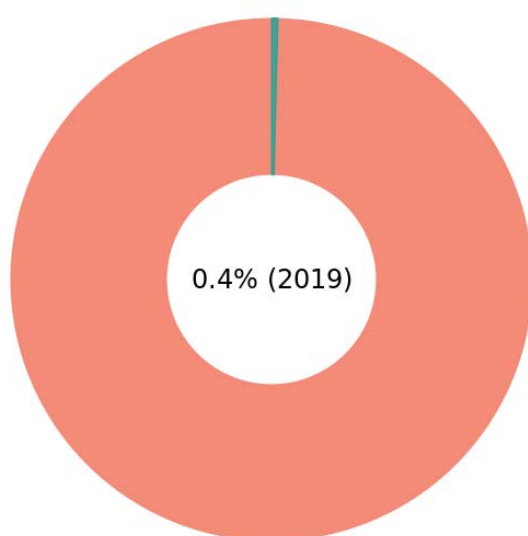
1.6 AIDS mortality rate per 100 000 among adults, Seychelles (2016-2019)

Total number of adults who have died from AIDS-related causes per 100 000 population



1.7 HIV testing volume and positivity, Seychelles

Percentage of HIV -positive results returned to people (positivity) in the calendar year



Number of HIV tests conducted = 27 904

Prevention of mother-to-child transmission

Eliminate new HIV infections among children by 2020 while ensuring that 1.6 million children have access to HIV treatment by 2018

Progress summary

Of 23 mothers testing positive for HIV during pregnancy, 19 followed the PMTCT program. Three babies had intra-uterine death and one baby tested positive for HIV within two months of birth.

In 2019 the Ministry of Health reviewed and developed a new National Guidelines on the EMTCT to ensure a comprehensive approach in achieving the elimination targets.

Policy questions (2019)

Does your country have a national plan for the elimination of mother-to-child transmission of HIV?

Yes

Target(s) for the mother-to-child transmission rate and year: 0; 2023

Elimination target(s) (such as the number of cases/population) and year: -

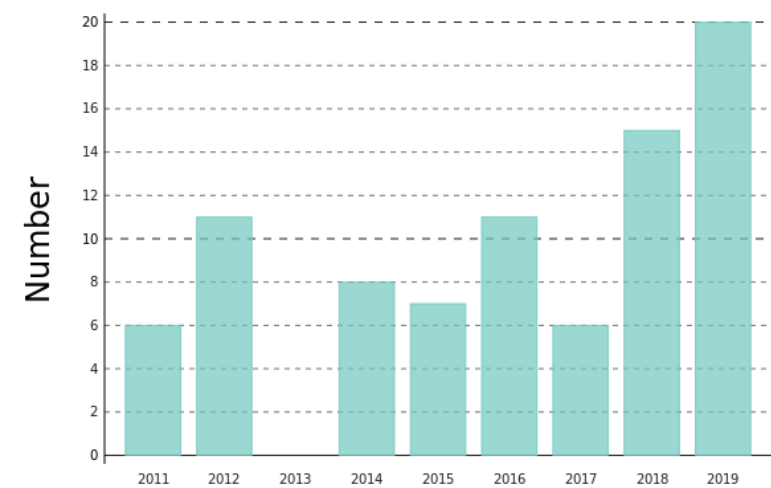
Do the national guidelines recommend treating all infants and children living with HIV irrespective of symptoms and if so, what is the implementation status of the cut-off?

Treat all, regardless of age

Implemented countrywide (>95% of treatment sites)

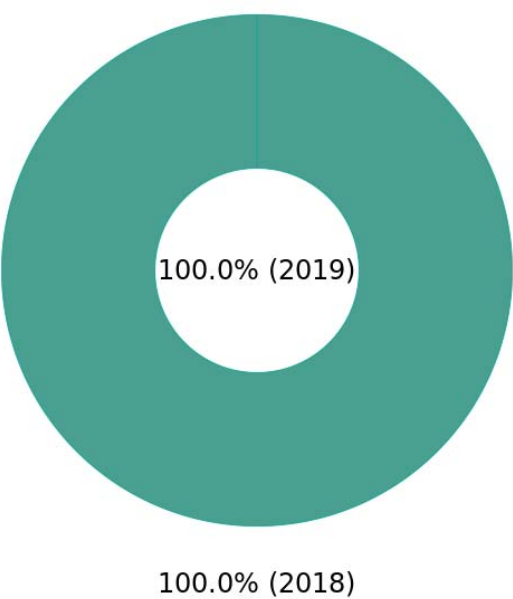
2.1 Early infant diagnosis, Seychelles (2011-2019)

Number of infants who received an HIV test within two months of birth



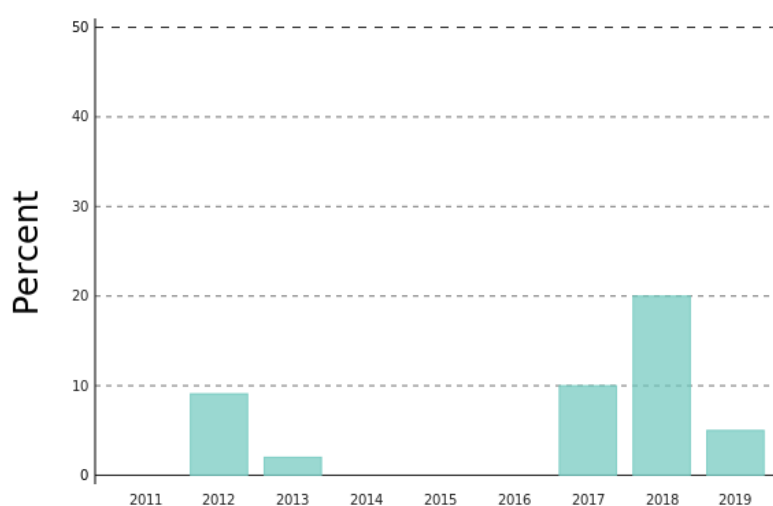
2.1 Early infant diagnosis, Seychelles (2018-2019)

Percentage of infants born to women living with HIV receiving a virological test for HIV within two months of birth

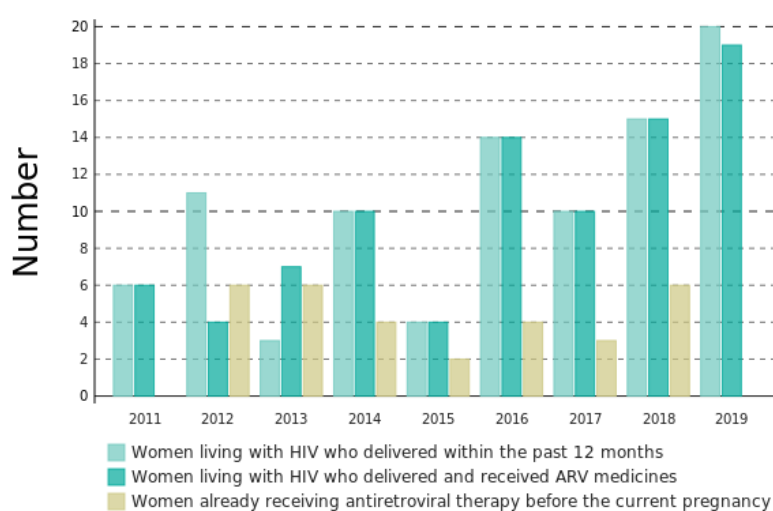


2.2 Mother-to-child transmission of HIV, Seychelles (2011-2019)

Estimated percentage of children newly infected with HIV from mother-to-child transmission among women living with HIV delivering in the past 12 months

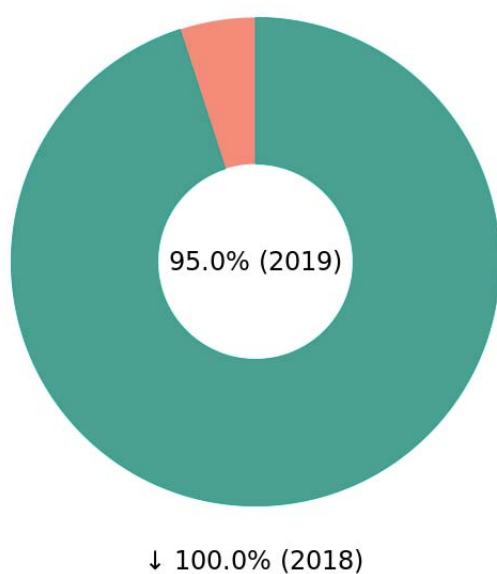


2.3 Preventing mother-to-child transmission of HIV, Seychelles (2011-2019)



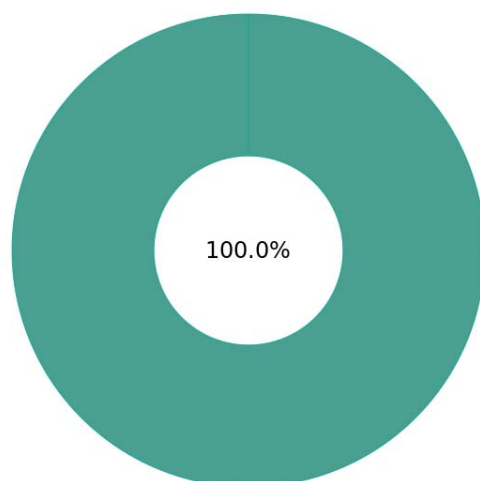
2.3 Preventing mother-to-child transmission of HIV, Seychelles (2018-2019)

Percentage of pregnant women living with HIV who received antiretroviral medicine to reduce the risk of mother-to-child transmission of HIV



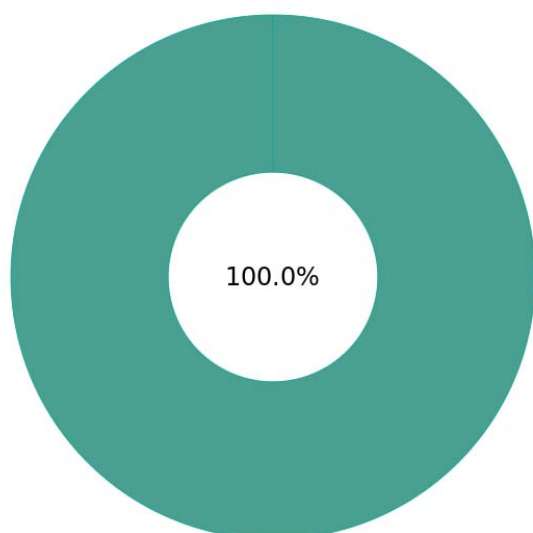
2.4 Syphilis among pregnant women, Seychelles (2019)

Percentage of pregnant women tested for syphilis



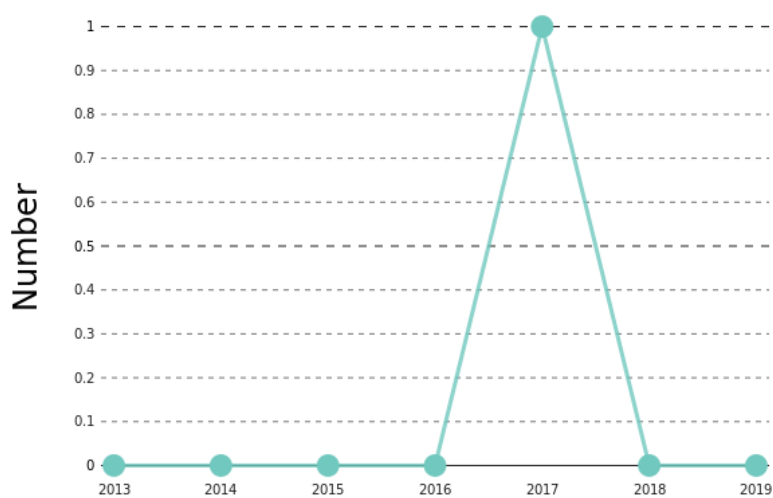
2.4 Syphilis among pregnant women, Seychelles (2019)

Percentage of pregnant women on treatment among those who tested positive



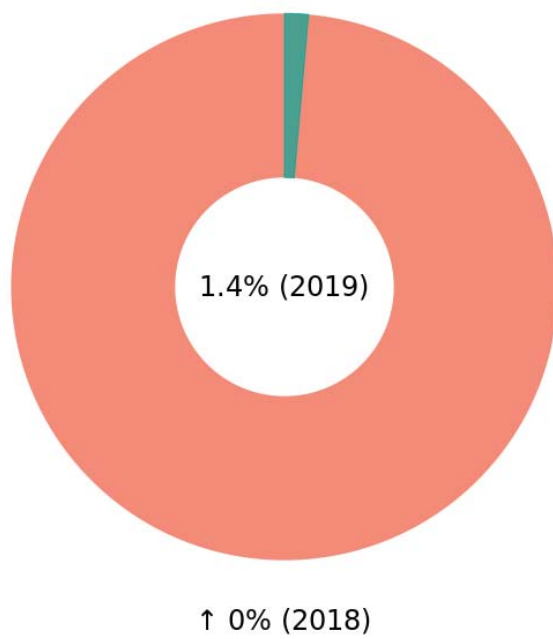
2.5 Congenital syphilis rate (live births and stillbirth), Seychelles (2013-2019)

Number of reported congenital syphilis cases (live births and stillbirths)



2.6 HIV testing in pregnant women, Seychelles (2018-2019)

Percentage of pregnant women with known HIV status



HIV prevention; Key populations

Ensure access to combination prevention options, including pre-exposure prophylaxis, voluntary medical male circumcision, harm reduction and condoms, to at least 90% of people by 2020, especially young women and adolescent girls in high-prevalence countries and key populations—gay men and other men who have sex with men, transgender people, sex workers and their clients, people who inject drugs and prisoners

Progress summary

Post Exposure Prophylaxis (PEP) is freely accessible to all. It is especially offered to health workers and other service providers exposed to potentially HIV positive material as well as victims of rape and sexual violence.

Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis (PrEP) is available free of charge but it was used by only 4 clients in 2018 but reached 26 clients in 2019. It is especially recommended to sero-discordant couples. In 2019 the PrEP guidelines were reviewed.

In 2019, 442,404 male condoms were freely distributed by the Ministry of Health in Government Health facilities and the NGOs. Only one NGO (ASFF) had her own procurement and distribution process of 10,368 male condoms reaching a total of 452772. It is important to note that male condoms are sold in pharmacies and shops all around the islands, but that it is very difficult to obtain data from the private sector especially now that pharmacies are really busy with the covid-19. Condoms are promoted in line with HIV & other STIs and other reproductive health programmes.

A total of 70,900 lubricants (5 g sachets) were distributed for free by the Ministry of Health representing an increase of 70% compared to last year. Lubricants are sold as well in private pharmacies in larger packaging and many flavours.

Demand has still not been established for female condoms.

The NSP programme increased from last year with 28,495 clean needle & syringes distributed by the Government, on the three most populated islands, compared to 13,760 in 2018. APDAR agency has started to distribute them in drug hot spots (736). The ratio of 11

Needles per IDU (estimated in 2017) has increased and more than 2500 IDU are at least partly enrolled in OST program. Counselling, testing for HIV and Hepatitis, and Yellow fever vaccination are given free to clients to encourage them to join.

OST program started in the Prison during 2019.

Policy questions: Key populations (2019)

Criminalization and/or prosecution of key populations

Transgender people

- Neither criminalized nor prosecuted

Sex workers

- Ancillary activities associated with selling sexual services are criminalized
- Profiting from organizing and/or managing sexual services is criminalized

Men who have sex with men

- No specific legislation

Is drug use or possession for personal use an offence in your country?

- Possession of drugs for personal use is specified as a criminal offence

Legal protections for key populations

Transgender people

- Neither criminalized nor prosecuted

Sex workers

- Constitutional prohibition of discrimination based on any grounds

Men who have sex with men

- Constitutional prohibition of discrimination based on any grounds

People who inject drugs

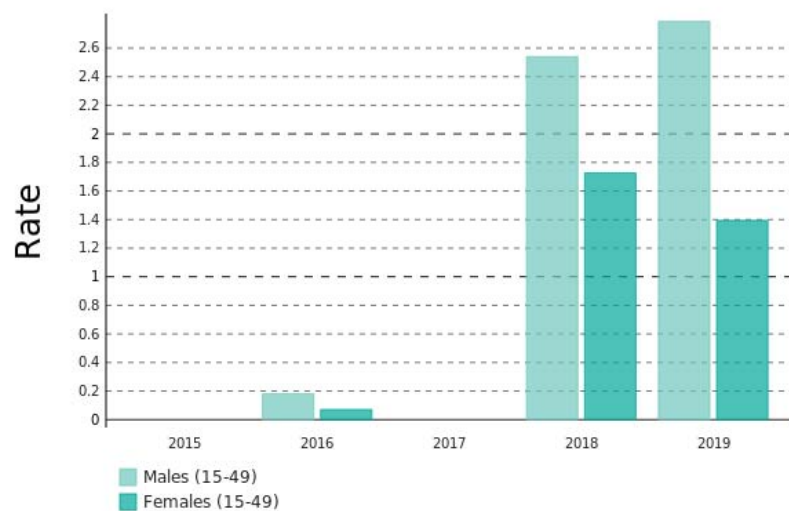
- No

Has the WHO recommendation on oral PrEP been adopted in your country's national guidelines?

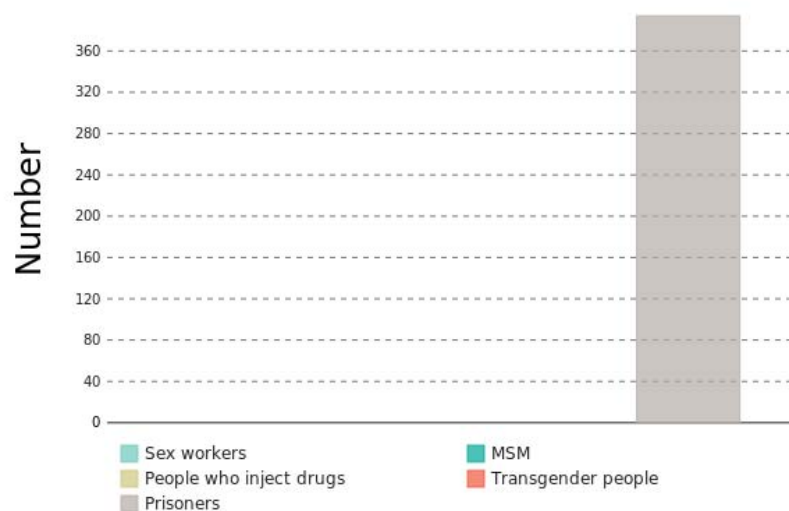
Yes, PrEP guidelines have been developed and are being implemented

3.1 HIV incidence rate per 1000, Seychelles (2015-2019)

New HIV-infections in the reporting period per 1000 uninfected population (Adults, ages 15-49)

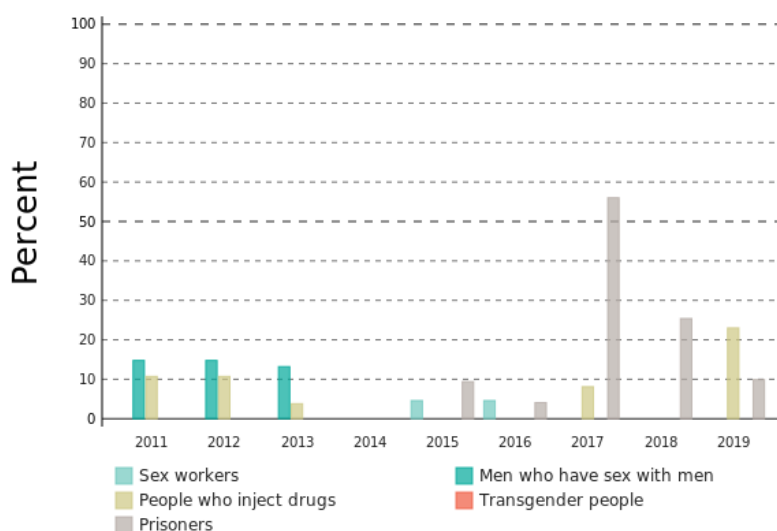


3.2 Estimates of the size of key populations, Seychelles



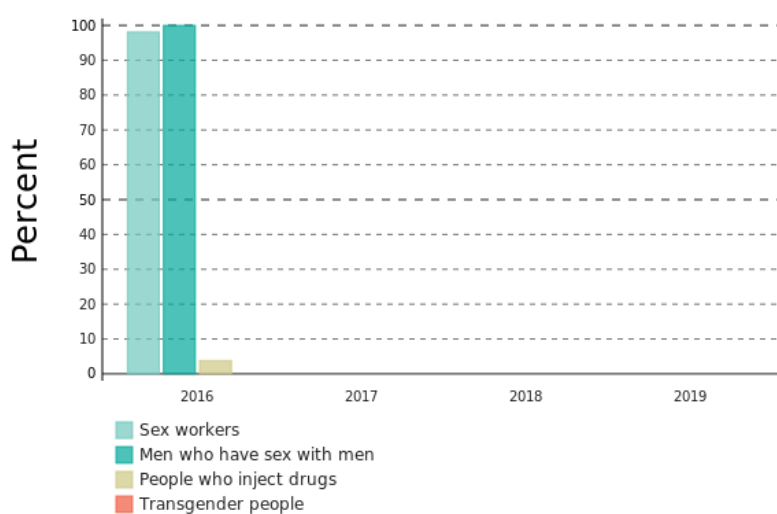
3.3 HIV prevalence among key populations, Seychelles (2011-2019)

Percentage of specific key populations living with HIV



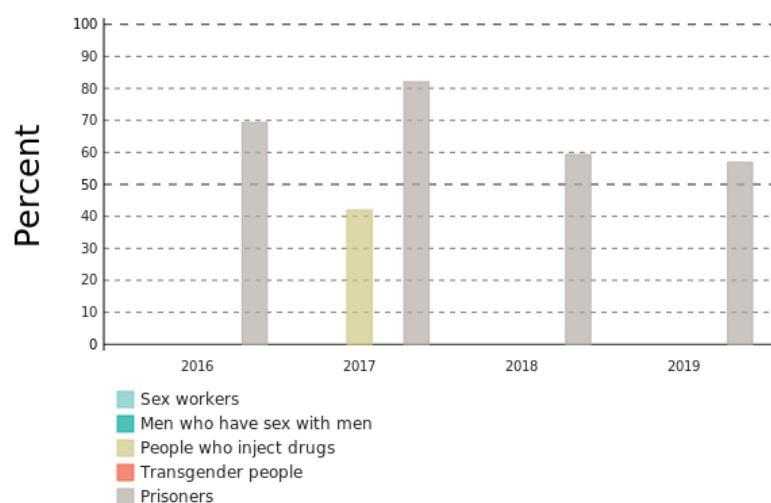
3.4 HIV testing among key populations, Seychelles (2016-2019)

Percentage of people of a key population who tested for HIV in the past 12 months, or who know their current HIV status



3.5 Antiretroviral therapy coverage among people living with HIV in key populations, Seychelles (2016-2019)

Percentage of the people living with HIV in a key population receiving antiretroviral therapy in the past 12 months



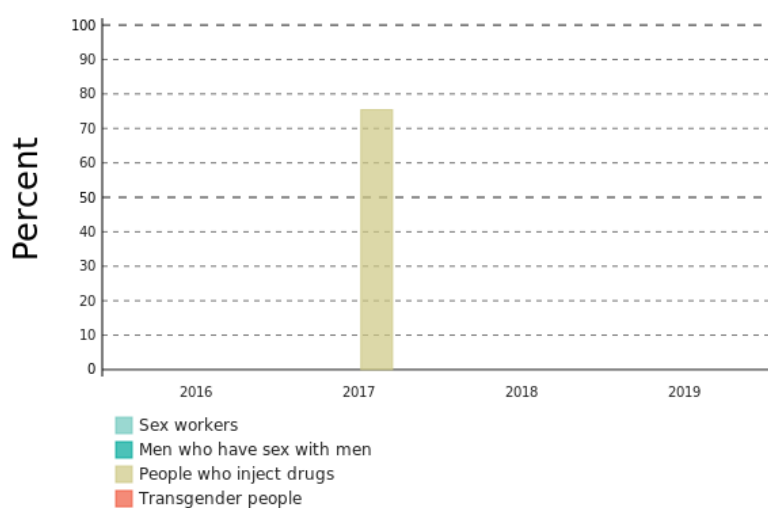
3.6 Condom use among key populations, Seychelles (2011-2019)

Percentage of people in a key population reporting using a condom the last time they had sexual intercourse



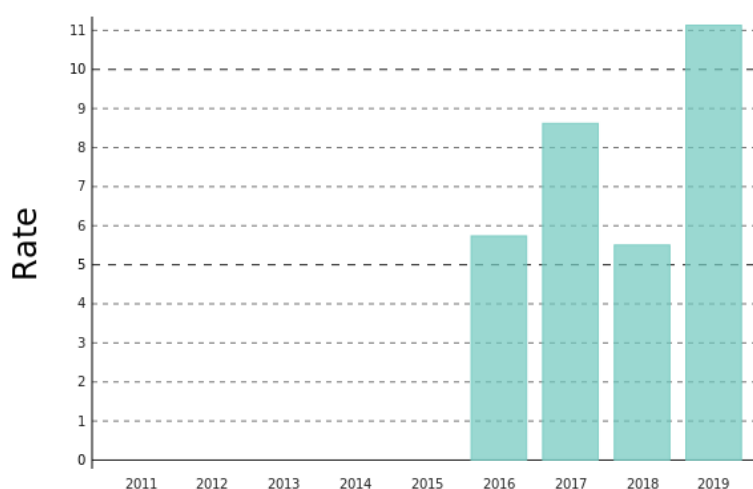
3.7 Coverage of HIV prevention programmes among key populations, Seychelles (2016-2019)

Percentage of people in a key population reporting having received a combined set of HIV prevention interventions



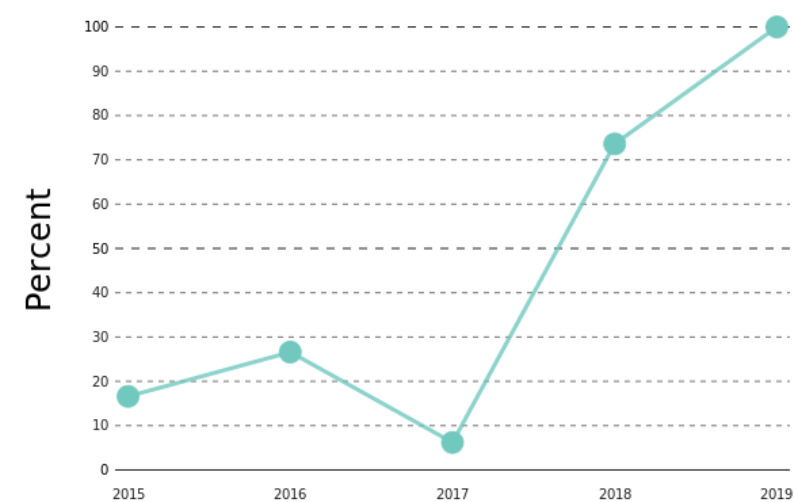
3.9 Needles and syringes distributed per person who injects drugs, Seychelles (2011-2019)

Number of needles and syringes distributed per person who injects drugs per year by needle-syringe programmes



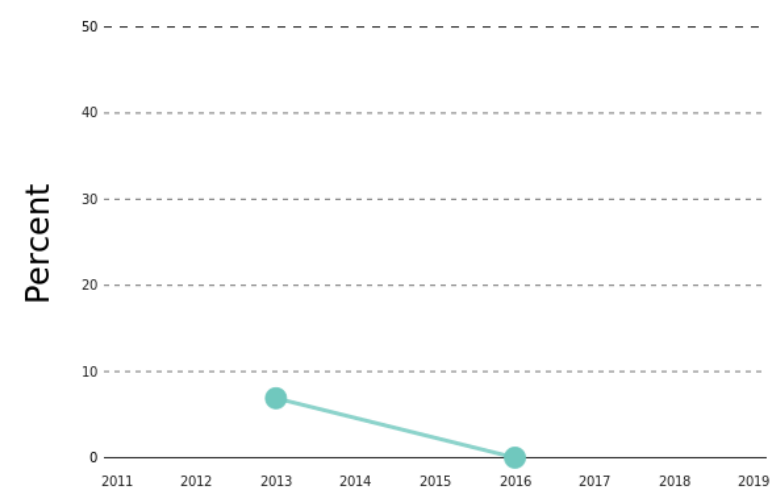
3.10 Coverage of opioid substitution therapy, Seychelles (2015-2019)

Percentage of people who inject drugs receiving opioid substitution therapy (OST)



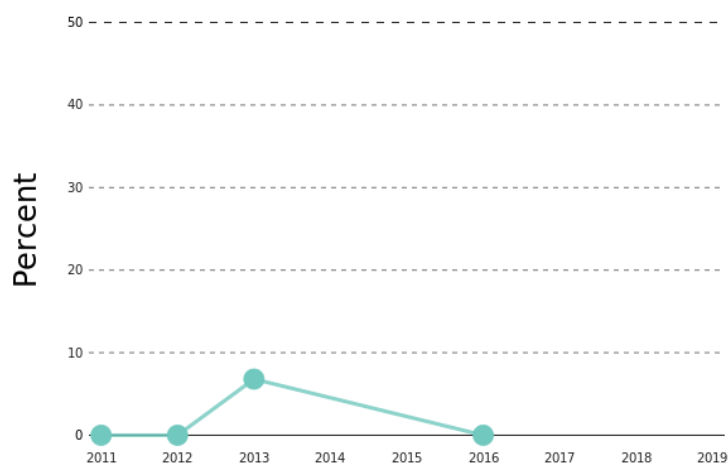
3.11 Active syphilis among sex workers, Seychelles (2011-2019)

Percentage of sex workers with active syphilis



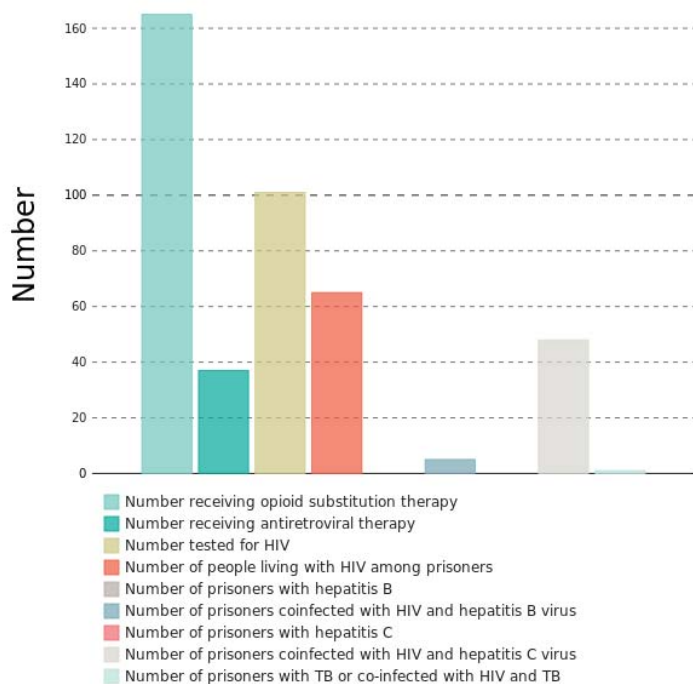
3.12 Active syphilis among men who have sex with men, Seychelles (2011-2019)

Percentage of men who have sex with men with active syphilis

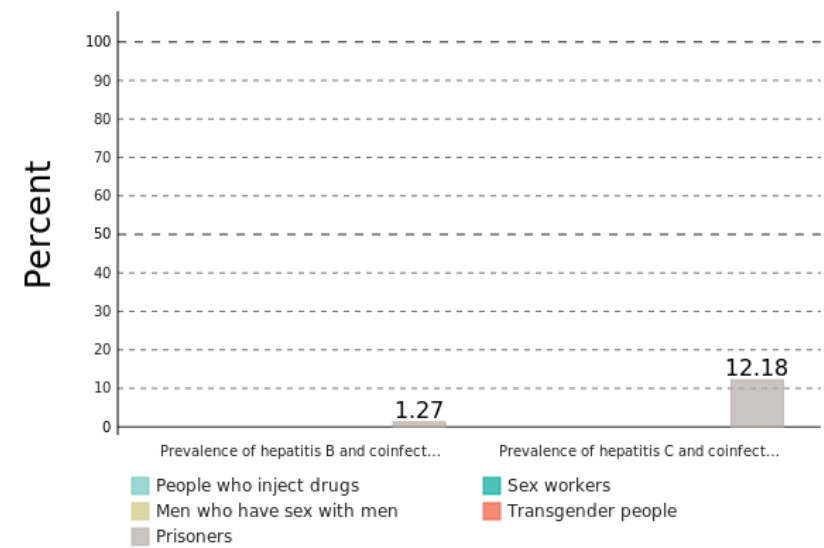


3.13 HIV prevention programmes in prisons, Seychelles (2019)

HIV prevention and treatment programmes offered to prisoners while detained

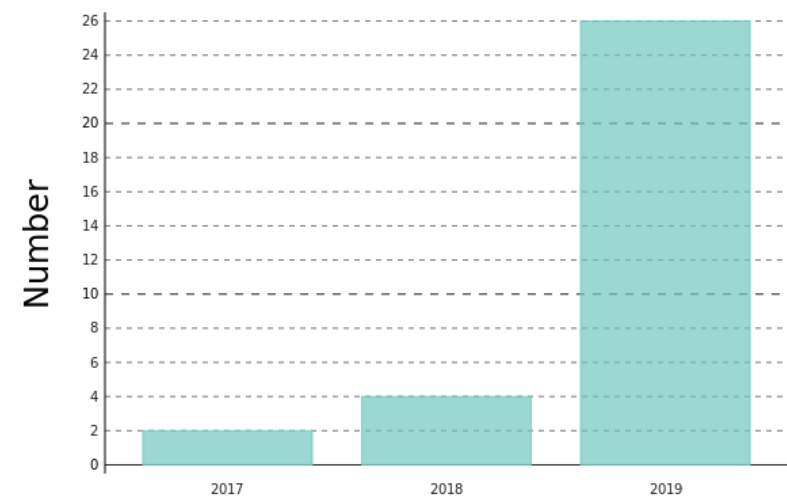


3.14 Viral hepatitis among key populations, Seychelles (2019)



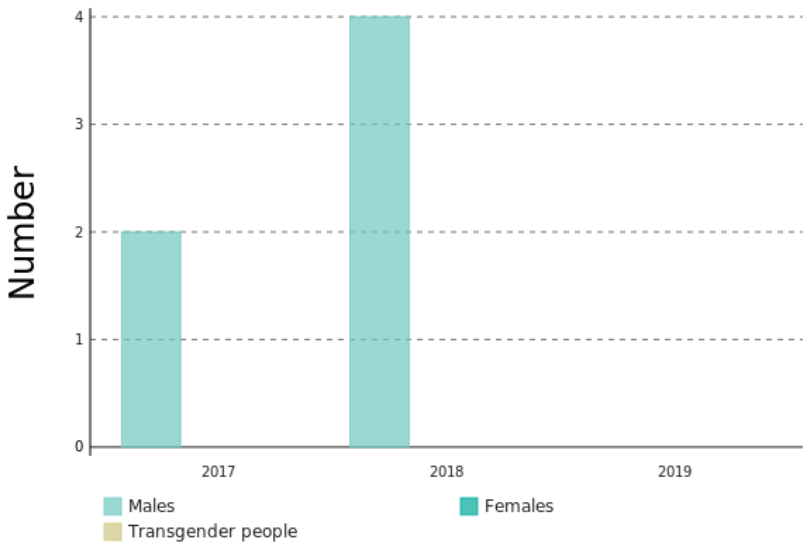
3.15 People who received pre-exposure prophylaxis, Seychelles (2017-2019)

Total number of people who received oral PrEP at least once during the reporting period



3.15 People who received pre-exposure prophylaxis, Seychelles (2017-2019)

Number of people who received oral PrEP at least once during the reporting period



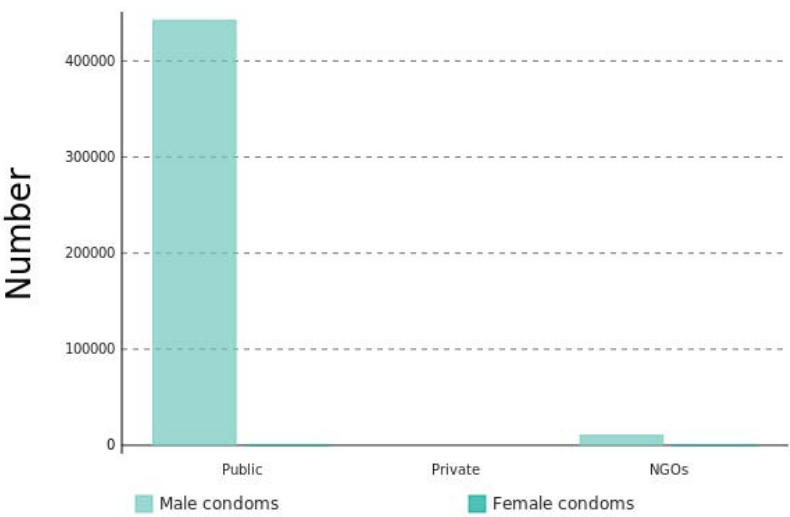
3.19 Annual number of condoms distributed, Seychelles (2019)

Number of condoms distributed during the past 12 months



3.19 Annual number of condoms distributed, Seychelles (2019)

Number of condoms distributed during the past 12 months



Gender; Stigma and discrimination

Eliminate gender inequalities and end all forms of violence and discrimination against women and girls, people living with HIV and key populations by 2020

Progress summary

Following the development of the National Gender policy in 2018, we are missing data on these topics. We are in the process of requesting support from UNAIDS for the organization of a stigma index (never done before) in 2020.

Policy questions (2018)

Does your country have a national plan or strategy to address gender-based violence and violence against women that includes HIV

Yes

Does your country have legislation on domestic violence*?

No

• -

What protections, if any, does your country have for key populations and people living with HIV from violence?

- General criminal laws prohibiting violence
- Programmes to address intimate partner violence*
- Interventions to address police abuse
- Interventions to address torture and ill-treatment in prisons

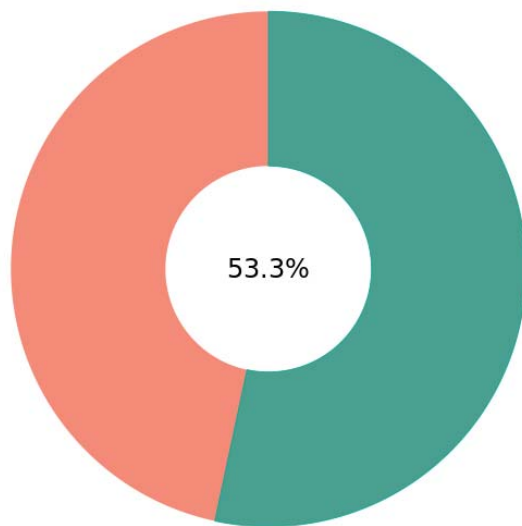
Does your country have policies in place requiring healthcare settings to provide timely and quality health care regardless of gender, nationality, age, disability, ethnic origin, sexual orientation, religion, language, socio-economic status, HIV or other health status, or because of selling sex, using drugs, living in prison or any other grounds?

Yes, policies exists and are consistently implemented

Does your country have laws criminalizing the transmission of, non-disclosure of or exposure to HIV transmission?

Yes

Percentage of Global AIDS Monitoring indicators with data disaggregated by gender



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Knowledge of HIV and access to sexual reproductive health services

Ensure that 90% of young people have the skills, knowledge and capacity to protect themselves from HIV and have access to sexual and reproductive health services by 2020, in order to reduce the number of new HIV infections among adolescent girls and young women to below 100 000 per year

Progress summary

A new KAP survey on adolescent sexual behaviour needs to be conducted in the foreseeable future as the last youth survey was in 2015.

The Public Health Authority (PHA) three Facebook pages had over 10,000 Social media followers and a reach of over 3000 young people. They attracted 5000 unique visitors and approximately 4000 pages were viewed each month.

PHA through the creation of the HIV / AIDS Prevention Task Force were able to conduct talks in school, on TV and radio as well as large activities.

A booklet on "Relationships, sex and other stuff Teenagers will need to know" were reproduced and distributed to teenagers after school session or during outreach.

Policy questions (2018)

Does your country have education policies that guide the delivery of life skills-based HIV and sexuality education, according to international standards, in:

a) Primary school

Yes

b) Secondary school

Yes

c) Teacher training

Yes

Social protection

Ensure that 75% of people living with, at risk of and affected by HIV benefit from HIV-sensitive social protection by 2020

Progress summary

Social protection is readily available for vulnerable populations but not specific to PLHIV .

Policy questions (2019)

Does the country have an approved social protection strategy, policy or framework?

Yes, and it is being implemented

a) Does it refer to HIV?

No

b) Does it recognize people living with HIV as key beneficiaries?

No

c) Does it recognize key populations (sex workers, gay men and other men who have sex with men, people who inject drugs, transgender people, prisoners) as key beneficiaries?

No

• -

d) Does it recognize adolescent girls and young women as key beneficiaries?

No

e) Does it recognize children affected by HIV as key beneficiaries?

No

f) Does it recognize families affected by HIV as key beneficiaries?

No

g) Does it address the issue of unpaid care work in the context of HIV?

No

What barriers, if any, limit access to social protection programmes in your country?

- Lack of information available on the programmes
- Fear of stigma and discrimination

Community-led service delivery

Ensure that at least 30% of all service delivery is community-led by 2020

Progress summary

Consultations were organized with different stakeholders during a National Forum to prepare the Operational Plan of the NSP 2019-2023 in January 2019.

Different stakeholders are on the Steering Committee responsible for the NSP implementation.

Subsequently, an operational plan was drafted.

An HIV/ AIDS Prevention Task Force (HAPTF), part of the Public Health Authority, is including HIV+, LGBTI, and IDU representatives.

A number of community activities were organized to commemorate World AIDS Day 2019 including HTC in different Communities.

Policy questions (2019)

Does your country have a national policy promoting community delivery of antiretroviral therapy?

No

Are there any of the following safeguards in laws, regulations and policies that provide for the operation of CSOs/CBOs in your country?

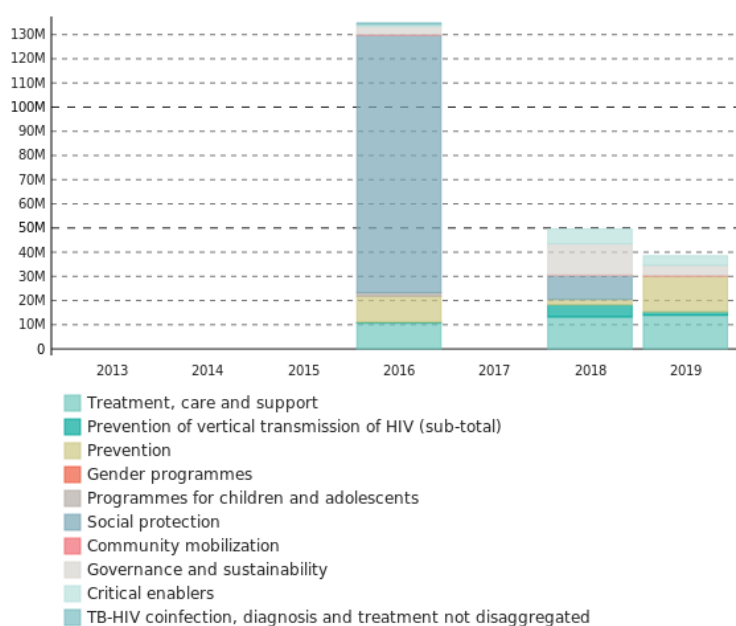
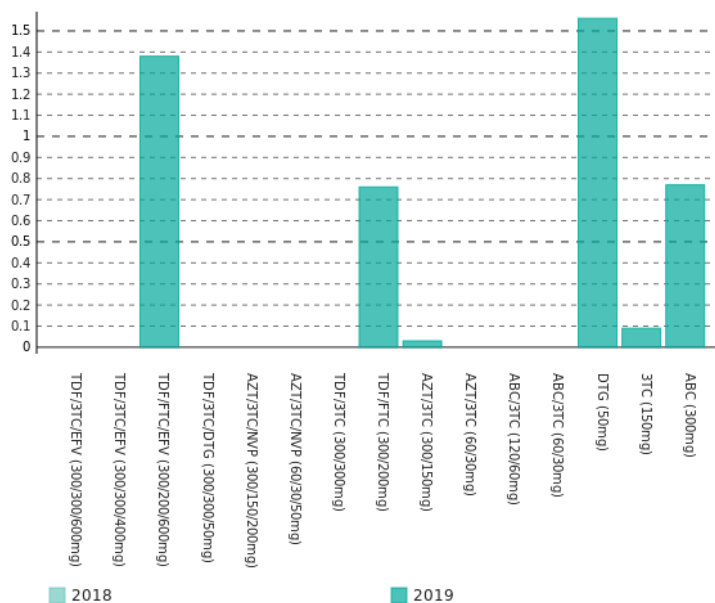
- Registration of HIV CSOs is possible
- Registration of CSOs/CBOs working with key populations is possible
- HIV services can be provided by CSOs/CBOs
- Services to key populations can be provided by CSOs/CBOs
- Reporting requirements for CSOs/CBOs delivering HIV services are streamlined

HIV expenditure

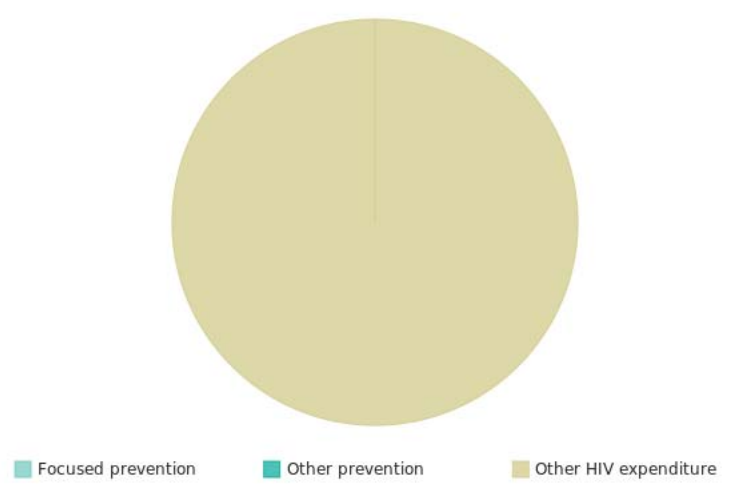
Ensure that HIV investments increase to US\$ 26 billion by 2020, including a quarter for HIV prevention and 6% for social enablers

Progress summary

Over 95% of HIV and AIDS interventions are funded from domestic sources mainly the country National Budget .



Share of effective prevention out of total, Seychelles (2019)



Structure of investments on effective and other prevention programmes (%), Seychelles (2019)



Empowerment and access to justice

Empower people living with, at risk of and affected by HIV to know their rights and to access justice and legal services to prevent and challenge violations of human rights

Progress summary

Human rights and reduction of violence, stigma and discrimination are main interventions in the "National Action Plan to remove legal barriers" developed with the assistance of ARASA and UNDP in February 2017, and integrated into the National Strategic Plan for HIV and Viral Hepatitis 2019-2023.

NGOs like HIV/AIDS support Organization (HASO), LGBTISey and Drug Utilization Response Network Seychelles (DURNS) are participating in most of our activities, they are present at the HIV & AIDS regional colloquium and they can request funding for projects under the NAC Fund.

We hope to be able to realize a Stigma Index in 2020 with the support of UNAIDS.

Policy questions (2018)

In the past two years have there been training and/or capacity building programmes for people living with HIV and key populations to educate them and raise their awareness concerning their rights (in the context of HIV) in your country?

Yes, at scale at the national level

Are there mechanisms in place to record and address cases of HIV-related discrimination (based on perceived HIV status and/or belonging to any key population)?

Yes

What accountability mechanisms in relation to discrimination and violations of human rights in healthcare settings does your country have, if any?

- Complaints procedure
- Procedures or systems to protect and respect patient privacy or confidentiality

What barriers in accessing accountability mechanisms does your country have, if any?

- Mechanisms are not sensitive to HIV
- Affordability constraints for people from marginalized and affected groups
- Awareness or knowledge of how to use such mechanisms is limited

AIDS out of isolation

Commit to taking AIDS out of isolation through people-centred systems to improve universal health coverage, including treatment for tuberculosis, cervical cancer and hepatitis B and C

Progress summary

All persons testing positive are tested for TB and vice-versa if they have any symptoms.

All HIV positive women are offered a Pap Smear test.

All HIV positive persons are asked about drug use and tested for Hepatitis B and C. They can be treated for Hepatitis C and vaccinated for Hepatitis B like the clients on the OST program and / or NSP. Injecting drug use appears to be still driving both epidemics of HIV and Hepatitis. A series of integrated bio-behavioural surveys (IBBS) were conducted in the last 10 years to understand risk and health seeking behaviours linked to HIV and HCV but some need to be redo: MSM and none were done for Transgender population and Male Sex workers.

Policy questions (2019)

Is cervical cancer screening and treatment for women living with HIV recommended in:

a) The national strategy, policy, plan or guidelines for cancer, cervical cancer or the broader response to non-communicable diseases (NCDs)

No

b) The national strategic plan governing the AIDS response

Yes

c) National HIV-treatment guidelines

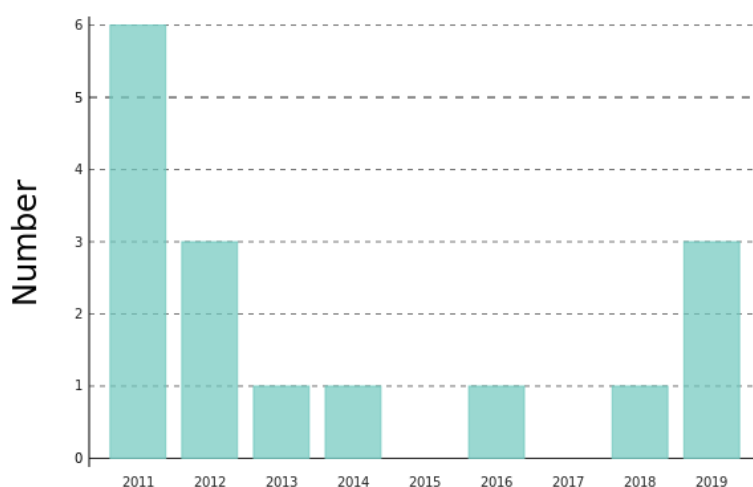
Yes

What coinfection policies are in place in the country for adults, adolescents and children?

- Hepatitis B screening and management in antiretroviral therapy clinics
- Hepatitis C screening and management in antiretroviral therapy clinics
- Hepatitis B vaccination provided at antiretroviral therapy clinics
- Hepatitis C treatment (direct-acting antiviral agents) provided in antiretroviral therapy clinics

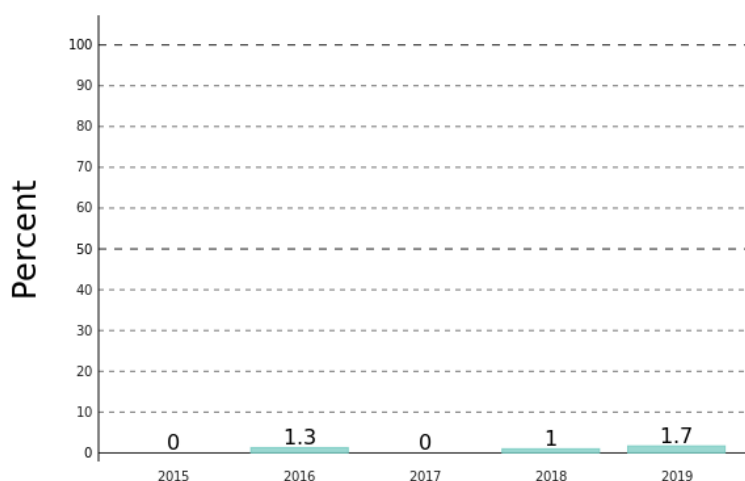
10.1 Co-managing TB and HIV treatment, Seychelles (2011-2019)

Number of HIV-positive new and relapse TB patients started on TB treatment during the reporting period who were already on antiretroviral therapy or started on antiretroviral therapy during TB treatment within the reporting year



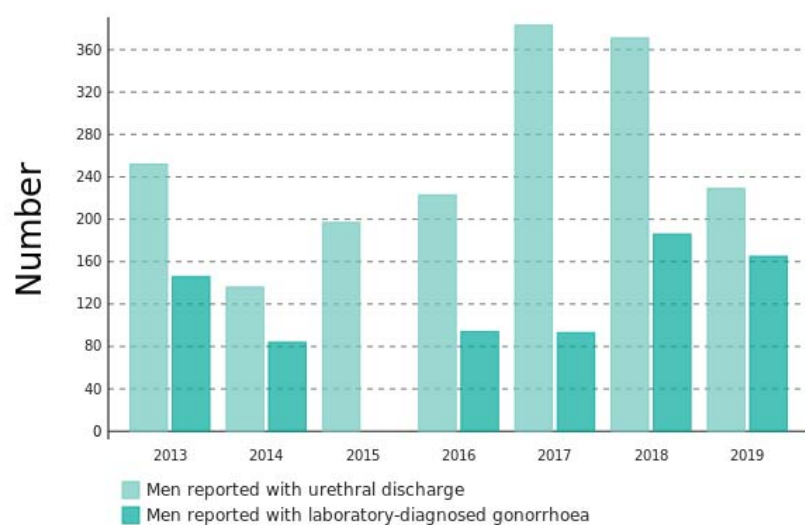
10.2 Proportion of people living with HIV newly enrolled in HIV care with active TB disease, Seychelles (2015-2019)

Total number of people living with HIV with active TB expressed as a percentage of those who are newly enrolled in HIV care (pre-antiretroviral therapy or antiretroviral therapy) during the reporting period



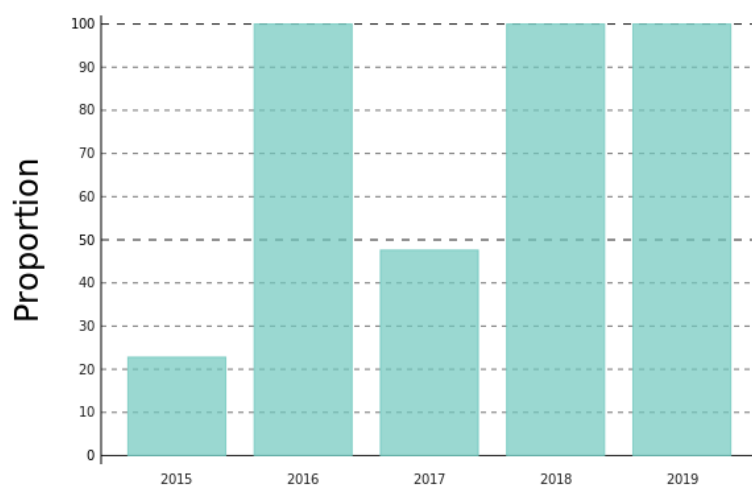
10.4/10.5 Sexually transmitted infections, Seychelles (2013-2019)

Number of men reporting urethral discharge in the past 12 months; number of men reported with laboratory-diagnosed gonorrhoea in the past 12 months



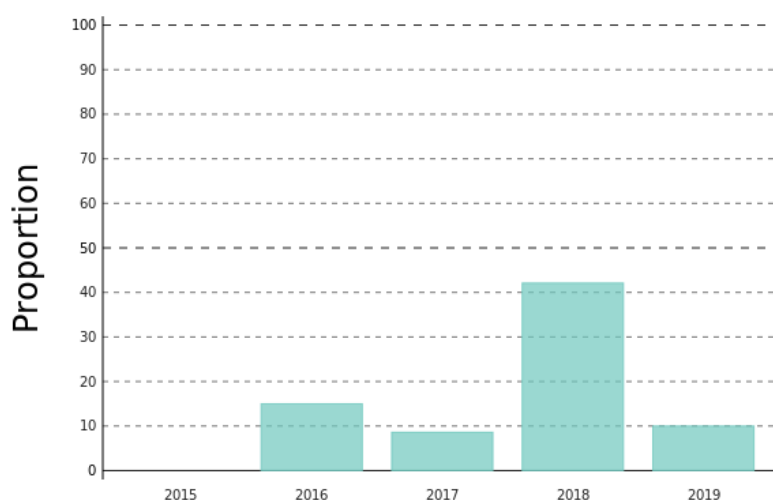
10.6 Hepatitis testing, Seychelles (2015-2019)

Proportion of people starting antiretroviral therapy who were tested for hepatitis C virus (HCV)



10.7 People coinfectd with HIV and HCV starting HCV treatment, Seychelles (2015-2018)

Proportion of people coinfectd with HIV and HCV starting HCV treatment



10.8 Cervical cancer screening among women living with HIV, Seychelles (2019)

Programme data: Proportion of women living with HIV who have ever been screened for cervical cancer using any of the following methods: VIA, Pap smear or human papillomavirus (HPV) test

