



# CQUIN Differentiated MCH Workshop

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## Prevention of HIV during Breastfeeding

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**HIV Learning Network**

The CQUIN Project for Differentiated Service Delivery

# What will it take to walk the last mile?



Achieving the goals of the *Start Free, Stay Free, AIDS Free* framework is essential to the global goal of ending AIDS as a public health threat.

To support these goals, *Going the Last Mile* was developed in collaboration with a broad group of stakeholders to guide a data driven approach to planning and implementing contextually-appropriate PMTCT.

This session will focus on a critical and challenging stretch of that last mile, prevention services during breastfeeding.

# Elevated risk in the postpartum period

- Compared to non-pregnant women, risk per sex act increases 3-fold in late pregnancy and 4-fold during breastfeeding.
- Biological changes associated with pregnancy and postpartum period as well as behavioral factors contribute to heightened vulnerability to HIV.

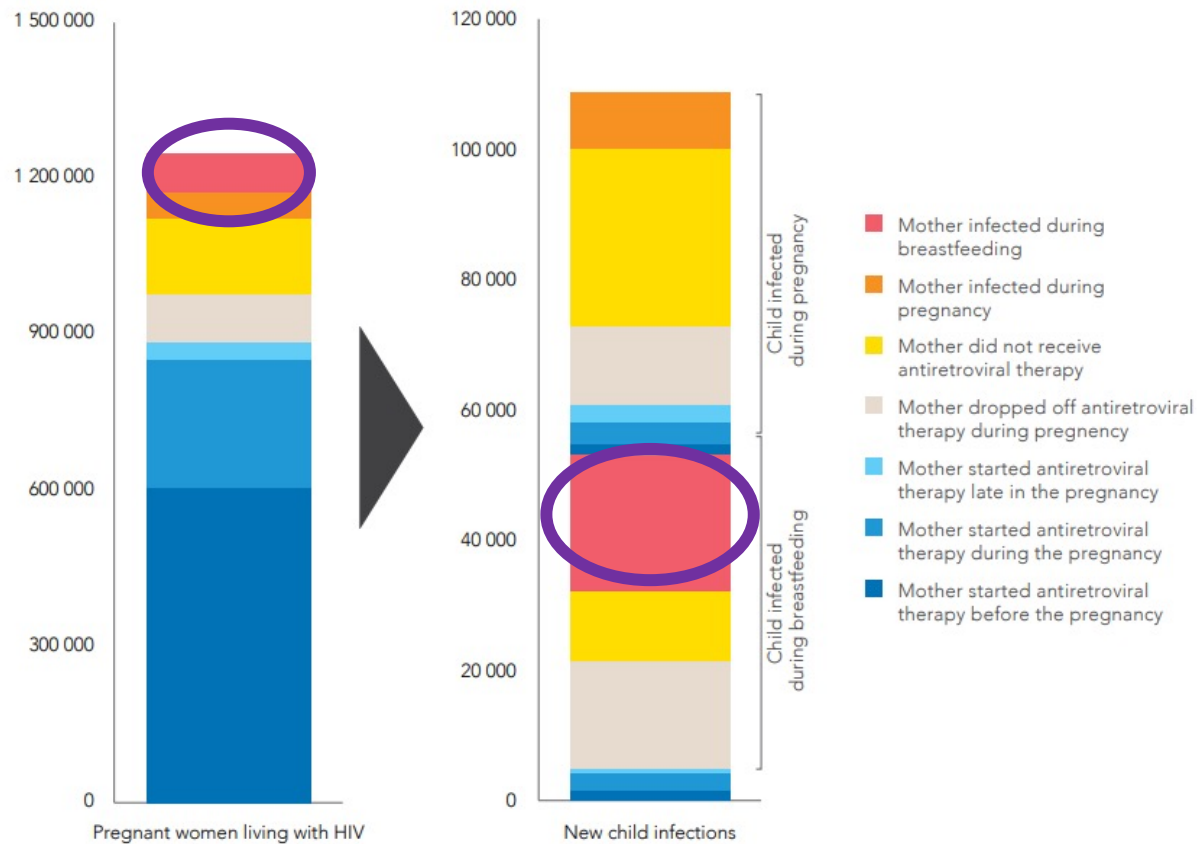
*(Thomson, JID 2018)*



- High levels of maternal viral load and lower maternal HIV-specific immune responses magnify risk of MTCT following incident infection, compared to during established infection.

*(Drake, PLOS Med 2014)*

# New maternal infections are a significant driver of vertical transmission



Source: UNAIDS epidemiological estimates, 2020.

In 2019, 30,000 children acquired HIV because of incident infection during pregnancy and breastfeeding.

*-Start Free Stay Free AIDS Free 2020 Report*

The postpartum period presents specific challenges to testing and prevention services in comparison to pregnancy, highlighted in our presentations today.

# Considerations for implementing retesting during breastfeeding

- Epidemiological: overall HIV prevalence and rate of MTCT
  - May differ, calling for EMTCT strategy that diverges from general approach to targeted testing.
- Programmatic: cascades where PBFW enter and differentially fall out of testing and prevention services
- Population-specific: understanding the nature of HIV risk specific to postpartum period
- Linkages with additional services, such as partner testing and prevention services for negative partners, including PrEP, can support retesting programs.
  - Choice-based prevention services to engage couples
  - Assessing prevention needs in concurrent and secondary partnerships
- Pre-implementation assessment of program strengths and gaps are a valuable tool to support program planning and implementation.

*(Drake, JIAS 2019)*

*(Chi, Bull WHO 2019)*





# Enduring lessons from 2020

- Flexible, person-centered services are resilient.
- Community-based approaches to testing and prevention can support service continuity.
  - Mobile, home-based care
  - Leveraging innovations like HIV self-testing
- Tailoring service delivery to context and sub-populations is critical.
  - Engagement of relevant stakeholders and partners is an essential step in *The Last Mile to EMTCT*

# Thank you!

