

The President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR)

The United States' President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) is the largest bilateral development assistance program for the global HIV response.

PEPFAR, along with other global AIDS programs, is critical to achieving the end of the AIDS pandemic as we know it. However, budget cuts from Congress in recent years have threatened its progress, and activist pressure is necessary to ensure that the program is fully funded.

What is PEPFAR?

The U.S. President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) is the largest bilateral development assistance program for the HIV response globally. As of September 2015, this program was supporting access to HIV treatment for 9.5 million people, and has supported testing and counselling for more than 68.2 million people.

How was the program created?

PEPFAR was created in response to international pressure on the U.S. to spend foreign aid dollars on HIV treatment. The U.S. government and other donors resisted this idea with claims that it would be 'unsustainable' and 'too expensive' to fund HIV treatment. At the same time, U.S. government policies were preventing access to generic, affordable medicines in the countries hit hardest by the AIDS epidemic. AIDS activists forced their hand to make exceptions to these policies, and invest foreign aid into HIV treatment and prevention.

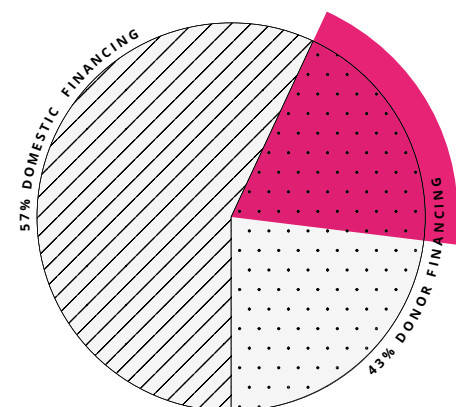
In 2003, after 3 years of intensive pressure from activists, President George W. Bush announced a 5-year, \$15 billion dollar initiative to fight AIDS around the world. The program was then reauthorized by Congress in 2008, and further extended in 2013, with strong support among both Republicans and Democrats.

Why is it so important?

We can end the AIDS pandemic in our lifetime.

New scientific evidence shows that starting HIV treatment immediately upon diagnosis enables people to live longer, healthier lives and is among the most effective ways to prevent HIV transmission. In addition, antiretroviral drugs can also successfully be used as pre-exposure prophylaxis to prevent HIV-negative people from contracting the virus. The U.S. government is a major funder of the HIV response worldwide, and PEPFAR has the power to help deliver the end of the AIDS pandemic by 2030, if it is fully funded and if it is held accountable to civil society goals and priorities.

PEPFAR FINANCING
IN LOW AND MIDDLE-INCOME COUNTRIES



PEPFAR accounts for **47%** of all donor funding for the AIDS response. In low and middle-income countries, donors financed 43% of the response in 2014.

How is PEPFAR funding channeled to recipient countries?

PEPFAR serves as the umbrella for all U.S. government bilateral funding for the AIDS response. Funding is spent through the U.S. Centers for Disease Control (CDC), USAID, Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA), the Departments of Defense, Commerce and Labour, and the Peace Corps. These agencies may then direct funding to 'implementing partners' that are either government agencies from the recipient country, or non-governmental organizations.

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What role have activists played in influencing PEPFAR funding and policy in the past?

For its first decade, PEPFAR funded several HIV policies that were not based on evidence and that undermined the HIV response. Activists demanded that PEPFAR change these policies, and have consistently called on PEPFAR to increase its focus on evidence-based interventions.

Activists in the United States have also worked in partnership with activists in recipient countries to demand that the government increase the funding that PEPFAR receives. Due to activist pressure, the program's yearly allocation has increased substantially since it was first signed into law. However, since 2010, funding for PEPFAR has decreased by hundred of millions of dollars due to funding cuts, and its yearly budget has been flat-lined since 2014.

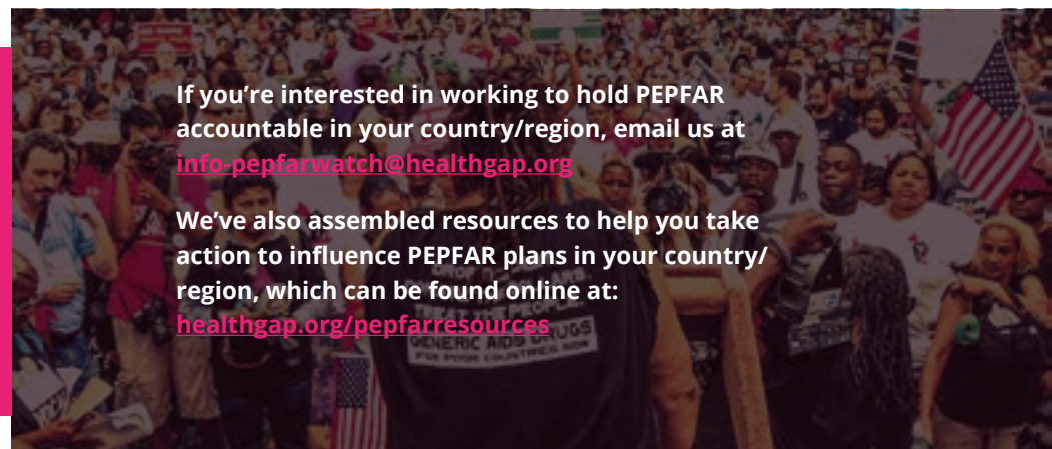
How can activists in the U.S. and in recipient countries influence PEPFAR today?

In recipient countries, activists have an opportunity to influence PEPFAR's in-country program planning process, which allows activists to pressure PEPFAR to fund the interventions most needed by their communities. See our fact sheet on opportunities for civil society engagement in recipient countries for more information.

In the United States, activists can pressure elected officials and other decision makers to fight for increased funding for PEPFAR. The end of the AIDS epidemic as we know it will only be a reality if PEPFAR, along with other key global HIV programs, is fully funded to support continued scale-up in access to treatment, prevention, and care for those who need it around the world. Since 2010, funding for PEPFAR has been flatlined by the US government, but this trend can be reversed with pressure from activists like you.



How can I get involved in advocacy to influence what PEPFAR is doing in my country?



If you're interested in working to hold PEPFAR accountable in your country/region, email us at info-pepfarwatch@healthgap.org

We've also assembled resources to help you take action to influence PEPFAR plans in your country/region, which can be found online at: healthgap.org/pepfarresources