

# Enhancing Viral Load Coverage The Impact of a Customized Electronic Medical Records System in UPDF Health Facilities for People Living with HIV in Uganda

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## BACKGROUND

In September 2020, 20,444 people living with HIV (PLHIV) were active in care at 31 Uganda Peoples' Defence Forces (UPDF) health facilities, yet viral load coverage at their sites lagged at 72% compared to the national average of 94%.

That same year, URC, with funding from the United States Department of Defense (DOD) HIV/AIDS Prevention Program (DHAPP), rolled out Electronic Medical Records (EMRs) in the UPDF health facilities to streamline client management, real-time data capture, and viral load tracking.

The UPDF EMR is integrated with the national Uganda EMR and has a customized camouflage background for military personnel.

End users have provided feedback for improvements to be made in subsequent versions of the EMR system.



Onsite coaching of UPDF health worker on use of EMR to improve HIV care at Gulu Military Hospital.

## DESCRIPTION

- ▶ UPDF health workers used the EMR to generate lists identifying clients overdue for viral load tests and appointments.
- ▶ These lists were utilized by health workers to contact clients for viral load sample collection.
- ▶ Monthly viral load test data was compared with EMR records to monitor all clients.
- ▶ A retrospective analysis of DATIM datasets from 2019 to 2023 was used to assess viral load coverage and suppression progress.
- ▶ Data queries addressed quality issues, and trend analysis revealed changes over the four-year period.

## RESULTS

- ▶ EMR enhances record-keeping and enables health workers to track and contact clients for services.
- ▶ Viral load coverage increased from 72% in FY19 to 90% in FY23.
- ▶ This improvement aligns with the introduction and consistent use of UPDF EMR for viral load tracking by the health workers.

## CONCLUSION

Uganda EMR has significantly improved HIV care. Accurate and consistent use of UPDF EMR boosts viral load coverage and retention for PLHIV. This success highlights the crucial impact of EMR systems on HIV care advancement.



Health facility EMR data entry screens refashioned for the UPDF.

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