



U. S. CDC South Sudan

Accessible link: <https://www.cdc.gov/global-health/countries/south-sudan.html>

CDC established an office in South Sudan in 2006, with an initial focus on HIV prevention through the U.S. President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR). CDC works closely with South Sudan's Ministry of Health (MOH) to build and strengthen the country's core public health capabilities. These include data and surveillance; laboratory capacity; workforce and institutions; innovation and research; and policy, communications and diplomacy. Priority program areas include HIV, tuberculosis (TB), measles, polio, COVID-19, and other infectious diseases.

KEY ACCOMPLISHMENTS



Data & Surveillance

- Supported establishment of field officers to periodically review records and registers to assess the completeness, accuracy, and timeliness of HIV data. Completeness of HIV data reporting has increased from less than 50% to 100%



Laboratory

- Supported the HIV reference laboratory in becoming the first and only laboratory in South Sudan to receive ISO 15189:2012 accreditation



Workforce & Institutions

- Trained over 56 staff through the Expanded Program on Immunization (EPI), more than 3,800 health workers through Project Extension for Community Healthcare Outcomes (Project ECHO), and over 144 staff in the Field Epidemiology Training Program (FETP)



Prevention & Response

- Established South Sudan's Public Health Institute and National Public Health Emergency Operations Center in 2018



Innovation & Research

- Supported six rounds of antenatal clinic sentinel surveys to provide important data for HIV estimates, and supported bio-behavioral surveys of female sex workers. These data are used in service delivery policy and funding decisions



Policy, Communications & Diplomacy

- Provided technical assistance to South Sudan's MOH in risk communications and advocacy



PROGRAM OVERVIEW

GLOBAL HEALTH SECURITY

CDC partners with MOH to develop sustainable national systems for disease surveillance, emergency preparedness, outbreak response, immunization, laboratory capacity, strategic information, and workforce development.

Surveillance Systems

In response to COVID-19, CDC supported the public health emergency operations center (PHEOC) to establish the Data Management Unit. This unit is a first-of-its-kind data hub that generates quality outbreak data and informs decision-making, preparedness, and response. CDC also established COVID-19 surveillance and vaccination reporting modules within the District Health Information Software 2 platform to increase data availability and inform the response.

Laboratory Systems

CDC is the sole U.S. agency that supports laboratory system development activities of MOH using PEPFAR resources. Activities have included:

- Ensuring a quality lab management system for HIV, early infant diagnosis (EID), and viral load (VL) testing
- Developing national laboratory guidelines, policies and strategic plans
- Enhancing sample referral systems to transport specimens to the testing laboratories
- Establishing and maintaining laboratory information management systems
- Training and mentorship of laboratory staff on management and technical skills
- Improving biosafety and biosecurity through training, providing supplies, maintaining equipment, and regulating access to laboratories

In response to COVID-19, CDC partnered with the MOH to decentralize and expand existing laboratory infrastructure for COVID-19 testing. This support resulted in a rapid scale-up in COVID-19 testing that led to identifying thousands of cases and contributed to effective case management. CDC also conducted a series of trainings for laboratory staff on COVID-19 prevention and control practices.

Workforce Development

Two tiers of FETP—frontline and intermediate—train health professionals at county, state, and national levels to identify and contain outbreaks before they become epidemics. Participants develop critical skills in data collection, analysis, and translation of data into evidence-based recommendations. Graduates of South Sudan's FETP-Frontline have led a series of investigations, responding to anthrax, hepatitis E, malaria, measles, meningitis, and acute watery diarrhea disease outbreaks in the country.

CDC leverages Project Extension for Community Healthcare Outcomes (Project ECHO) to expand health care worker's capacity in epidemiology, disease surveillance, diagnostics, treatment and case management, and prevention. Project ECHO currently serves as the only source of continuing medical education in the country across any public health program.

Emergency response

CDC and MOH established South Sudan's first national PHEOC in 2018. The establishment leveraged existing resources from the PEPFAR. Since then, PHEOC has led and coordinated several epidemic preparedness efforts and outbreak responses, including Ebola and COVID-19. CDC provides technical and financial support to the MOH to train PHEOC staff on the Incident Management System. These trainings strengthen emergency management capabilities at the national and sub-national levels. CDC also provides technical assistance to South Sudan's MOH in the areas of surveillance, laboratory systems, border health, risk communications, and advocacy. CDC supports Ebola response preparedness activities, including epidemiology and disease surveillance, laboratory services, border health screening, and infection prevention and control.

HIV AND TB

As a key implementer of PEPFAR, CDC works to build a sustainable national HIV response program and achieve the Global 95-95-95 goals for epidemic control. CDC collaborates with MOH, World Health Organization (WHO), UNAIDS, Global Fund, and other partners. CDC supports comprehensive HIV programs including HIV testing services, prevention of mother-to-child transmission, EID, and antiretroviral treatment (ART). Activities focus on:

- Increasing access to quality HIV services
- Minimizing interruptions in HIV treatment
- Reaching viral load suppression among people living with HIV (PLHIV)
- Enhancing laboratory capacity and coverage of viral load and EID
- Enhancing the quality and availability of HIV surveillance data

CDC works with MOH and partners to increase TB screening and scale up TPT services, including ensuring sufficient quantity of supplies.

IMMUNIZATION

CDC works with MOH and partners to strengthen immunization systems and provide technical support. Additional partners include the WHO, African Field Epidemiology Network, and UNICEF. CDC supports workforce capacity-strengthening for national and state immunization programs as part of the Expanded Program on Immunization (EPI). Health professionals participate in trainings on routine immunization, disease surveillance, cold-chain logistics, data management, communication, and other supplemental activities. A CDC-supported national consultant provides technical direction to EPI and contributes to polio outbreak response and surveillance strengthening. CDC also supports planning for measles supplemental immunization activities to close immunity gaps and prevent outbreaks.

