

## PRESS RELEASE

### New HIV Policy Lab uses law and policy data in the HIV response

**WASHINGTON, D.C./GENEVA, 29 September 2020**—Despite decades of scientific advance in the HIV response, progress remains uneven, with some countries rapidly reducing AIDS-related deaths and new HIV infections and others seeing increasing epidemics. Laws and policies are driving a significant part of that divergence.

Launched today, the HIV Policy Lab is a unique initiative to gather and monitor HIV-related laws and policies around the world.

“Laws and policies are life or death issues when it comes to HIV. They can ensure access to the best that science has to offer and help people to realize their rights and live well, or they can be barriers to people’s well-being. Like anything that matters, we need to measure the policy environment and work to transform it as a key part of the AIDS response,” said Winnie Byanyima, UNAIDS Executive Director.

The HIV Policy Lab is a data visualization and comparison tool that tracks national policy across 33 different indicators in 194 countries around the world, giving a measure of the policy environment. The goal is to improve transparency, the ability to understand and use the information easily and the ability to compare countries, supporting governments to learn from their neighbours, civil society to increase accountability and researchers to study the impact of laws and policies on the HIV pandemic.

According to Matthew Kavanagh, Director of the Global Health Policy & Politics Initiative at Georgetown University’s O’Neill Institute, “Policy is how governments take science to scale. If we want to improve how policy is used to improve health outcomes, it is essential to monitor and evaluate the policies that comprise it.”

“Reducing stigma and making care easier to access are fundamental for improving the lives of people living with HIV—and those are all consequences of policy choices. Tracking these choices is a key tool for improving them, and ensuring justice and equity for people living with HIV,” said Rico Gustav, Executive Director of the Global Network of People Living with HIV.

The HIV Policy Lab draws information from the National Commitments and Policy Instrument, legal documents, government reports and independent analyses to create data sets that can be compared across countries and across issues. The goal of the HIV Policy Lab is to help identify and address the gaps between evidence and policy and to build accountability for a more inclusive, effective, rights-based and science-based HIV policy response.

The HIV Policy Lab is a collaboration between Georgetown University and the O’Neill Institute for National and Global Health Law, UNAIDS, the Global Network of People Living with HIV and Talus Analytics.

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## **About the Georgetown University O'Neill Institute for National and Global Health Law**

The O'Neill Institute, housed at Georgetown University, was established to create innovative solutions to the most pressing national and international health concerns, with the essential vision that the law has been, and will remain, a fundamental tool for solving critical health problems. The Georgetown University Department of International Health is home to scholarship in public health, economics, political science, and medicine. Georgetown's Global Health Initiative serves as a university-wide platform for developing concrete solutions to the health challenges facing families and communities throughout the world. Read more at [oneillinstitute.org](http://oneillinstitute.org) and connect with us on Twitter and Facebook.

## **About UNAIDS**

The Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) leads and inspires the world to achieve its shared vision of zero new HIV infections, zero discrimination and zero AIDS-related deaths. UNAIDS unites the efforts of 11 UN organizations—UNHCR, UNICEF, WFP, UNDP, UNFPA, UNODC, UN Women, ILO, UNESCO, WHO and the World Bank—and works closely with global and national partners towards ending the AIDS epidemic by 2030 as part of the Sustainable Development Goals. Learn more at [unaids.org](http://unaids.org) and connect with us on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and Youtube.

## **About GNP+**

GNP+ is the global network for and by people living with HIV. GNP+ works to improve the quality of life of all people living with HIV. GNP+ advocates for, and supports fair and equal access to treatment, care and support services for people living with HIV around the world. Learn more at [gnpplus.net](http://gnpplus.net) and connect with GNP+ on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram.