RELATIVE GAP IN HIV VIRAL LOAD SUPPRESSION IN YOUNGER CHILDREN IN ETHIOPIA

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BACKGROUND

- Ethiopia adopted the UNAIDS 95-95-95 goal for controlling HIV by 2030
- The country subsequently strengthened viral load (VL) testing services and implemented interventions to improve viral load suppression (VLS) among 95% of people on antiretroviral (ARV) treatment
- We analyzed the trend of VL coverage (VLC) and VLS by age-band over three years period

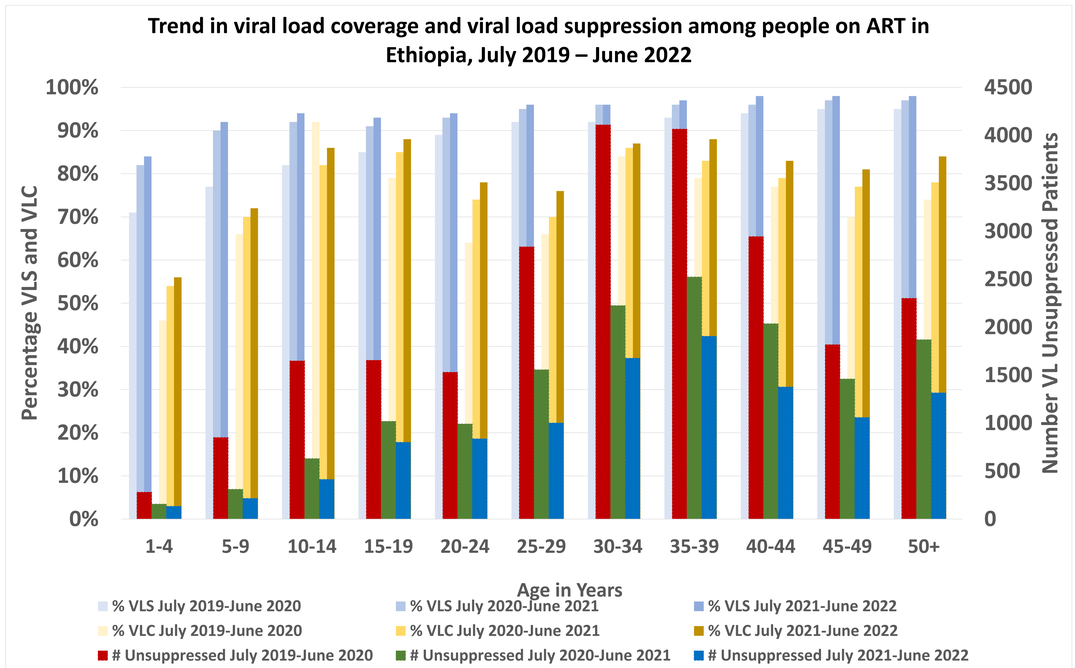
METHODS

- We used aggregate national VL data for 2019-2022
- Annual trend analysis of VLC (number tested/total eligible on ART) and VLS (number suppressed/number tested) are presented.
- Percentage is computed to describe the trend in VLC and VLS
- The absolute number of VL unsuppressed (>1,000 copies/ml) cases is presented

RESULTS

- At baseline (July 2019-June 2020), **the VLS in the age group 1-4 and 5-9 years was in the lowest range**
- The baseline VLC was relatively lower in the age group 1-4 (46%), 5-9 (66%), 20-24 (64%) and 25-29 (66%)
- After two years, **VLS in age group 1-4 and 5-9 showed a relative improvement** (84% and 92% respectively)
  - Age bands beyond 25 years exceeded the 95% target
- **Two years VLC increased modestly among younger children:** 56% for 1-4 and 72% for 5–9 years

Ethiopia is on track in achieving the UNAIDS third 95 target in most age groups in 2030 with last mile efforts ***among younger children***.



CONCLUSIONS

- Ethiopia is on track in achieving the UNAIDS third 95 target within all age groups in 2030 provided the VLS performance gap among younger children is addressed
- Understanding the root causes of relatively lower VLC and VLS among children on ART and devising targeted interventions is very important

ADDITIONAL KEY INFORMATION

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The findings and conclusions in this report are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official position of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

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