

Progress towards Universal Access Guatemala

Universal access implies that all people should be able to have access to information and services that are:

Equitable – accessible – affordable – comprehensive – sustainable

In 2006, countries worldwide committed to setting ambitious national targets for scaling up towards Universal Access to HIV prevention, treatment, care and support by 2010. The targets focus on what could be achieved if the following obstacles can be addressed:

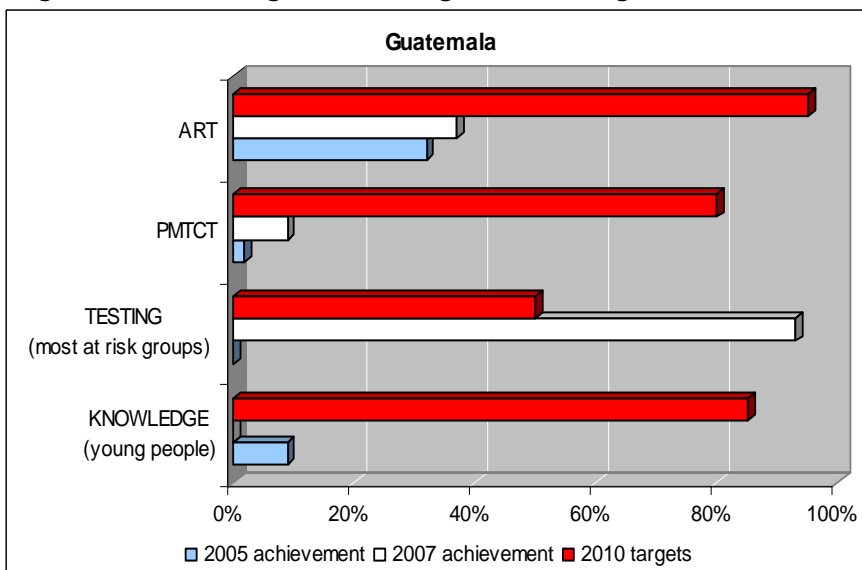
- **Predictable and sustainable financing**
- **Strengthening human resources and health systems**
- **Access to affordable commodities**
- **Stigma, discrimination, gender and human rights**

Review of National reports in 2008 demonstrated that Universal Access has catalyzed an accelerated and strengthened national HIV response with more results-based planning and a general overall increase in access to services. National political leadership and coordination were found to be critical to scale up. However more emphasis was needed on addressing the obstacles to scale up which would not support reaching universal access but also the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. Specifically, there is a need to accelerate progress on HIV-prevention efforts, and to better utilise the resources available within civil society and people living with HIV.

Universal access has generated a continuing engagement with national partners to monitor and review progress towards universal access. This has resulted in a number of countries revising their national targets to ensure a sharper focus on areas in need of additional support.

Progress in Guatemala

During 2006 and 2007, Guatemala focused on scaling up treatment to guarantee increased access and coverage. Key issues included avoiding stock problems, drug shortages, reducing prices and providing oversight to access issues through civil society and people living with HIV. Government and partners worked jointly to address access to commodities through better prices, stocks, purchasing mechanisms and logistics as well as the decentralization of ARVs to regional hospitals. As a result of these efforts, the number of people living with AIDS receiving ARVs increased from 6,647 at the end of 2006 to almost 8,000 by the end of 2007). Guatemala has also prioritized the scaling up the prevention of mother to child transmission programmes, updating national guidelines, increasing the number and response capacity of nursing and lab staff, and training health providers in prevention of mother to child transmission leading to a significant expansion of mother to child transmission prevention programmes. Guatemala also undertook awareness-raising activities, voicing alert messages and raising these to decision-making levels in cases of shortages



Universal access has been adopted from a human rights perspective in the political agenda, particularly during the political transition.

Figure 1. The graph presents a snapshot of progress towards universal access based on 2005 and 2007 reported UNGASS achievements and 2010 reported targets, as per data available.

Please note that ARV and PMTCT targets may be subject to change based on revised numbers in need of ART.

"(We) commit ourselves to pursuing all necessary efforts to scale up nationally driven, sustainable and comprehensive responses... towards the goal of universal access to comprehensive prevention programmes, treatment, care and support by 2010."

2006 Political Declaration, (UN General Assembly, 15 June 2006)