



THE REPUBLIC OF UGANDA  
MINISTRY OF HEALTH

# UGANDA POPULATION-BASED HIV IMPACT ASSESSMENT (UPHIA 2024-2025)

EVERY  
DROP  
COUNTS

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

## 1. What is the PHIA Project?

The Population-based HIV Impact Assessment Project (PHIA) is a multi-country effort to gather key data needed to guide the global response to the HIV epidemic. Each PHIA survey offers household-based HIV testing and counseling conducted by trained survey staff, with return of results. The surveys also ask questions about access to preventive care and treatment services. The results measure national and regional progress toward the UNAIDS 95-95-95 goals and guide policy and funding priorities. In addition, UPHIA 2024-2025 is offering blood sugar testing and measurement of weight, height and blood pressure. The results will help the Ministry of Health to know the number of people with raised blood pressure, raised blood glucose and obesity, and to better plan for services. UPHIA 2024-2025 is being conducted through the Ministry of Health, with technical assistance from Makerere University School of Public Health (MakSPH) and the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) with funding from the U.S. President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR).

## 2. Why are PHIA surveys conducted?

Data from PHIA provides an in-depth understanding of how many people are currently infected with HIV (HIV prevalence), how many people have new infections (HIV incidence), and how many people with HIV are on effective treatment (HIV viral load suppression) in each country. This provides government leaders, medical professionals, civil society organizations and researchers with a valuable guide to decision-making on HIV policy, programs and funding, leading to better health, stronger families, and more prosperous nations.

## 3. What households will the survey reach?

The survey will reach a nationally representative sample of households in Uganda. It will target approximately 7,000 randomly selected households. Approximately 16,000 men, women and adolescents, 15 years and older, in these households will be invited to participate in the survey. Some selected households may have people living with HIV, but other selected households may not include any people living with HIV. In some areas, young adolescents 10-14 years may also be invited to participate in a small interview as part of the survey.

## 4. How will this survey be conducted?

Before the interview begins, you will be given information that fully describes the survey. Before starting, survey teams will obtain permission (consent) for participants 18 years and older. Adolescents ages 10-17 years will be asked for their assent and for their parent or guardian's permission. Emancipated minors, who are adolescents ages 15-17 years who are married, the parent of a child, or who have left home and are self-sufficient, will give consent similar to adults ages 18 years and older.

Computer tablets will be used to collect information via face-to-face interviews. Household heads will be asked questions about the people living in the house. After the household interview, there will be individual interviews with eligible household members. Individuals will be asked questions about age, the kind of work they do, their experience with HIV services, and their personal behaviors.

Blood samples will be taken from the arm and/or finger to perform HIV and blood sugar testing for all eligible participants in the house. These test results will be returned to the participant on the same day.

Those who test positive for HIV will be referred to the health facility for care and treatment. Those with abnormal blood sugar or blood pressure measurements will also be referred to the health facility for further assessment and care. Blood samples will also be sent to a laboratory to conduct further tests such as CD4 count and viral load for the participants who tested HIV-positive. Results for tests done in the laboratory will be sent to the health facility of the participant's choice within about 12 weeks.

## **5. Is there a cost to participate?**

There is no cost for your participation in the survey. Similarly, you will not be paid to participate in the survey.

## **6. Do I have to participate?**

Your participation is completely voluntary. However, it is important for you to know your HIV status in order to initiate treatment early if you are HIV positive. Medicines are available in health facilities. Knowing your weight, blood pressure and blood sugar levels will also empower you to take early corrective measures leading to better health.

## **7. What are the benefits of my participation?**

Your participation will contribute to improving health systems, policies and programs to address the HIV epidemic in Uganda. This survey also provides an opportunity to receive free and voluntary HIV and blood sugar testing in the privacy of your home if you are 15 years or older. It is important to get tested and know your status. If you do test positive, receiving lifesaving antiretroviral treatment as early as possible will help you live a long and healthy life. Your participation will also provide the Ministry of Health with valuable information on how effective HIV policies and programs are in your community and will inform national-level advancements.

Monitoring of blood pressure and blood sugar helps in making an early diagnosis of hypertension or diabetes mellitus, which is helpful in taking early corrective measures leading to better control of blood pressure and blood sugar levels.

## **8. Will my information be kept private?**

There is no cost for your participation in the survey. Similarly, you will not be paid to participate in the survey. Yes, survey staff are specially trained to protect your confidentiality. You may choose the location in or near your home where you would like to speak with survey staff. You may also choose to skip any questions or stop the survey at any time. You will be given a unique identification number, but your name will be kept separate from your answers to the questions. Only those managing the survey will have access to the information gathered during data collection.

If your test result is positive, survey staff will share your test results with a health facility of your choice, with your consent, for linkage to care purposes. In the same way, if you have abnormal blood pressure or blood sugar measurements, you will be referred to a health facility of your choice for further assessment and care.

## **9. When will I receive the HIV and blood sugar test results?**

If you are 15 years or older, you will receive your HIV and blood sugar test results the same day you are tested. It will be provided to you by our trained staff. If you test positive for HIV, you will be provided with a referral form for a health facility of your choice to learn more about your status and overall health.

You will also be able to receive your CD4 count and viral load results at the health facility you choose within about 12 weeks after your test. If you have abnormal blood pressure or blood sugar results, you will be referred to a health facility of your choice for further assessment and care.

## 10. What will the blood sample be used for?

After HIV testing is conducted in your home, blood samples will then be taken to a central laboratory for further testing. The blood sample will only be used for laboratory tests to understand the state of the HIV epidemic in Uganda. If you agree in the consent form, your blood may also be stored and used for future tests to better understand health issues in your country. All samples will be handled according to Ministry of Health approved standards.

## 11. What are the benefits of knowing one's HIV status?

Getting tested is the pathway to treatment or prevention of HIV. If you test positive, it allows you to immediately seek treatment to live a long and healthy life. You will also learn about prevention methods, such as prevention of partner transmission or prevention of mother-to-child-transmission. If you test negative, this result opens the door to access HIV prevention options in your health facility. In either case, getting tested allows you to make empowered choices about your health.

## 12. How can I tell if someone has HIV?

You cannot tell by simply looking at someone whether they are living with HIV. Most people living with HIV today do not appear sick. Only an HIV test can correctly identify if someone has the virus or not.

## 13. What treatments exist for HIV?

Several different types of medications exist to treat and manage HIV infection. For those living with HIV, there is antiretroviral treatment (ART). For those who are HIV negative and may feel at risk of contracting HIV, there is pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) and post-exposure 4 prophylaxis (PEP). There are also preventative measures that can be taken to stay HIV-free, such as condom usage, medical circumcision for males, and more. For more information, please visit your nearest health facility.

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