

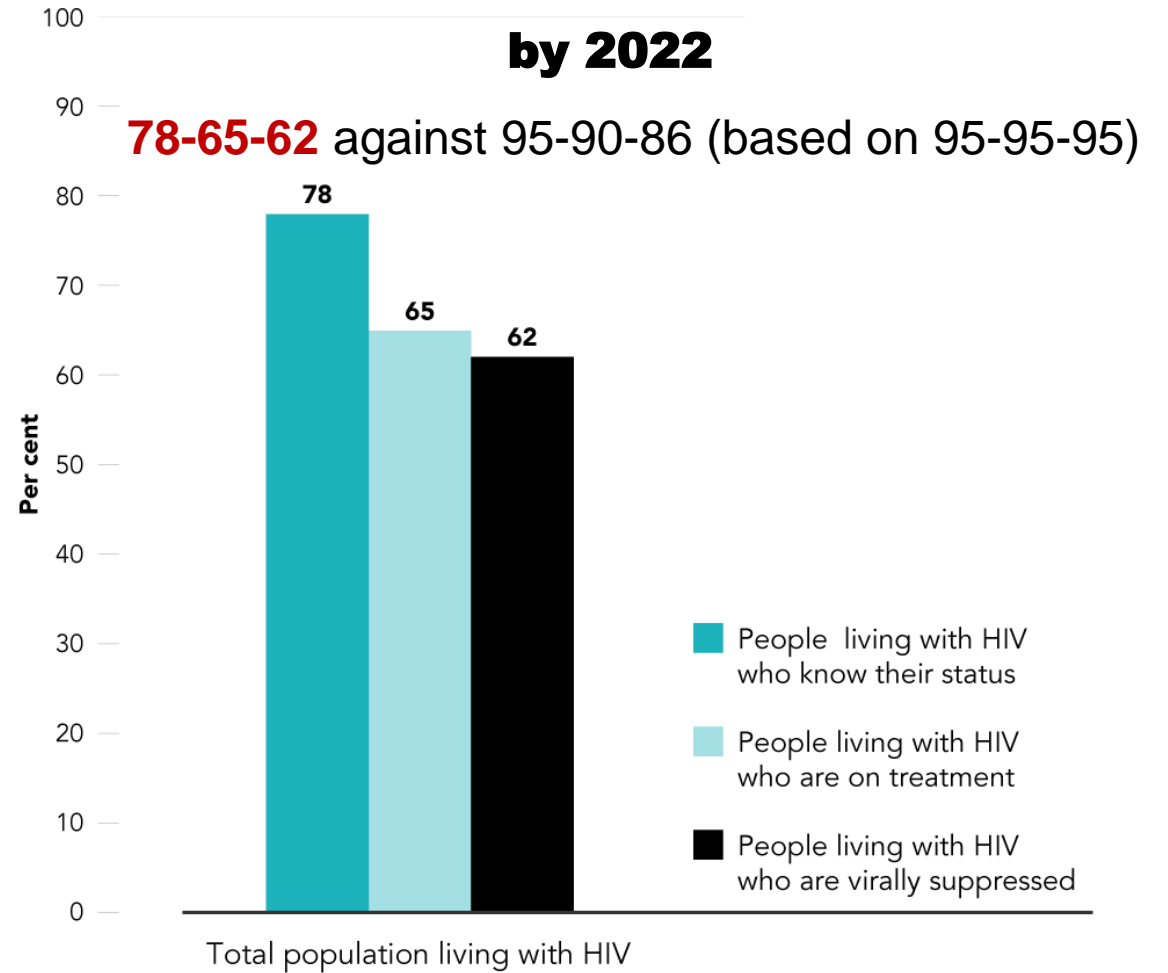
# ***Key messages from IAS 2023***

## *translating science into implementation in the Asia-Pacific*

- **Nittaya Phanuphak, MD, PhD**
- IAS Governing Council Asia-Pacific representative and Executive Director of the Institute of HIV Research and Innovation (IHRI), Bangkok, Thailand

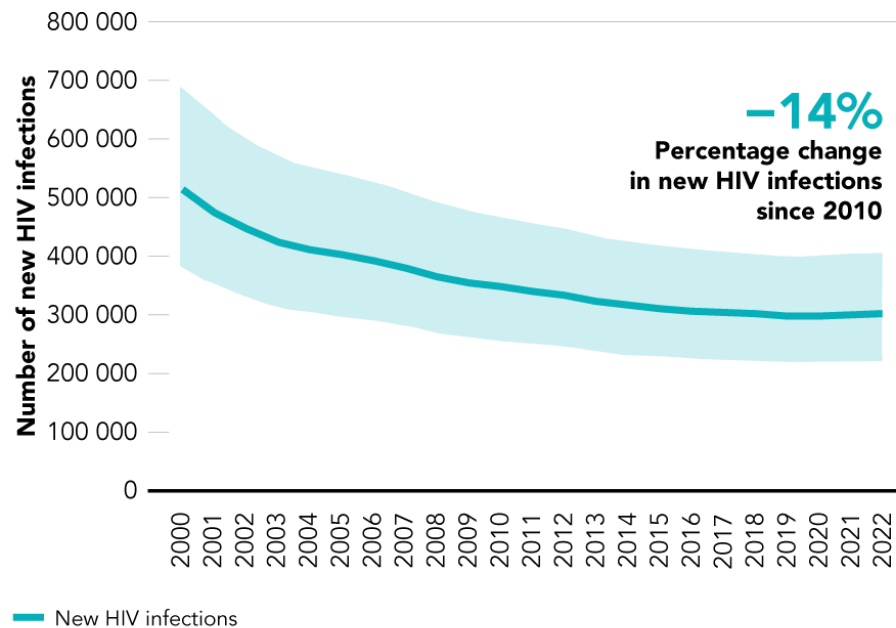
# Are we on track to end AIDS in the Asia-Pacific by 2030?

**“NO”**



# HIV epidemic in Asia and the Pacific

- **Marked inequalities and diverse epidemic trends** affect progress in the HIV response in Asia and the Pacific
- **Young people** (aged 15–24 years): around a quarter of new HIV infections in the region; nearly half in Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Myanmar, the Philippines and Thailand

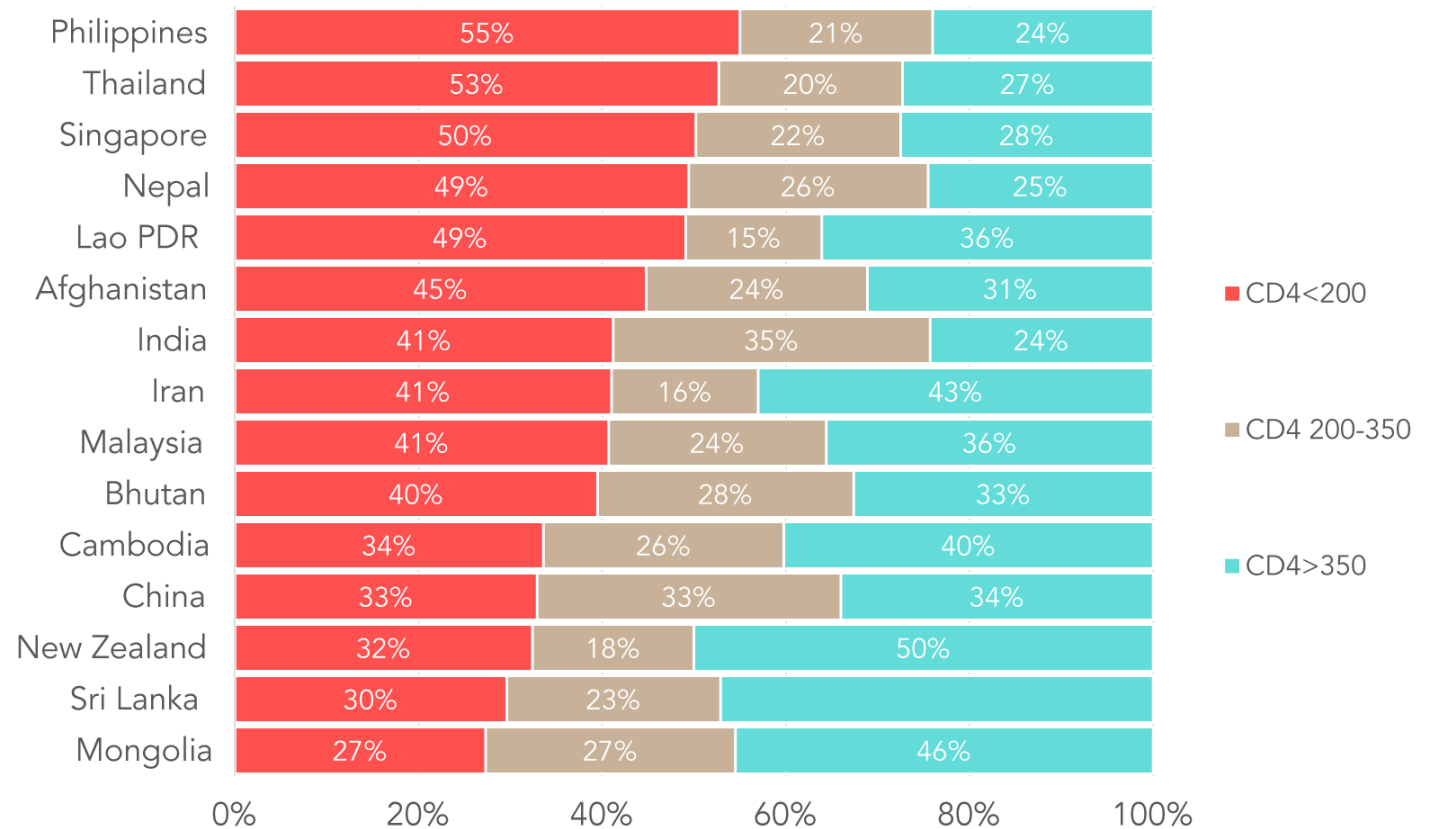


- New HIV infections among **gay men and other men who have sex with men** increased by
  - **6 times** in the Philippines
  - **3 times** in Cambodia
  - Almost **2 times** in Laos
- Increasing use of **stimulants and synthetic opioids** exacerbates the risks of HIV transmission among people who use drugs




# Late diagnosis & low ART coverage are serious concerns

ART coverage is below 50% in a third of countries with published data. ART coverage >80% achieved only in Cambodia, New Zealand and Thailand.

Proportion of PLHIV who have had initial CD4 count in 2020 by CD4 level

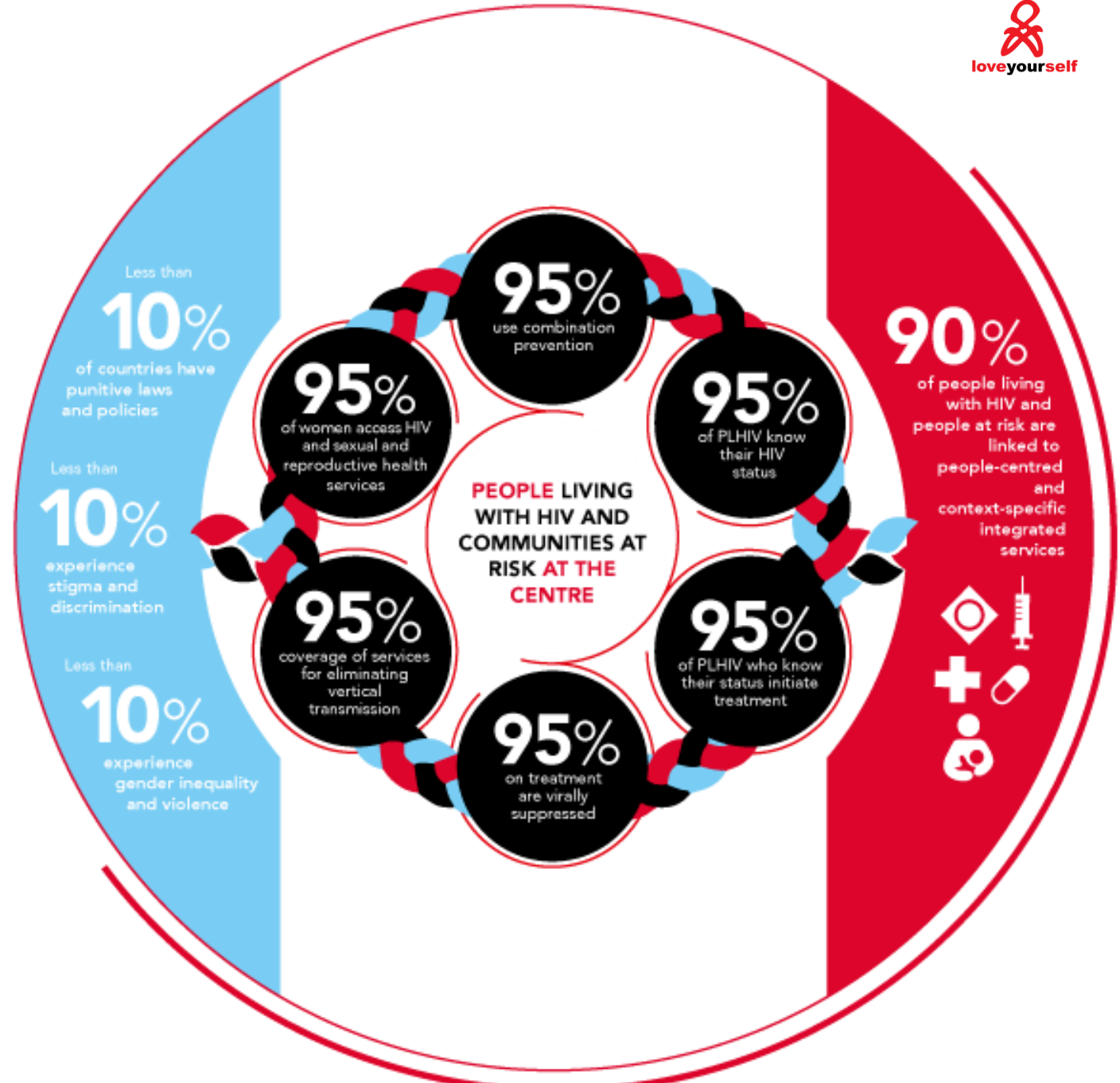


# We must move to

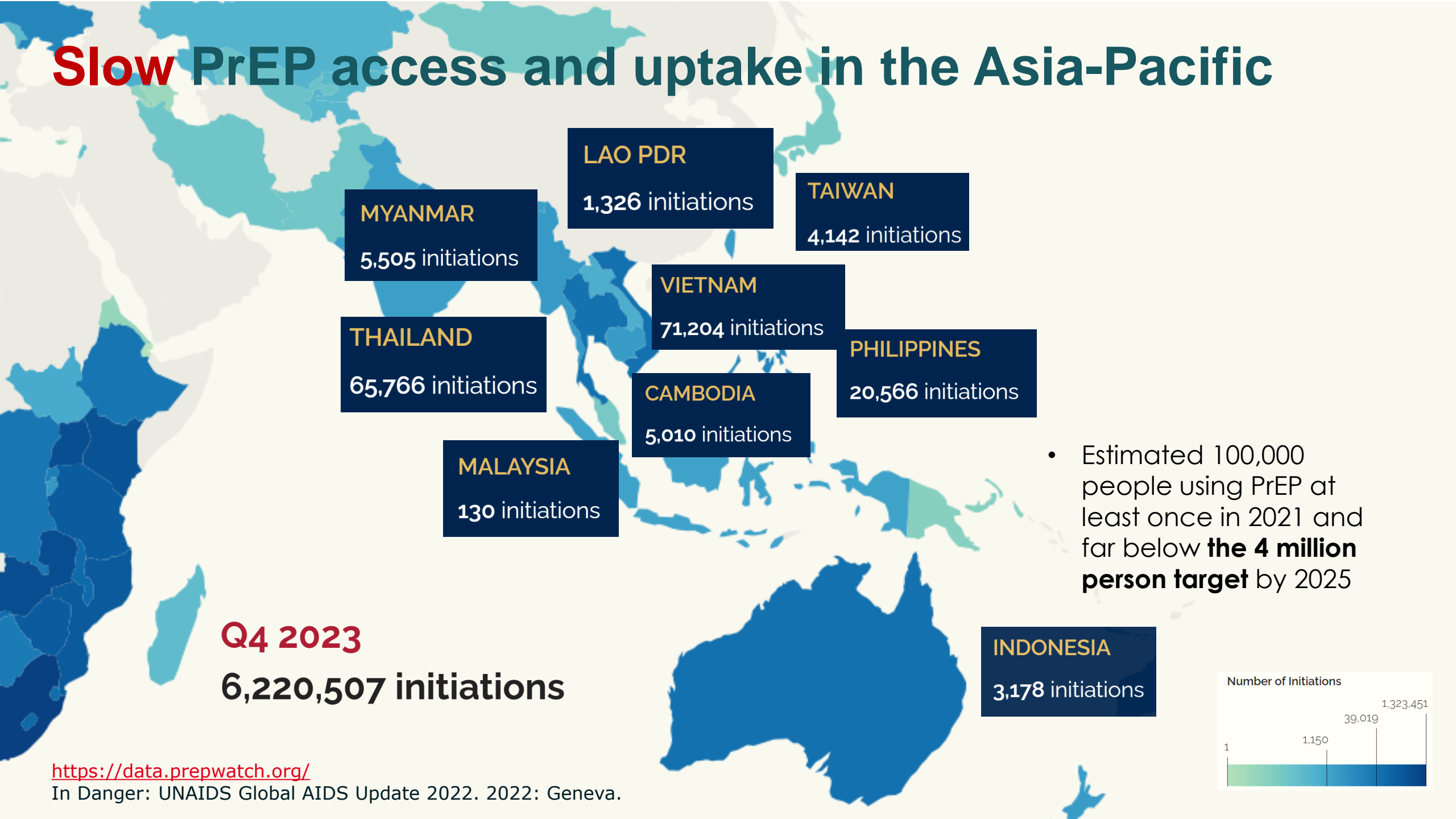
-  **THE 10s**
-  **THE 95s**
-  **THE INTEGRATION**

now!

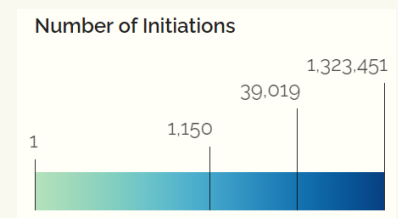
– see *people* in the percentages



# Slow PrEP access and uptake in the Asia-Pacific



- Estimated 100,000 people using PrEP at least once in 2021 and far below **the 4 million person target** by 2025



# Laws and policies that impede HIV responses

Although there is evidence of progress, all 39 countries still have laws that impede HIV response.

- **38** criminalize some aspect of sex work
- **17** criminalize same-sex relations
- **24** law does not allow for possession of a certain limited amount of drugs for personal use
- **19** criminalizing the transmission of, non-disclosure of or exposure to HIV transmission
- **15** restricting the entry, stay and residence of people living with HIV

# Laws and policies that impede HIV responses

Criminalization/ Restriction	Same-sex relations	Transgender people	Sex work	Possession of drugs for personal use**	Transmission of, non- disclosure of, exposure to HIV	Restricting entry, stay, residence of PLHIV	Parental consent for adolescent HIV testing
Cambodia	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
Indonesia	Yes/NS	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Lao PDR	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
Malaysia	Yes/NS	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	NA
Myanmar	Yes/NS	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	No
Philippines	No	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes
Singapore	No*	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Thailand	No	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	No
Vietnam	No	No	Yes	NA	Yes	No	Yes

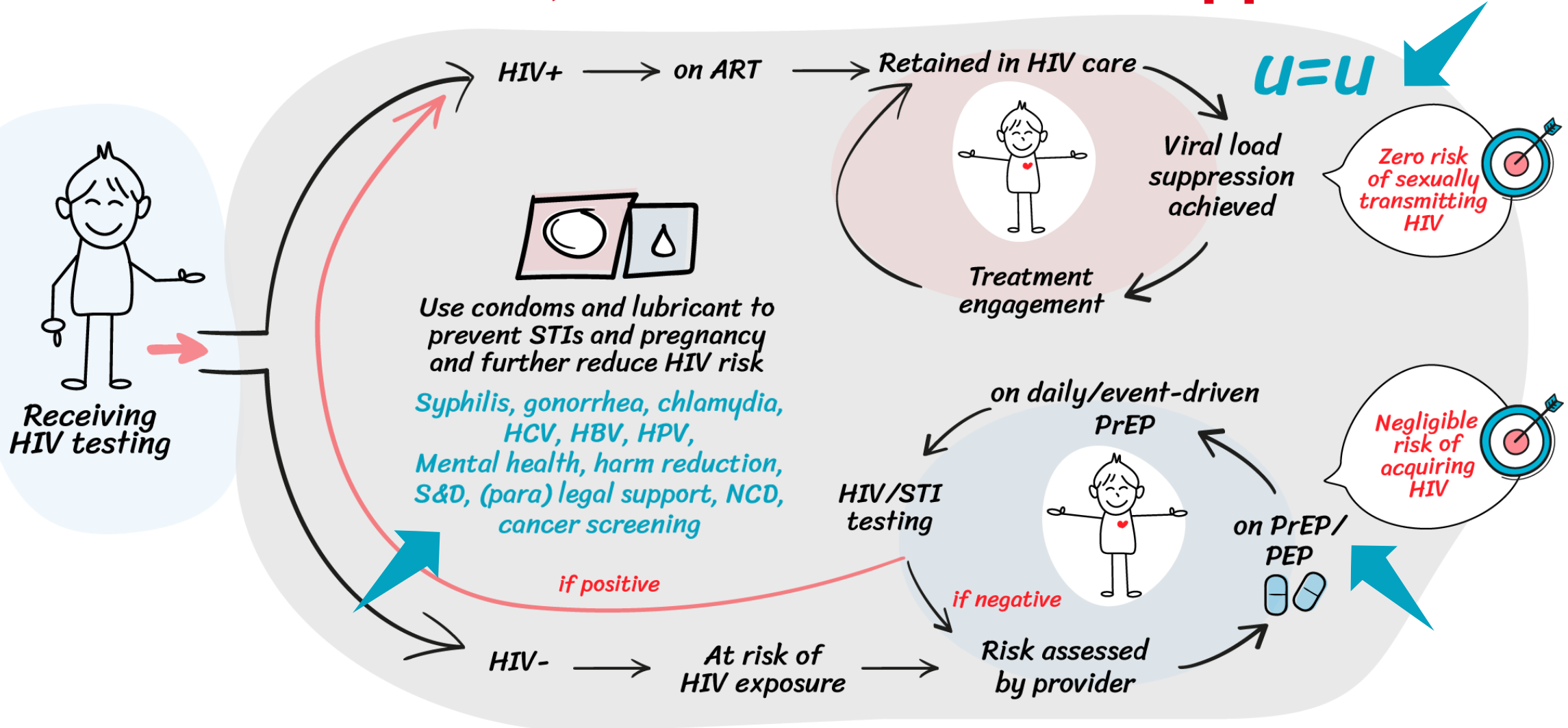
NS = No penalty specified; NA = Data not available

\*Singapore removed colonial laws prohibiting consensual sex between men in April 2023.

\*\*Death penalty for drug offences in 14 countries



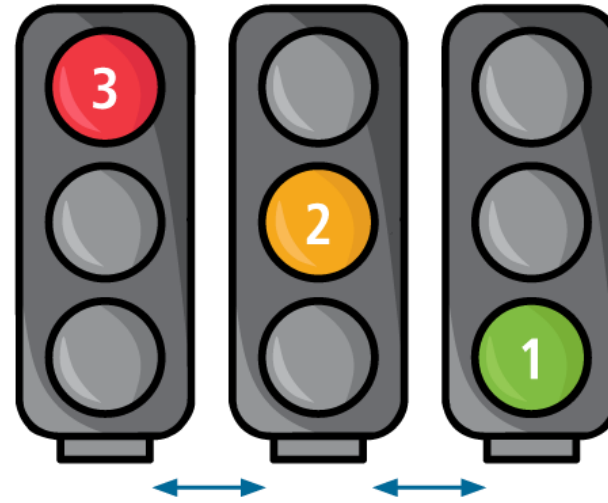
# Person-centered, HIV status-neutral approach



# WHO Policy Brief on The role of HIV viral suppression in improving individual health and reducing transmission, July 2023



Unsuppressed    Suppressed but detectable    Undetectable



- 1 Undetectable (not detected\*):** no measurable virus. Zero risk of transmission to sexual partner(s); minimal risk of mother to child transmission.
- 2 Suppressed (detected but  $\leq 1000$  copies/mL):** some virus replicating and present: could be due to missing doses, recent treatment initiation or drug resistance. Almost zero or negligible risk of transmission to sexual partner(s).
- 3 Unsuppressed ( $> 1000$  copies/mL):** significant virus replicating and present: could be due to missing doses, recent treatment initiation or drug resistance. Increased risk of falling ill and/or passing virus on to sexual partner(s) or children.



# U=U activation IAS 2023, Brisbane



We welcome protests  
at IAS 2023.

We endorse freedom of expression as an essential  
principle in the HIV response.

#sayzero

U=U=ZERORISK

Source: World Health Organization (2023)

IAS 2023

IAS

IAS 2023

IAS



iasociety.org

iasociety.org

iasociety.org

iasociety.org

iasociety.org

iasociety.org

# U=U – it is not just to take your pill



## Early testing and immediate treatment

- Point-of-care HIV testing
- Lay provider testing
- HIV self-testing
- Same-hour HIV test result
- Same-day ART initiation

## Suppressed VL Undetectable VL

- Happy with the regimen
- Enjoy being in care
- Adequate and sustainable ARV supply

## The goal of living a full life

- Quality of all life aspects
- Best sexual health with sexual pleasure, physically and emotionally
- ~~Being sinful/immoral, infectious, worthless~~

## The medical ethics

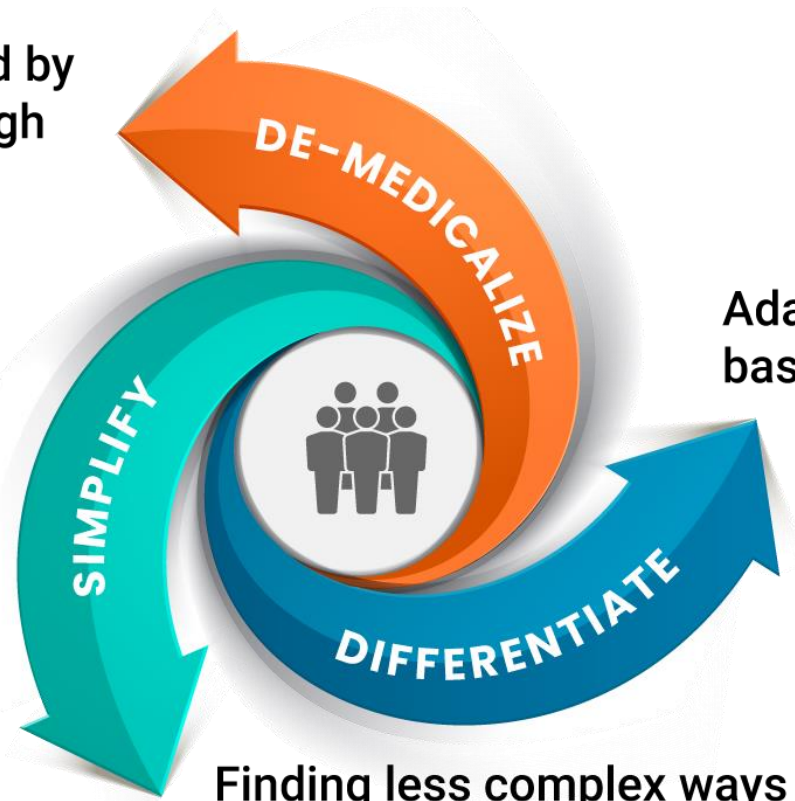
~~Condom = Responsibility~~  
 ↓  
 Respect an informed decision to choose prevention tool-of-choice  
**[AUTONOMY]**

~~Saying negligible risk~~  
 ↓  
 #SayZero to enhance physical, mental & sexual health  
**[BENEFACTENCE]**

~~Selective communication~~  
 ↓  
 Discuss U=U with all PLHIV  
**[JUSTICE]**

# People-centered service delivery principles

Different steps offered by lay providers, or through HCW task-shifting



Adapting the when, where, who and what based on a client-centered approach

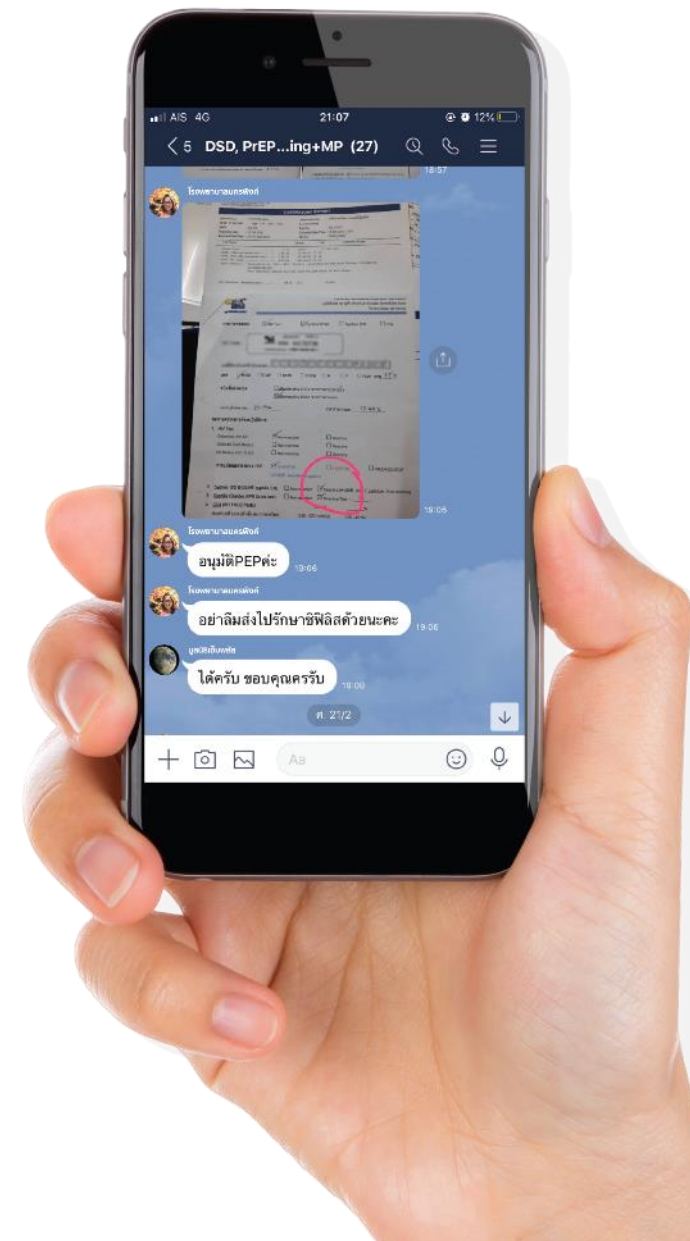
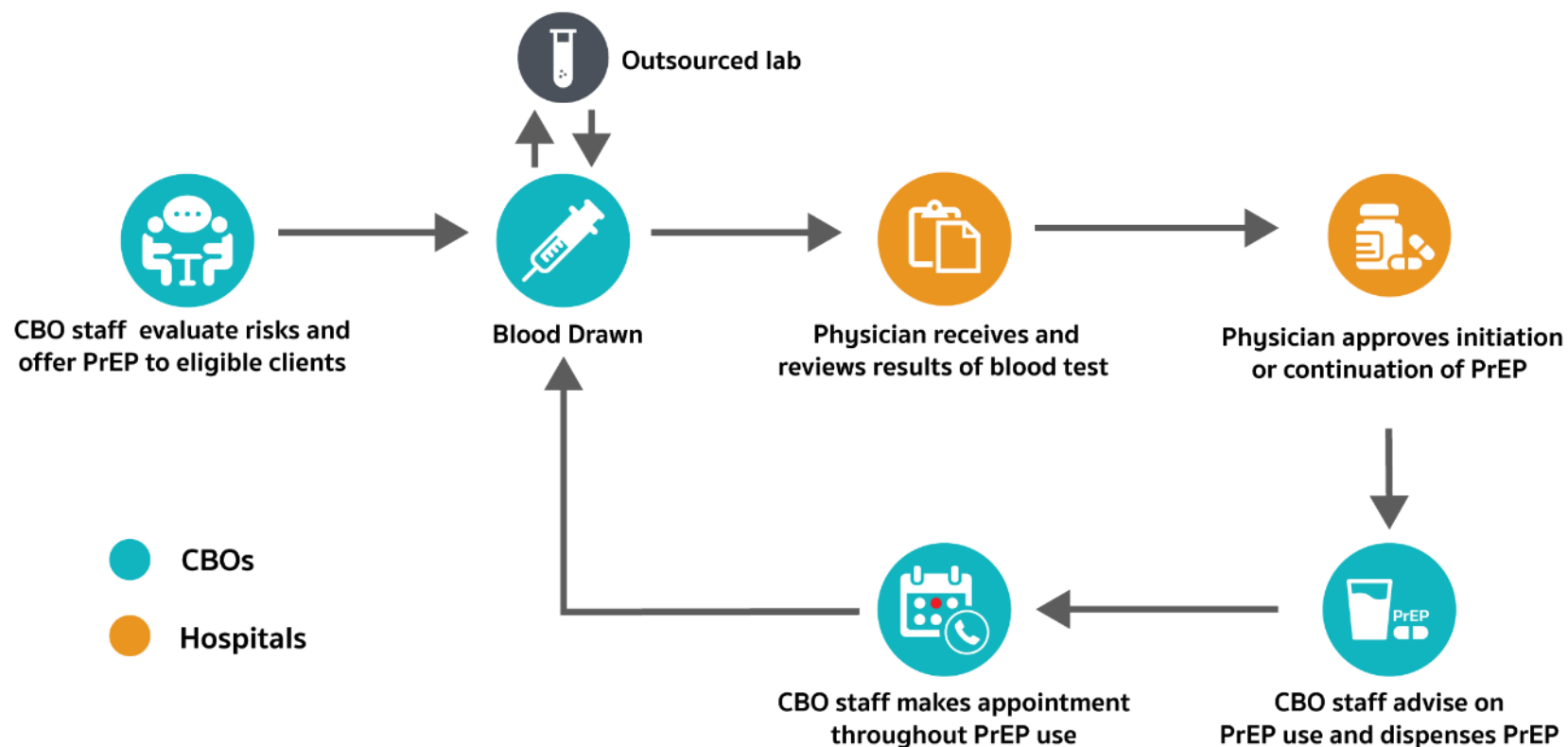
One size fits all → Custom tailoring

Finding less complex ways to deliver care, to promote increased access and lower cost, while retaining efficacy and quality

Nice-to-have → Must-have



# KP-led, Same-Day PrEP: close collaboration between CBOs and hospitals



# Moving towards self-care

776 HIVST kits distributed  
(May 2022–September 2023)



**Pribta  
Tangerine  
Clinic**



**606** clients

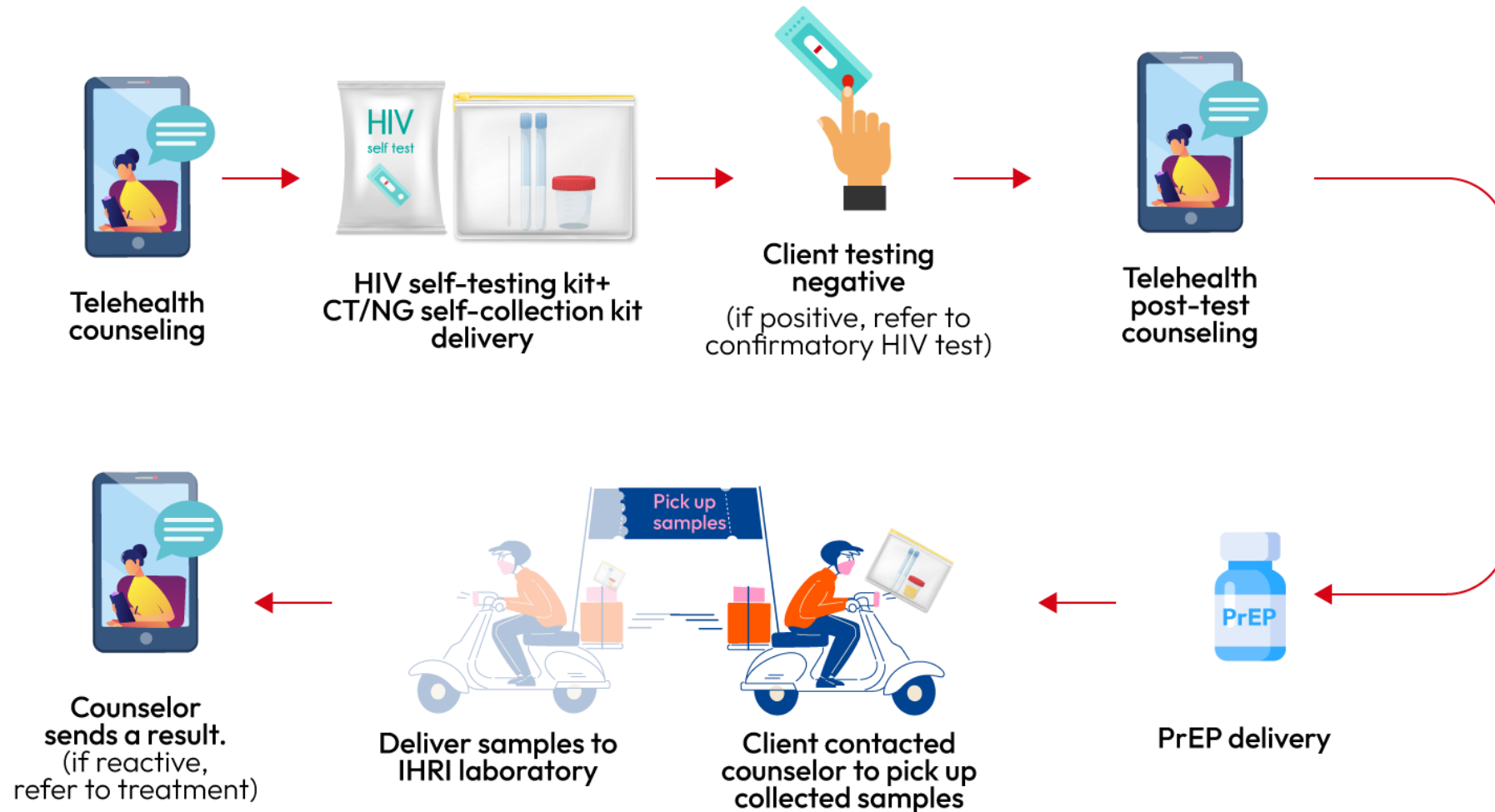
received HIVST kits and  
sent the results

**33.3%**  
never received  
HIV testing in their life

- **43.2%** Trans women
- **38.1%** Men who have sex with men
- **10.6%** Cisgender women
- **5.1%** Cisgender men
- **2.0%** Female sex workers
- **1.0%** Male sex workers

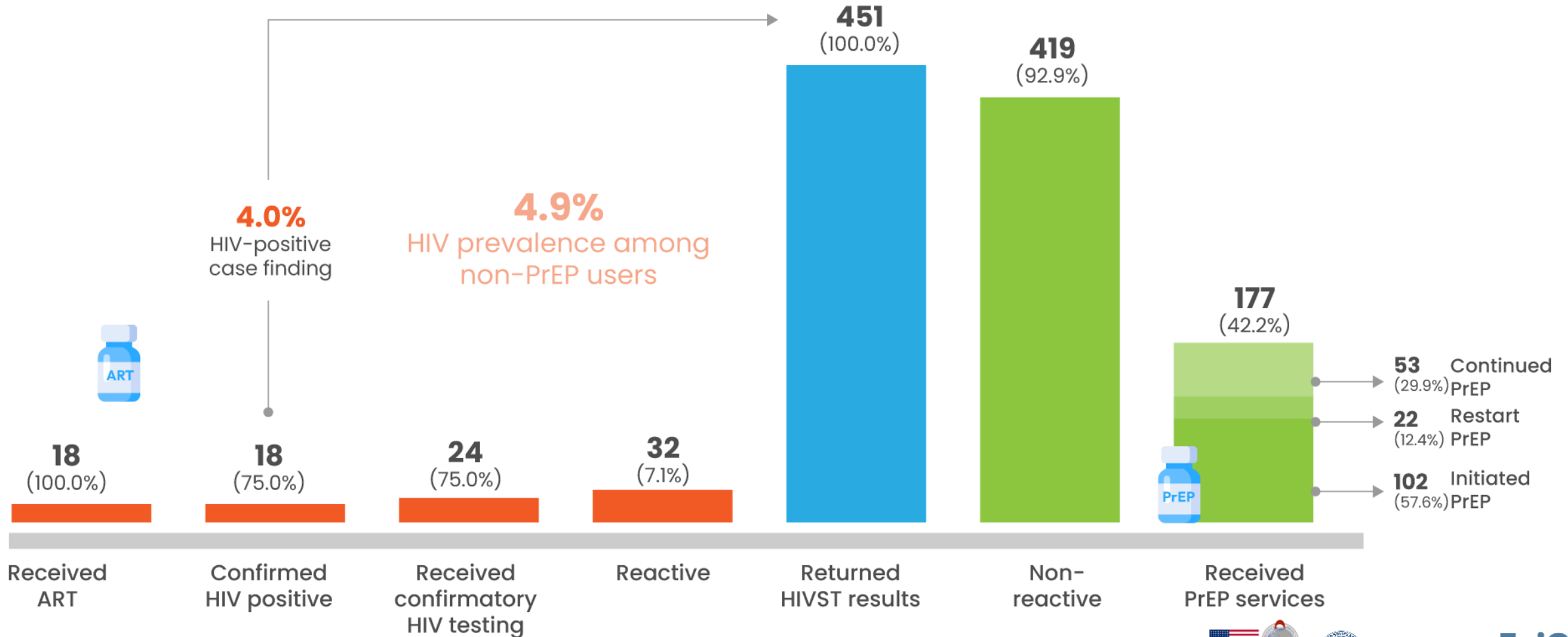
*\*HIV self-testing was legalized in 2019. The first HIV self-test kit became available in 2022. UHC will cover HIV self-testing in FY2024.*

# HIV self-testing to initiate and continue PrEP

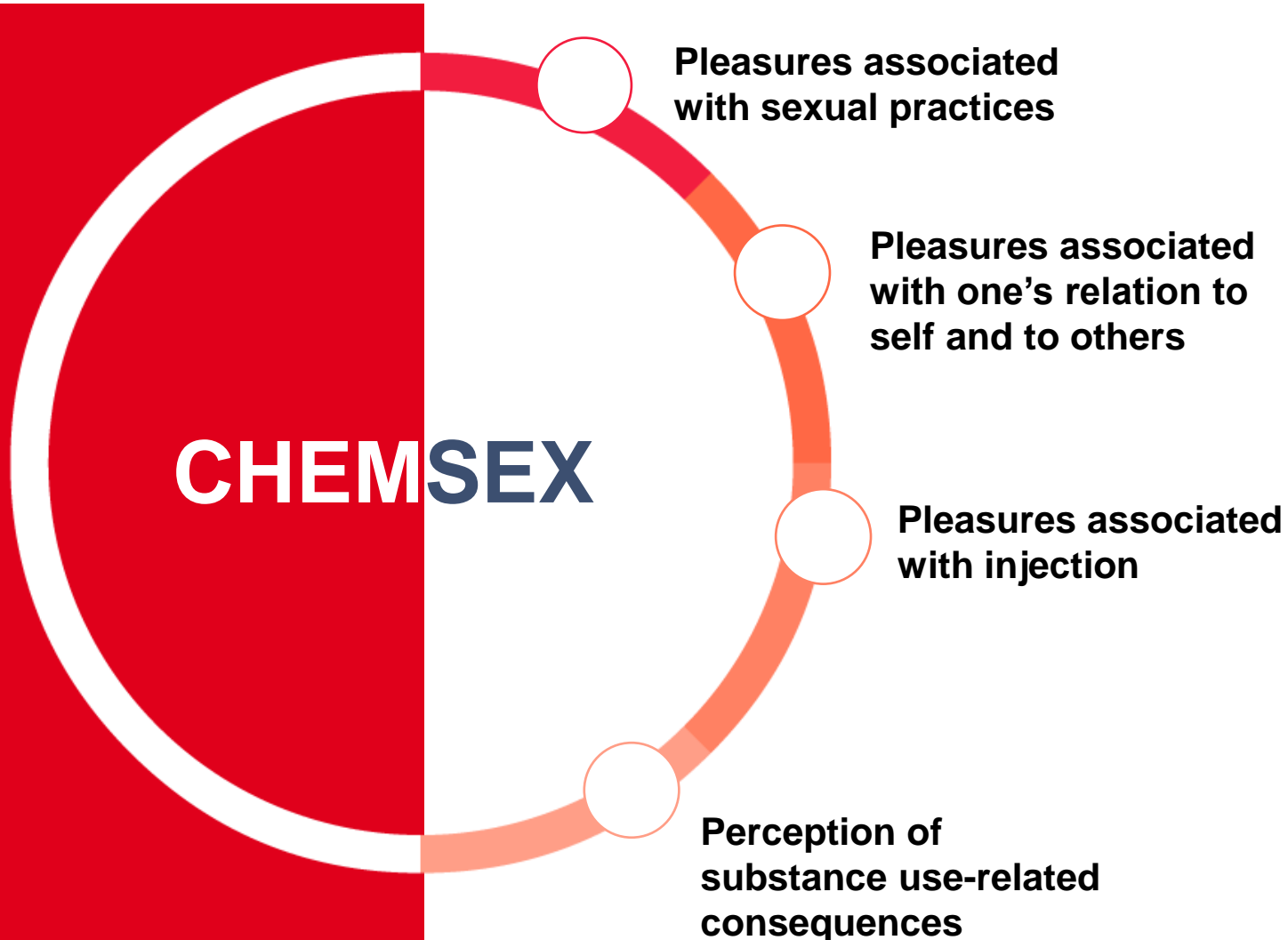




# HIV self-testing linkage to prevention/treatment



# Pleasure-integrated chemsex care



- **Lack of languages** to describe pleasures
- **Internalized stigma** towards homosexuality and substance use within a mainstream culture
- **Pleasure-integrated approach** to chemsex that is free of associated, negative judgments to make access to care appealing and/or accessible

- Needs evidence-based interventions
- Ways to **rediscover the pleasure and sexual fulfillment** (sober sex)
  - Ways to **reconstruct one's social network**

# Conclusions

- We must move from 95-95-95 to THE 10s, THE 95s, and THE INTEGRATION.
- U=U can be an important tool to address intersectional stigma and discrimination in all settings, including internalized stigma.
- Demedicalization, simplification, and differentiation are key principles of people-centered care. Care must be integrated.
- Innovative science/products are important but innovative mindset to translate existing science/products into actual implementation is more crucial.