

Public Health in the News

Women in Africa 'being left behind' in fight against HIV/AIDS: UN report

Despite considerable advances made in the global response to the AIDS epidemic over the last several decades, young women and adolescent girls in Africa "are still being left behind," according to a new joint report from the United Nations and the African Union.

In the sub-Saharan region, AIDS-related illnesses remain the leading cause of death among girls and women of reproductive age. In 2013, 74% of new HIV infections among African adolescents were among adolescent girls, the Joint UN Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) said in a statement. Young women and adolescent girls acquire HIV on average five to seven years earlier than young men, and in some countries in the region, HIV prevalence among this population can be as much as seven times that of their male counterparts. In the absence of a vaccine, ending gender-based violence, keeping girls in school and empowering young women and adolescent girls are the best options we have available, Sheila Tlou, UNAIDS Regional Director for Eastern and Southern Africa, said. In order to guide regional and global advocacy and inform political dialogue on HIV prevention and treatment among young women and adolescent girls, UNAIDS and the African Union have launched a joint report entitled Empower young women and adolescent girls: Fast-Tracking the end of the AIDS epidemic in Africa.

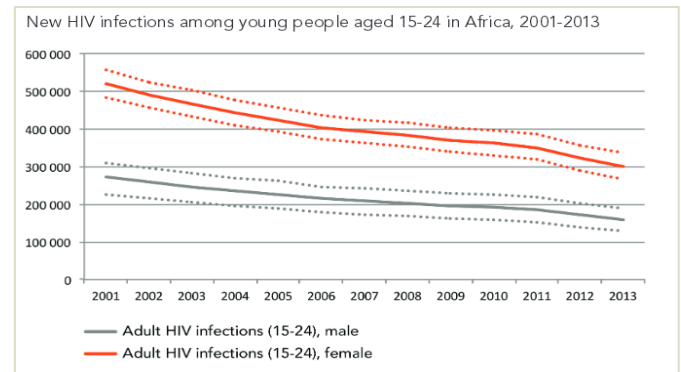
The document outlines three political commitments to advance the rights and empowerment of Africa's young women and girls to help Fast-Track an AIDS response firmly rooted in gender equality and social justice. The commitments are: to stop new HIV infections among young women and adolescent girls in order to ensure that AIDS is no longer the leading cause of death among adolescents; to empower young women and adolescent girls through comprehensive sexuality education; and to prevent HIV infections among children and keep their mothers alive...

Source: [Nekerala, 11 June 2015](#)

Context

According to the new [UN/AU report](#) - despite declining HIV infection rates, in 2013 globally, there were approximately 250 000 new HIV infections among adolescent boys and girls, 64% of which are among adolescent girls. Furthermore, young

women and adolescent girls are missing out on the scale-up of antiretroviral treatment access for people living with HIV.



Only 15% of young women and adolescent girls aged 15–24 years in sub-Saharan Africa know their HIV status. In the Middle East and North Africa, only one in five people living with HIV has access to treatment. Young women and adolescent girls from socially marginalized groups are at increased risk of HIV because they face multiple challenges. Stigma, discrimination, punitive laws and a lack of social protection increase the risk of HIV, notably for young female sex workers, young transgender women, young migrants and young women who use drugs.

Source: [Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS \(UNAIDS\)](#)

WAMTechnology assists the health and pharmaceutical industry with custom software development projects. Notably, our many successful projects include the development and support of the [Electronic Tuberculosis Register \(ETR.Net\)](#) and [Electronic Drug-Resistant Tuberculosis Register \(EDRWeb\)](#) – which are the **official software tools** used by the South African National Department of Health's Tuberculosis Control Program, to maintain and analyse registered patients.

The "Electronic TB Register" (ETR.Net) is a Microsoft.net-based computer software program, inspired and based on the World Health Organization (WHO) recording and reporting formats. Many of the features of ETR.Net are derived from the "Electronic TB Register" software, a TB surveillance project in southern Africa supported by USAID and CDC (Centres for Disease Control). It was developed to provide for more efficient and useful collection, compilation, and analysis of TB data on an ongoing basis.

CONTACT US: Tel: +27 (0)21 887 7161

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