



STORIES of HOPE

THAILAND

Community-Based Organization Strengthens Families



The PEPFAR-supported Mercy Center provides HIV treatment, care and support for this Bangkok family.

Mercy Center programs work with the community members, helping to dispel the misconceptions about people living with HIV/AIDS.



Last year, two parents living in the slums of Bangkok learned they were HIV-positive. Today, both parents maintain jobs and are able to take care of their three children while receiving antiretroviral treatment. With support from the U.S. President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (Emergency Plan/PEPFAR), the Human Development Foundation's Mercy Center offers antiretroviral treatment, outreach education, and home and hospice care to persons living with HIV/AIDS, working in 34 slums around Bangkok.

In the nearby Klong Toey slum, home to 100,000 Bangkok residents, the Mercy Center's outreach healthcare counselors, who are living with HIV themselves, enter the slums in order to provide care, support and treatment to HIV-positive individuals and their families. Over 200 people living with HIV/AIDS and their families in poor urban communities receive antiretroviral treatment and treatment for opportunistic infections through the Mercy Center. Outreach workers encourage adherence and assist with treatment for opportunistic infections, as well as medical appointments and hospice care when needed. Mercy Center's humanitarian assistance supports care of both physical health and social well-being.

Despite the poverty and conditions in these communities, the challenge most commonly described among persons living with HIV/AIDS is not physical discomfort, but the fear of discrimination and stigma within the community. Both of the parents were prepared to live positively with HIV, but their greatest anxiety was rejection by their neighbors. Mercy Center programs work with the community members, helping to dispel the misconceptions about people living with HIV/AIDS. In addition, the three children have benefited from the organization's program to reduce stigma in the home, school and workplace by mainstreaming children who are HIV-positive, or whose parents are HIV-positive, into public schools.

The U.S. President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief

Department of State | U.S. Agency for International Development | Department of Defense | Department of Commerce
Department of Labor | Department of Health and Human Services | Peace Corps

Office of the U.S. Global AIDS Coordinator
www.PEPFAR.gov | SGAC_Public_Affairs@state.gov