

PRESS STATEMENT

UNAIDS calls for an end to gender-based violence

GENEVA, 22 November 2013—Ahead of the International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women, the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) is calling for an end to gender-based violence.

Gender based violence is a serious violation of human rights and increases the risk of HIV infection. Recent research has established a clear association between intimate partner violence and HIV, with women experiencing such violence facing a 50% increased risk of acquiring HIV.

“Every hour 50 young women become newly infected with HIV,” said Michel Sidibé, Executive Director of UNAIDS. “Women and girls have the right to live free of violence and inequities and to protect themselves against HIV.”

Gender-based violence is a pervasive reality across the globe—affecting both women and men around the world with women and men from key populations, such as women who inject drugs, female sex workers and transgender people most affected.

Globally, according to the World Health Organization, about one in three women experience physical and/or sexual violence by a partner or sexual violence by a non-partner. While around 150 million girls under the age of 18 have experienced some form of sexual violence, with many never disclosing their traumatic experience.

Responding to gender-based violence and HIV is a matter of shared global responsibility for social justice. In the 2011 Political Declaration on HIV and AIDS, United Nations Member States pledged to eliminate gender inequalities, gender-based abuse and violence, and to protect women from the risk of HIV infection.

UNAIDS fully recognizes gender equality and women’s empowerment as essential for an effective response to HIV and prioritizes gender equality with zero tolerance for gender based violence. UNAIDS will continue to leverage the AIDS response to end gender-based violence.

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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 to maximize results for the AIDS response. Learn more at unaids.org and connect with us on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).