WOMEN AND GIRLS
AND HIV
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 socio-cultural, 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

Globally, young women are twice as likely to acquire HIV as their male counterparts. Source: UNAIDS 2017 estimates.

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)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cause</th>
<th>2016 Estimate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>HIV</td>
<td>241.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ischaemic Heart Disease</td>
<td>150.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maternal Conditions</td>
<td>148.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stroke</td>
<td>139.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Breast Cancer</td>
<td>130.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuberculosis</td>
<td>96.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


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.

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 28 countries in which 83% of all women aged 15–24 in sub-Saharan Africa live.


Around 150 adolescents (10–19 years) died of AIDS-related illnesses every day in 2016. Source: UNAIDS 2017 estimates.

42% of urban 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.

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.

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.

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cause</th>
<th>2016 Estimate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ischaemic Heart Disease</td>
<td>150.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maternal Conditions</td>
<td>148.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stroke</td>
<td>139.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Breast Cancer</td>
<td>130.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuberculosis</td>
<td>96.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HIV</td>
<td>241.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


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 the least developed countries in the world 6 out of 10 girls do not attend secondary school. In sub-Saharan Africa, 7 in 10 young women do not have comprehensive knowledge about HIV. Young people require the consent of parents or legal guardians to access sexual and reproductive health services in at least 79 countries.

Female sex workers are 10 times more likely to acquire HIV than other women. In 29 countries women require the consent of a spouse/partner to access sexual and reproductive health services. 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.

23 girls below the age of 18 are married every minute. 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. Globally, adolescent girls and young women (15-24 years), account for close to 7,000 new HIV infections every week.

Women living with HIV have the right to access sexual and reproductive health services and programmes that prevent and address violence. Globally only 55% of women participate in the labour force. Women still earn 50% less than men for the same work.
18.8 MILLION GIRLS AND WOMEN LIVING WITH HIV

Girls and women make up more than half of the 36.7 million people living with HIV. Ending AIDS by 2030 requires that we address girls’ and women’s diverse roles by putting them at the centre of the response.

**Latin America and the Caribbean**
- Argentina: 39,000
- Bahamas: 3,500
- Barbados: <1,000
- Cuba: 7,000
- Dominican Republic: 34,000
- Ecuador: 10,000
- Haiti: 90,000
- Brazil: 290,000
- Colombia: 25,000
- Jamaica: 11,000
- El Salvador: 8,600
- Trinidad and Tobago: 3,900

**Western and central Europe and North America**
- Albania: <100
- Latvia: 2,300
- Lithuania: <100
- Croatia: <500
- Malta: <100
- Slovenia: <100
- Norway: 3,200
- Sweden: 3,200
- Italy: 40,000
- France: 58,000
- Bulgaria: 11,000
- Spain: 32,000
- Netherlands: 43,000
- Belgium: 20,000

**Eastern Europe and central Asia**
- Afghanistan: 28,000
- Georgia: 3,600
- Mongolia: <100
- Tajikistan: 3,700
- Kyrgyzstan: 2,800
- Uzbekistan: <1,000
- Armenia: <1,000
- Azerbaijan: 2,900
- Kazakhstan: 7,700
- Turkmenistan: <500

**North Africa and Middle East**
- Algeria: 5,900
- Lebanon: 11,000
- Djibouti: 4,800
- Nigeria: 3,400
- Eritrea: 9,200
- Sudan: 26,000
- Tanzania: 8,100
- Jordan: <200
- South Sudan: 12,000
- Saudi Arabia: 2,400
- Oman: <200
- United Arab Emirates: <200
- Qatar: <100
- Yemen: 4,100
- South Africa: 4,300,000
- South Africa: 5,700,000
- Angola: 170,000
- Kenya: 970,000
- Lesotho: 190,000
- Malawi: 1,100

**Africa—western and central Africa**
- Benin: 39,000
- Burkina Faso: 61,000
- Côte d’Ivoire: 270,000
- Democratic Republic of the Congo: 230,000
- Equatorial Guinea: 20,000
- Ghana: 180,000
- Gabon: 32,000
- Mauritania: 400
- Chad: 65,000
- Gambia: 12,000
- Togo: 61,000
- Sierra Leone: 57,000
- Guinea: 73,000
- Mali: 63,000
- Guinea-Bissau: 22,000

**Africa—eastern and southern Africa**
- Ethiopia: 420,000
- Malawi: 610,000
- Zimbabwe: 750,000
- Lesotho: 190,000
- Botswana: 200,000
- Swaziland: 130,000
- Madagascar: 13,000
- South Africa: 4,300,000

**Asia and the Pacific**
- Afghanistan: 22,000
- India: 220,000
- Indonesia: 860,000
- Pakistan: 41,000
- Thailand: 200,000
- Bangladesh: 40,000
- Philippines: 570,000
- South Korea: 5,700
- Cambodia: 37,000
- Nepal: 12,000
- Australia: 26,000

**Global**
18,800,000

18.8 MILLION GIRLS AND WOMEN LIVING WITH HIV

Girls and women make up more than half of the 36.7 million people living with HIV. Ending AIDS by 2030 requires that we address girls’ and women’s diverse roles by putting them at the centre of the response.

No data available for those countries not listed.

Source: UNAIDS 2017 estimates.
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

- 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.
- 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.