

WOMEN AND GIRLS

AND HIV



18.8

MILLION WOMEN AND GIRLS
LIVING WITH HIV

NEARLY 870 000 NEW HIV INFECTIONS
AMONG WOMEN AND GIRLS EVERY YEAR

EVERY FOUR MINUTES THREE YOUNG WOMEN
BECOME INFECTED WITH HIV

1.1 BILLION

GIRLS IN THE WORLD TODAY, THE LARGEST GENERATION IN HISTORY

On International Women's Day, UNAIDS is recognizing the contribution of, and celebrating, the activists and organizations working for gender equality and women's empowerment in rural and urban areas. Women's engagement and leadership are critical to ensuring success across all 17 of the Sustainable Development Goals.

UNAIDS is highlighting that women continue to bear the brunt of the HIV epidemic. In sub-Saharan Africa, young women are twice as likely to become infected with HIV as their male counterparts. And in sub-Saharan Africa, three out of four new HIV infections among 15–19-year-olds are among young women, and seven out of 10 young women do not have comprehensive knowledge about HIV. Approximately 6900 adolescent girls and young women aged 15–24 years are newly infected with HIV every week around the world.

The heightened vulnerability of women and girls to HIV is closely linked to the sociocultural, economic and political inequalities they experience. Early marriage often results in girls being taken out of school, followed by early pregnancy and limited future opportunities for economic independence and decision-making.

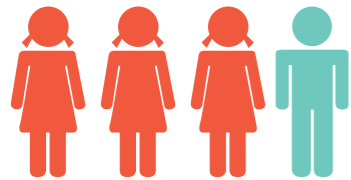
Many young people—particularly girls and particularly young people living in rural areas—lack adequate health services. In sub-Saharan Africa, more than 50% of rural women between the age of 15 and 24 years have had a pregnancy before their 18th birthday and only one in two is able to make decisions on their own health. In Ethiopia, 56% of urban women received HIV counselling, testing and the result during an antenatal visit, compared with 14% in rural areas. Young women in rural areas have lower levels of knowledge of HIV and have less access to HIV testing and modern contraceptives.

We know that through enabling women and girls to fulfil their rights to health, to education and to self-determination, change happens. Good health enables women and girls to thrive, to grow, to explore and to contribute to their communities. Access to quality health services and learning how to stay healthy enables women and girls to prevent illness, including HIV, and to exercise their sexual and reproductive health and rights.

We cannot stand by and allow the quality of life of women and girls to be held back and their hopes and dreams for the future to slip away. We must work collectively to close the gaps that continue to leave women and girls behind. Ending the AIDS epidemic by 2030 depends on advancing a social justice agenda that demands access to education, employment, health services, justice and political representation, free from discrimination and violence.

Michel Sidibé
Executive Director, UNAIDS

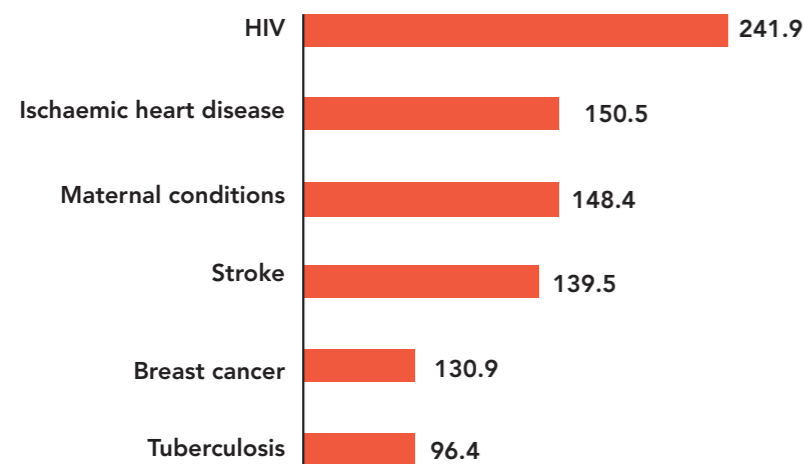
AT A GLANCE



In sub-Saharan Africa, three in four new HIV infections among 15–19-year-olds are among girls.

Source: UNAIDS 2017 estimates.

AIDS-related illnesses are the leading cause of death among 15–49-year-old females globally (hundred thousands)

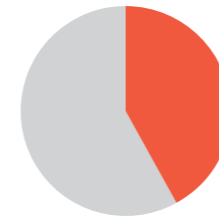


Source: Global health estimates 2015: deaths by cause, age, sex, by country and by region, 2000–2015. Geneva, World Health Organization; 2016.

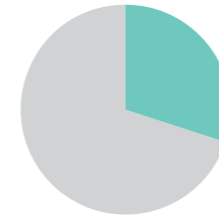
10X

HIV INCIDENCE IS 10 TIMES HIGHER AMONG FEMALE SEX WORKERS THAN AMONG THE GENERAL POPULATION

Source: UNAIDS. Prevention gap report. Geneva: UNAIDS, 2016.

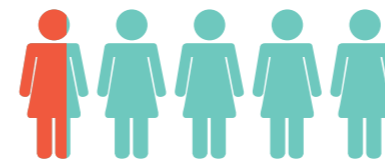


42% of **urban** young women aged 15–24 who live in sub-Saharan Africa who have had sex and have had an HIV test.

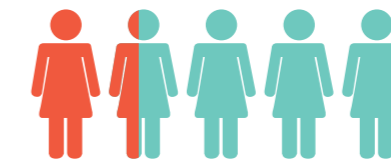


30% of **rural** young women aged 15–24 who live in sub-Saharan Africa who have had sex and have had an HIV test.

Source: Population-based surveys, 2011–2016. The statistics are based on available data from 28 countries in which 83% of all women aged 15–24 in sub-Saharan Africa live.



16% of **rural** currently married adolescent girls and young women who live in sub-Saharan Africa report using a modern contraceptive.



23% of **urban** currently married adolescent girls and young women who live in sub-Saharan Africa report using a modern contraceptive.

Source: Population-based surveys, 2011–2016. The statistics are based on available data from 28 countries in which 83% of all women aged 15–24 in sub-Saharan Africa live.



Globally, young women are twice as likely to acquire HIV as their male counterparts.

Source: UNAIDS 2017 estimates.

52%

of adolescent girls and young women in rural areas are unable to make decisions about their own health, compared with

47%

in urban areas.

Source: Population-based surveys, 2011–2016. The statistics are based on available data from 28 countries in which 83% of all women aged 15–24 in sub-Saharan Africa live.

IN SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA, **42%** OF WOMEN LIVING IN **URBAN** AREAS AGED 15–24 HAD A PREGNANCY BEFORE THE AGE OF 18. IN **RURAL** AREAS, MORE THAN **50%** OF WOMEN AGED 15–24 HAD A PREGNANCY BEFORE THE AGE OF 18.

Source: Population-based surveys, 2011–2016. The statistics are based on available data from 27 countries in which 80% of all women aged 15–24 in sub-Saharan Africa live.

Each year, 12 million girls are married before the age of 18—married too soon, endangering their personal development and well-being.

Source: UNICEF 2018 estimates.

AROUND 150

adolescents (10–19 years) died of AIDS-related illnesses every day in 2016.

Source: UNAIDS 2017 estimates.

HIV in a woman's life—challenges and opportunities

50+

Biological changes can put sexually active older women at higher risk of acquiring HIV

RISK

RISK

HIV self-testing enables older women to know their status without fear of stigma

50+

Weak health systems and unequal distribution of caregiving responsibilities present a unique challenge for older women living with HIV

HEALTH SYSTEMS

HEALTH SYSTEMS

Women living with HIV who are taking antiretroviral therapy can have life expectancies comparable to people who have not acquired HIV

30–49

Intimate partner violence is associated with lower adherence to ART adherence

Women living with HIV are five times more likely to develop cervical cancer

HEALTH SYSTEMS

HEALTH SYSTEMS

Empowering community health workers can increase access to antiretroviral therapy

Women living with HIV have the right to access sexual and reproductive health services and programmes that prevent and address violence.

30–49

20–29

In 29 countries women require the consent of a spouse/partner to access sexual and reproductive health services

INTEGRATED HEALTH SERVICES

INTEGRATED HEALTH SERVICES

Regular screening and treatment for precancerous cervical lesions could prevent 250 000 women from dying each year

20–29

In high HIV prevalence settings women experiencing intimate partner violence are 50% more likely to have acquired HIV than women who have not experienced violence

PROTECTION FROM INTIMATE PARTNER VIOLENCE

PROTECTION FROM INTIMATE PARTNER VIOLENCE

Community-based programmes like SASA! in Kampala, Uganda, combined community mobilization on HIV and intimate partner violence prevention, helped change norms around intimate partner violence

Female sex workers are 10 times more likely to acquire HIV than other women

PREVENTION

PREVENTION

Provision of a comprehensive package of community-based prevention and treatment services for female sex workers resulted in zero new HIV infections in a cohort in Burkina Faso

Globally only 55% of women participate in the labour force

Women still earn 50% less than men for the same work

EMPLOYMENT

EDUCATION

The cash transfer programme in Malawi reduced the school dropout rate of girls by 35% and had a 40% reduction in early marriages and a 30% reduction in teenage pregnancies and a 64% reduction in HIV risk

15–19

Young people require the consent of parents or legal guardians to access sexual and reproductive health services in at least 79 countries

POLICY AND LEGAL BARRIERS

POLICY AND LEGAL BARRIERS

Lowering the age of consent in South Africa increased knowledge of HIV status among young women

15–19

23 girls below the age of 18 are married every minute

CHILD MARRIAGE

CHILD MARRIAGE

Women with more education tend to marry later, bear children later and exercise greater control over their fertility

In sub-Saharan Africa, 7 in 10 young women do not have comprehensive knowledge about HIV

In the least developed countries in the world 6 out of 10 girls do not attend secondary school

EDUCATION

EDUCATION

Providing information on gender and power results in lower rates of sexually transmitted infections and unintended pregnancies

In Botswana every additional year of school was shown to reduce risk of HIV infection by 11.6% among girls

16 million girls aged 15–19 years give birth every year

Globally, adolescent girls and young women (15–24 years), account for close to 7,000 new HIV infections every week

HEALTH SERVICES

HEALTH SERVICES

Providing integrated HIV and sexual and reproductive health services prevents HIV infection and unwanted pregnancies and increases safe deliveries

0–14

120 million girls have experienced rape or other forced sexual acts at some point in their life

VIOLENCE AGAINST CHILDREN

VIOLENCE AGAINST CHILDREN

The proportion of women who were married as children decreased by 15% in the last decade

0–14

Many children are diagnosed late with HIV, leading to high infant mortality

Only 43% of children aged 0–14 years have access to antiretroviral therapy globally

INTEGRATED HEALTH SERVICES

INTEGRATED HEALTH SERVICES

HPV vaccine given to girls between 9 and 13, before they become sexually active, prevents cervical cancer

HPV vaccine costs as little as US\$ 8

200 children are born with HIV every day

More than 50% of rural women between the age of 15 and 24 years in sub-Saharan Africa have had a pregnancy before their 18th birthday

MATERNAL AND NEWBORN HEALTH

MATERNAL AND NEWBORN HEALTH

98% new HIV infections among children are preventable

Another 200 children are infected through breastfeeding every day

0

0



GLOBAL COMMITMENTS

FOR GIRLS' AND WOMEN'S HEALTH AND DEVELOPMENT

Sustainable Development Goals

- ▶ **SDG 3:** Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages.
- ▶ **SDG 4:** Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all.
- ▶ **SDG 5:** Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls.
- ▶ **SDG 8:** Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all.
- ▶ **SDG 16:** Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels.

2016 United Nations General Assembly Political Declaration on Ending AIDS

- ▶ Reduce the number of children newly infected with HIV annually to less than 40 000 by 2018.
- ▶ Reach and sustain 95% of pregnant women living with HIV with lifelong HIV treatment by 2018.

- ▶ Ensure that 30 million people living with HIV have access to treatment by 2020, and 90–90–90 targets are met by 2020.
- ▶ Provide 1.6 million children aged 0–14 years and 1.2 million adolescents aged 15–19 years living with HIV with lifelong antiretroviral therapy by 2018 [reach 95% of all children living with HIV].
- ▶ Reduce the number of new HIV infections among adolescent girls and young women to below 100 000 per year.
- ▶ Ensure that 90% of adolescent girls and women at high risk of HIV infection access comprehensive prevention services by 2020.
- ▶ Ensure that 90% of young people have the skills, knowledge and capacity to protect themselves from HIV.
- ▶ Ensure that 90% of young people in need have access to sexual and reproductive health services and combination HIV prevention options by 2020.
- ▶ Ensure universal access to quality, affordable and comprehensive sexual and reproductive health care and HIV services, information and commodities for women.
- ▶ Eliminate gender inequalities and end all forms of violence and discrimination against women and girls, such as gender-based, sexual, domestic and intimate partner violence, including in conflict, post-conflict and humanitarian settings.
- ▶ Ensure that 90% of key populations—including female sex workers, transgender women, women who inject drugs and prisoners—access comprehensive prevention services, including harm reduction, by 2020.
- ▶ Make 20 billion condoms annually available in low- and middle-income countries by 2020.
- ▶ Review and reform laws that reinforce stigma and discrimination, including on age of consent, HIV non-disclosure, exposure and transmission, travel restrictions, and mandatory testing by 2020.
- ▶ Eliminate stigma and discrimination in health-care settings by 2020.
- ▶ Reach 90% of all people who need tuberculosis treatment, including 90% of populations at higher risk, and achieve at least 90% treatment success; and reduce tuberculosis-related AIDS deaths by 75% by 2020.



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