

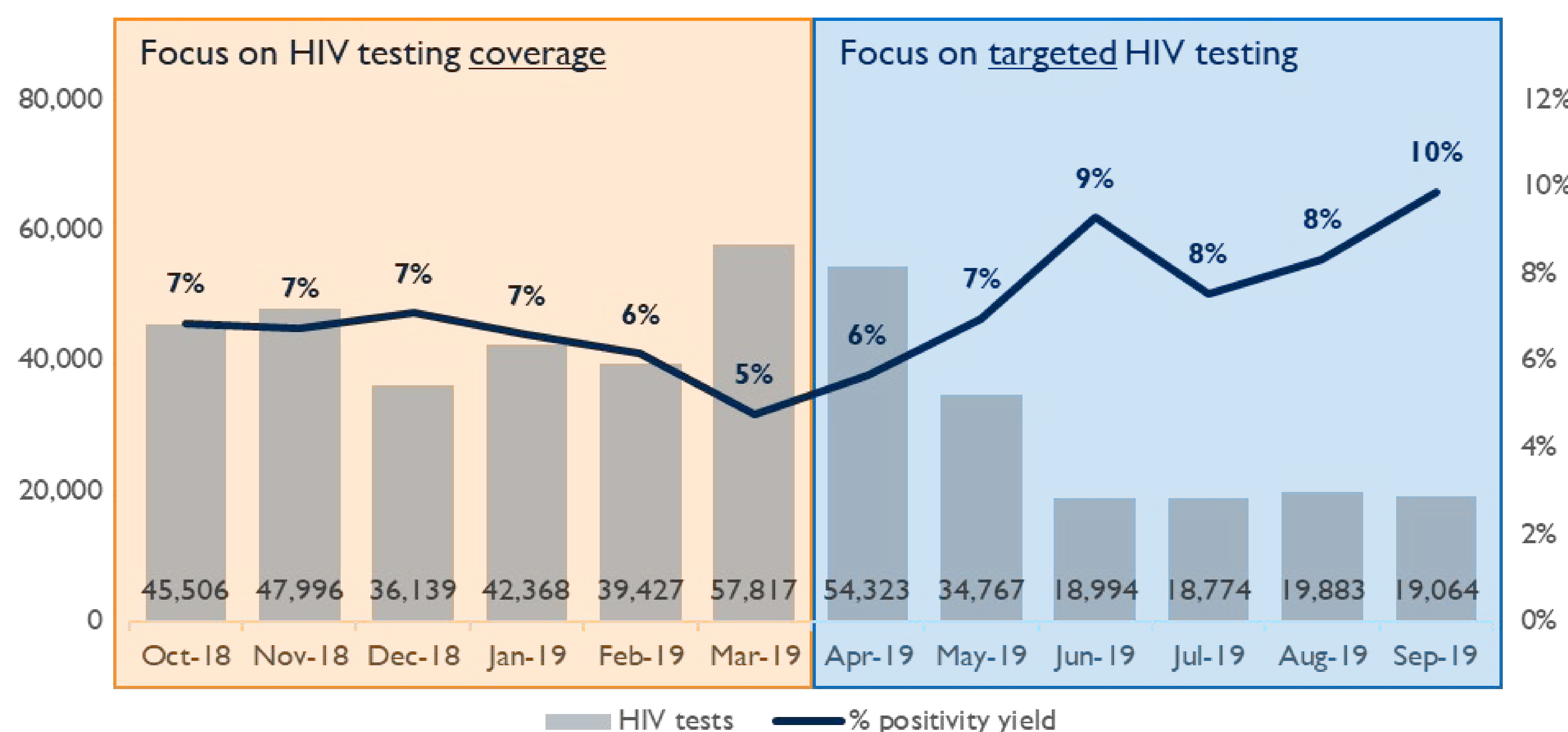
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HIV testing is critical to ensure early diagnosis and treatment of people living with HIV (PLHIV) which reduces transmission to others. As we move toward HIV epidemic control, index testing and HIV screening tools have been shown to be efficient and effective targeted testing strategies to identify the remaining undiagnosed PLHIV.

The USAID SAFE program initially supported widespread testing focused on increasing coverage but that led to high numbers of HIV test kits being used and declining yields.

USAID SAFE shifted to targeted HIV testing through two strategies:

- Enhanced **index testing** through psychological counselors (including lay and healthcare workers) administering an Index Interview Guide to all newly identified PLHIV and those already on ART each time they came to the facility to determine sexual risk behaviors and assess eligibility for partner notification services,
- Enhanced use of **MOH HIV screening tool** in all testing points to screen all (except antenatal women) seeking HIV testing, only clients with one or more risk factors or HIV defining condition were offered an HIV test.



The USAID SAFE program supports the Ministry of Health (MOH) in 114 health facilities in Central Province, Zambia, to implement HIV case identification, treatment, and retention services.

The initial focus on increasing HIV testing coverage led to declining positivity yield from 7% in Oct 2018 to 5% by March 2019, while targeted testing increased yield to 10% in September 2019. HIV testing volumes reduced remarkably by 67% (from 57,817 to 19,064) representing a potential savings of over 35,000 HIV test kits in one month.

Targeted HIV testing through enhanced index testing and HIV screening tools improves the positivity yield while reducing the testing volumes. As we progress toward HIV epidemic control, MOHs and implementing partners should embrace effective and efficient testing techniques to identify the remaining pockets of HIV to avert new infections and attain epidemic control.

