

PEPFAR COP/ROP 2021 Temporary Pause FAQs

COP/ROP 2021 Planning Temporary Pause

Q: Why are we taking this pause when we were so close to completing the COP 2021 process?

A: The COP/ROP 2021 process was in its preparation stage, with all countries and regions having completed the virtual in-country retreats in which transparent and data-driven discussions were taking place to inform the COP/ROP 2021 vision. The COP/ROP 2021 planning phase was to commence officially on February 16, 2021 and occur through April 16, 2021. We understand and appreciate that some countries and regions have made tremendous progress in the early preparation phase. We are taking this temporary pause because of the tremendous toll that the COVID-19 pandemic continues to take on PEPFAR-supported countries and regions around the globe. Over the past month, embassies in no fewer than 14 countries in which PEPFAR operates have reverted on the Diplomacy Strong scale due to deteriorating local conditions; this has occurred in all regions in which PEPFAR operates. Right now, our full focus must be on the current implementation of COP/ROP 2020, as we continue to adapt and optimize the program for impact and patient outcomes.

Q: Does this temporary pause in the COP/ROP 2021 process signal a lack of commitment by the Biden Administration to PEPFAR?

A: The Biden Administration is fully committed to and supportive of PEPFAR's mission to control the HIV/AIDS epidemic as successfully led through the State Department and implemented through U.S. implementing agencies and all its partners across the globe.

Q: Our OU was very close to finalizing some COP/ROP 2021 processes and discussions (e.g. targets and budgets, Table 6, etc.). Can we continue this work and find a more natural stopping point, or do we need to immediately pause all meetings and work related to COP 2021?

A: Per the guidance and cable issued, please temporarily pause all COP/ROP 2021 activities. During the temporary pause, all formal and informal activities related to COP/ROP 2021 must be postponed until further notice. These activities include but are not limited to COP/ROP 2021 meetings, tools development for targets, budgets, etc., and any associated internal or external discussions.

Q: What impact will this pause have on the timely approval of congressional notifications and the availability of funds for FY 2022 programming?

A: We are committed to ensure that data-driven COP/ROP 2021 planning and completion, including all the required steps for Congressional Notifications, budget transfer, and obligations occurs and there is no disruption in HIV services for the start of fiscal year 2022.

Q: If the interagency agrees, is there any flexibility in continuing COP/ROP 2021 finalization?

A: Even if the interagency agrees, teams may not continue the COP/ROP 2021 process and finalization. During the temporary pause, all formal and informal activities related to COP/ROP 2021 must be postponed until further notice. These activities include but are not limited to meetings, tools development, and any associated internal or external discussions. All PEPFAR OUs must fully abide by the temporary pause. There is no waiver or exception to the COP/ROP 2021 temporary pause.

Q: Does the pause apply to meetings about COP/ROP 2021 with host country governments and external stakeholders?

A: Any COP/ROP 2021-related planning meetings that are occurring or scheduled to be held in the next few weeks, including associated internal U.S. government planning or technical consultations, should be postponed until further notice.

Q: Can we reassure our host country governments and partners that our funding commitment goes forward? Some host country governments are in the midst of their annual planning, but their plan depends on knowing what USG will provide. When will we know what the US commitment is?

A: You can reassure host country governments and other partners that our commitment to supporting their HIV responses remains strong. In fact, the temporary pause is about ensuring we can deliver on our commitments in COP/ROP 2020, by focusing on the adaption and implementation that are required to optimize program impact and patient outcomes.

As in all other COP/ROP cycles, the ultimate level of funding provided to each OU is not final until it is fully notified to and approved by Congress. That remains true for COP/ROP 2021 as in previous years.

Q: How will a delay factor in commodity orders that will need to be placed to ensure no stockouts, especially for OUs without significant pipeline?

A: We are committed to avoiding any disruption in HIV services for the start of fiscal year 2022, including by ensuring the sufficient supply of HIV-related commodities.

Q: How will the COP/ROP 2021 planning pause affect FY 2022 IP work plan submissions? Can work plan development continue during this pause?

A: During the pause, any work on FY 2022 IP work plans should be postponed until further notice.

Q: How will the COP/ROP 2021 planning pause factor in partners ending in September with no carryover? This could cause major disruption.

A: We are committed to avoiding any disruption in HIV services for the start of fiscal year 2022, including in cases where partner awards may be ending in September 2021 without provisions for carryover. If there are specific instances of concern in this area, please identify them to your Chair/PPM so S/GAC leadership can engage on this with you.

COP/ROP 2021 Planning Resumption

Q: What will be the timeline and process for the resumption of COP/ROP 2021 planning? Will the planning process be different (e.g. streamlined) in any way?

A: More information will be forthcoming about the revised COP/ROP 2021 planning timeline as soon as it is available. At this time, the planning process will resume no earlier than the first week of April 2021. When it resumes, we will ensure that data-driven COP/ROP 2021 planning and completion occurs and there is no disruption in HIV services for the start of fiscal year 2022.

Q: Does resuming “no earlier than the first week of April” refer to COP/ROP preparations (i.e. tool development, consultations, etc.), or the COP/ROP 2021 meetings? When will we know a firm timeline for when COP/ROP 2021 planning will resume?

A: Under the temporary pause, all COP/ROP 2021 related activities are postponed until at least the first week in April. Further guidance will be provided about the revised COP/ROP 2021 planning timeline as soon as it is available

Q: When COP/ROP 2021 planning is resumed, will we be able to pick up where we left off or will we have to start over? Will budgets and PLLs change?

A: Further guidance will be provided about the resumption of the COP/ROP 2021 planning process as soon as it is available. The resumption of the COP/ROP 2021 will build on the important work done to date, as we ensure that data-driven COP/ROP 2021 planning and completion occurs and there is no disruption in HIV services for the start of fiscal year 2022.

Q: For OUs that resolved issues and had made progress on COP/ROP 2021 budget and program design, is there guidance on whether or not these discussions can be re-opened when we resume planning?

A: Further guidance will be provided about the resumption of the COP/ROP 2021 planning process as soon as it is available. The resumption of the COP/ROP 2021 will build on the

important work done to date, as we ensure that data-driven COP/ROP 2021 planning and completion occurs and there is no disruption in HIV services for the start of fiscal year 2022.

Q: Will TBD renaming be approved and included in FAST and DATIM now that COP 2021 has been delayed to April? The original deadline for inclusion was in January.

A: Yes, TBD renaming will continue to be processed and approved during the pause. Updated FASTs would be available at the first tool check in after COP/ROP 2021 formally restarts. More information will be provided as the restarted COP/ROP 2021 timeline is completed.

Q: Will COP 2021 tools (e.g. FAST, Datapack, etc.) still be required when planning resumes?

A: The COP/ROP21 tools (e.g., FAST, Datapack, etc.) were streamlined in COP/ROP 2020 and moved forward for use in COP/ROP 2021. These tools are essential for tracking and monitoring targets and budgets to ensure accountability and impact of U.S. taxpayer dollars.

Please note the following updates to PEPFAR 2021 Country and Regional Operational Plan (COP/ROP) Guidance for all PEPFAR Countries:

- Pg. 160: *Section 5.9.4 Implementation of Protecting Life in Global Health Assistance in PEPFAR Programs* has been deleted as the policy was rescinded by President Biden in January, 2021
- Dates referenced in *Sections 2.5.3 Active Engagement with Community and Civil Society* and *5.3 COP/ROP Timeline* will be updated when further information is available.
- Pg. 62: *Figure 2.3.2.2: HIV case finding approaches supported by PEPFAR, based on ART coverage* was corrected to maintain that minimum 5% yield is expected for Other Facility-based Testing when national or SNU ART coverage is under 70%.
- Links to resources on PEPFAR SharePoint for U.S. Government teams were updated on pages 94 and 442.

COP/ROP 2020

Q: Can COP/ROP 2020 OPUs still be submitted during the pause period?

A: Yes. OPUs can be submitted and processed during the pause. We expect that when COP/ROP 2021 restarts, OPU processing will slow.

Q: What will the Q1 POART look like, including the extent of preparations?

A: More information will be forthcoming, but it will be a streamlined process.