



PrEP: Progress in Central Asia

Fast Track Cities Conference 2023

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The propagation of HIV within the MSM in EECA

HIV prevalence



Coverage with HIV prevention

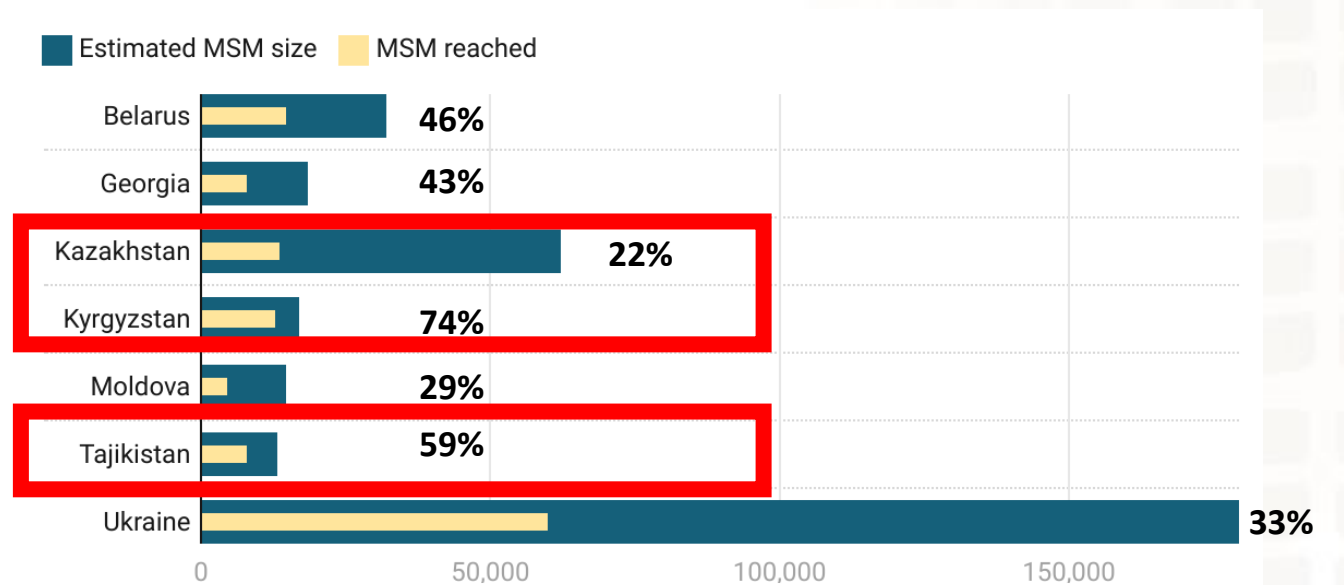
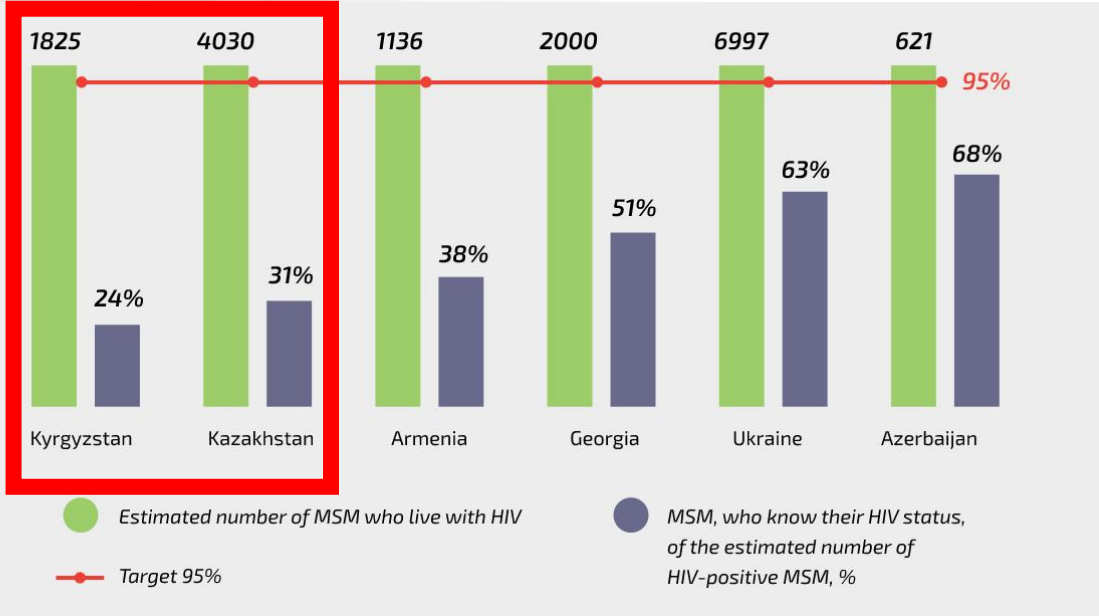


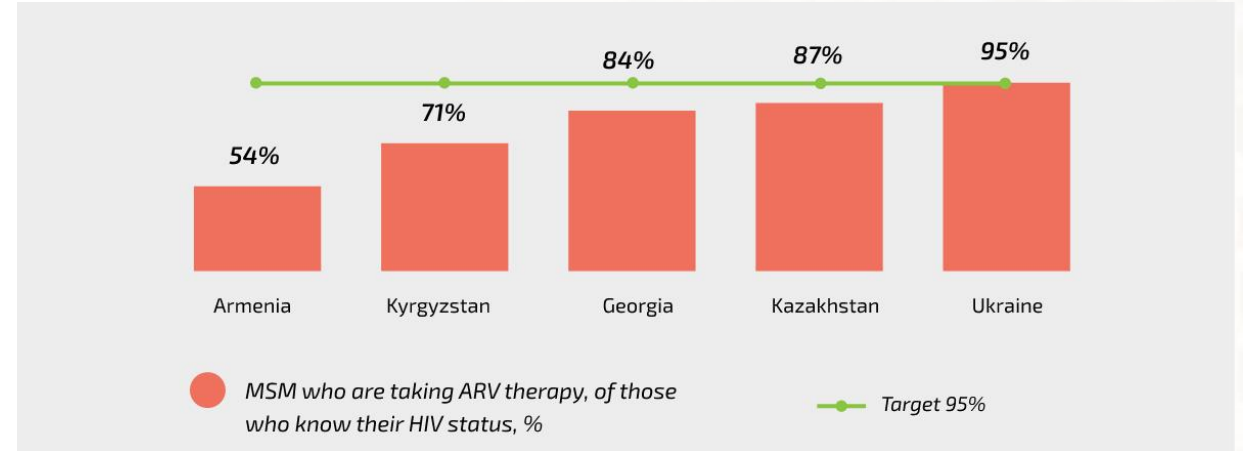
Chart: ECOM • Source: AIDSinfo and Global Fund • Created with Datawrapper

HIV Cascade among MSM

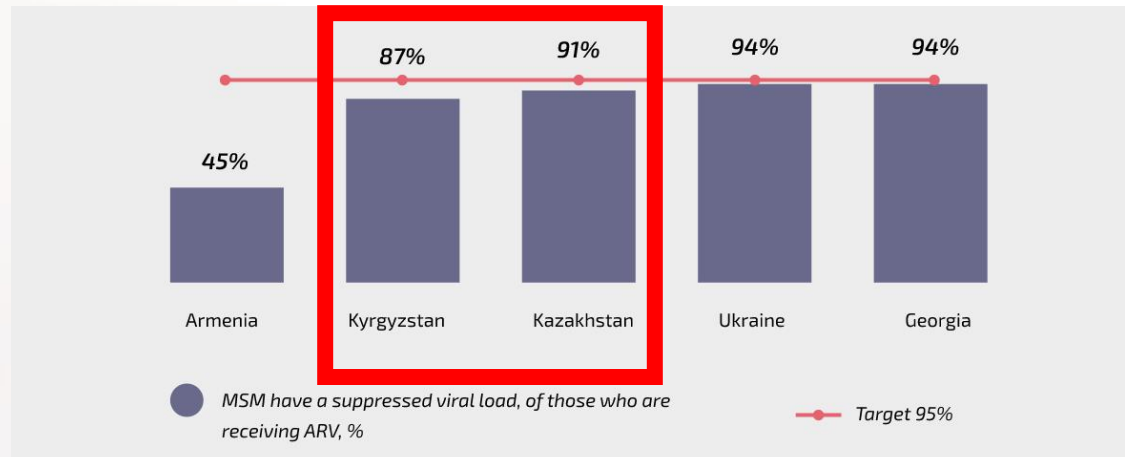
% People living with HIV know their HIV status



% People who know their status, receive HIV treatment



% People on HIV treatment have a suppressed viral load



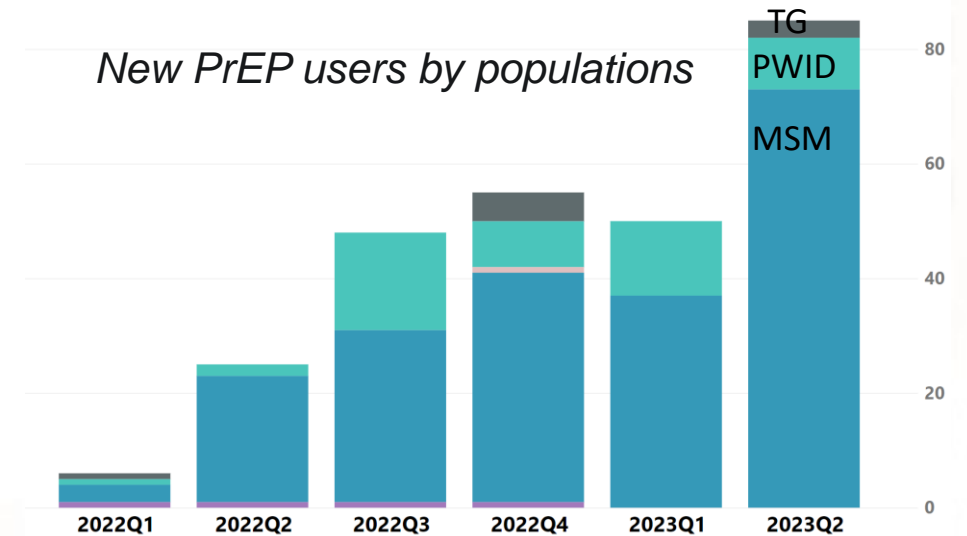


PrEP in Central Asia

- PrEP initiatives were implemented across four nations, with three of these programs specifically targeting key populations, notably men who have sex with men (MSM).
- Notably, there is an absence of nationally standardized PrEP protocols within Turkmenistan.
- Over the course of a decade, there has been a notable expansion in the availability of PrEP, yet its accessibility remains constrained.
- Kazakhstan stands out as a pioneering nation in terms of the sheer magnitude of individuals benefiting from PrEP interventions.

PrEP in Kyrgyzstan

- **Low awareness of PrEP (2021 BBS)**
 - MSM: 22.1 (Osh)- 37.3% (Bishkek)
 - PWID: 4.6-15.2% (across six locations)
- **< 400 users**
- **From Q1->Q2 FY23, there was a substantial 66% surge in the number of newly registered PrEP users**
 - Results represent 50.3% of annual target (350)
- **Newly registered PrEP users: 50-50% a daily and on-demand (E-D) schedule**
- **Introduction of community-based delivery services in 2022**



Source: PEPFAR

PrEP in Kazakhstan

- **State funding for PrEP since 2021**
- **> 3,000 clients, 2023**
- **Daily PrEP is the most preferred option for users, 68%**
- **New PrEP protocol in December 2022, the most advanced in EECA, includes CAB-LA**
- **July 2023 - PrEP available through pharmacies and community centres**



ECOM / WHO cooperation within SoS_Project 2.0

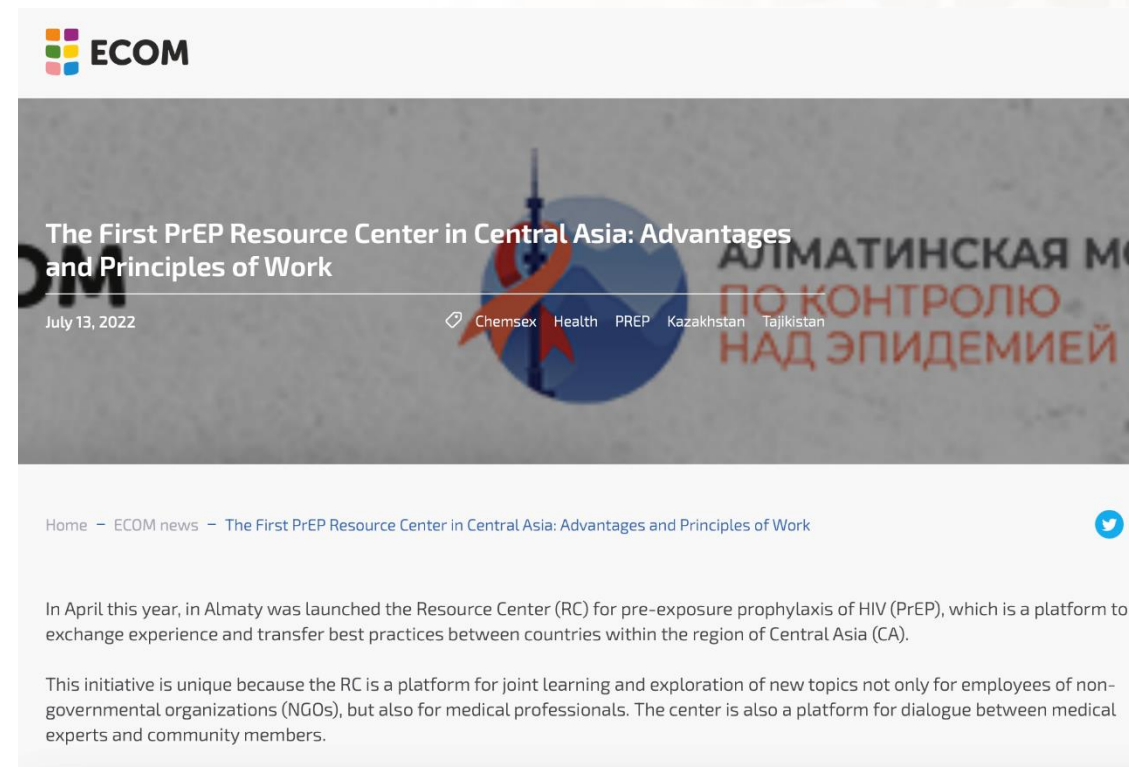
- **Facilitating access and reducing barriers to PrEP in the EECA region**
- **Technical assistance: regular expert site visits, educational activities, review of policies and protocols, demand creation: development of informational materials**
- **Advocacy to promote the latest WHO recommendations and ensure their inclusion in national protocols**
- **1st (Sub-)Regional Consultation on PrEP in Central Asia: platform for interdisciplinary and regional cooperation**



Technical Assistance

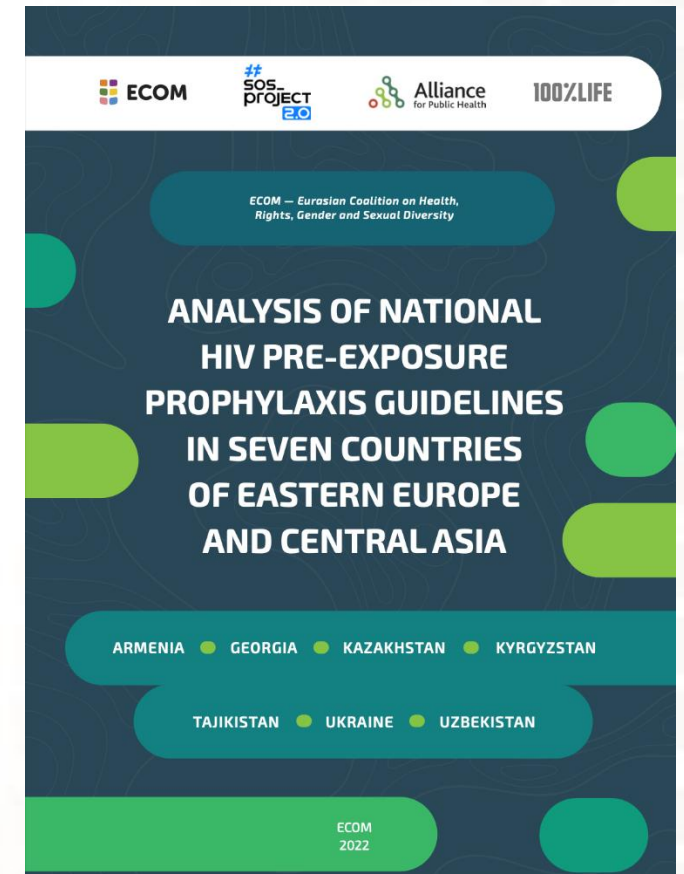
Joint ECOM/WHO team visits to Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan in 2023:

- **Kazakhstan: Expansion of PrEP in remote regions**
- **Kyrgyzstan: Review of national policy and recommendation for revision, including community-based model**
- **Tajikistan: Site visits for medical professionals within the region**



Analysis of National PrEP Protocols

- National protocols are not fully aligned with WHO recommendations and technical guidelines for PrEP provision
- The excessive medicalization of prescription methods.
- National protocols do not consider a community-based service delivery model



Analysis of National PrEP Protocols

WHO Guidelines	ARM	GEO	KAZ	KGZ	TJK	UKR	UZB
PrEP available to key populations	+	+	+	+	+	+	-
PrEP available to all individuals at substantial risk of HIV upon request	-	-	+	+	+	+	-
Event-Driven PrEP available for trans people	-	-	-	+	-	+	-
Persons with HBV infection are eligible for event-driven PrEP	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Community-based PrEP delivery is possible	-	+	-	-	-	-	-
Creatinine clearance testing is not required for PrEP start	-	-	+	+	+	+	-
Creatinine clearance testing is not required for PrEP continuation	-	-	+	+	+	+	-
HBsAg testing is not required for PrEP start	-	-	+	+	+	+	-

Challenges and Barriers



- **Inadequate awareness of PrEP within key populations.**
- **Limited knowledge among healthcare professionals regarding PrEP.**
- **Stigmatization and discrimination by healthcare practitioners.**
- **The medicalization of PrEP services, restricting prescription authority solely to medical doctors.**
- **Prohibition of online procurement of PrEP.**
- **Unavailability of PrEP for migrant populations.**

Recommendations

- **Facilitate community-based service delivery.**
- **Establish protocols that support the activities of non-governmental organizations (NGOs).**
- **Generate demand within local communities.**
- **Provide training for healthcare professionals.**



1st Sub-Regional Consultation on PrEP among MSM and Trans People in Central Asia



21-22 November 2023. Goals:

- **Develop multi-stakeholder approaches for subregional and national scale up of PrEP programs among MSM and trans* people**
- **Advocate for and popularize community-based models**
- **Present the best practices of PrEP implementation, including community-based practices**
- **Identify the needs and potential solutions to overcome the barriers for PrEP expansion**