



Concept note:

Virtual launch of the Continental Study on “Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment and HIV in Africa: The Impact of Intersecting Issues and Continental Priorities”

Date: 26 July 2021- 14:00 to 16:00

1. Background

African girls and women bear a disproportionate global disease burden of the HIV/AIDS pandemic. Women account for more than half of people living with HIV (63%) and 60% of new infections among adults (15 years and older) in Africa. Young women are disproportionately burdened, accounting for over double the number of people living with HIV (1.9m versus 0.85m) and for over 70% of new HIV infections in their age group. This translates to over 4,600 new HIV infections per week among adolescent girls and young women in Africa. Adolescent girls and young women are more than twice as likely to acquire HIV as their male peers. AIDS-related illnesses remain one of the leading causes of death for women of reproductive age (aged 15 to 44 years) in Africa.

HIV among African girls and women is driven by multiple gender inequalities that intersect at the individual, sociocultural, economic, and systemic levels. These gender inequalities, including gender-based and intimate partner violence, exacerbate women and girls’ physiological vulnerability to HIV and block their access to HIV services, testing, treatment, and care. While HIV is fuelled by gender inequality, it also entrenches gender inequality, leaving women more vulnerable to its impact. The power imbalance between men and women means that many young women cannot decide about their health. These inequalities are more severe for marginalized migrants and women with disabilities due to their heightened risk of discrimination and violence. Some of the gender inequalities that drive the HIV epidemic are; Gender-Based Violence, including child marriage and female genital mutilation. Inequalities in power and decision-making, women’s lack of economic empowerment, girls’ lack of access to education, legal and political factors such as discriminatory legal frameworks, stigma and discrimination, humanitarian crisis, and COVID 19 are cross-cutting factors.

2. The study : Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment and HIV in Africa: The Impact of Intersecting Issues and Continental Priorities

This policy paper aims to use the goals and targets outlined in the existing global sustainable development goals (SDGs) and continental African Union (AU) gender and HIV policy frameworks as its baseline. In addition, it identifies best practices for dealing

with gender inequality and intersecting issues that keep girls and women vulnerable to HIV. The recommendations made will guide AU, AU Member States (MS) and other stakeholders to integrate the gender equality and women's empowerment priorities in HIV/AIDS policies, programs, and initiatives implemented at different levels in Africa towards achieving the continental gender and AIDS targets by 2030.

3. Proposed Launch event

To ensure the dissemination and effective use of the study: Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment and HIV in Africa: The Impact of Intersecting Issues and Continental Priorities, its key findings, recommendations, the partners will organize a high-level launch dialogue platform that aims to:

- highlight the key outcomes and recommendation of the study
- Garner multi-stakeholder partnerships around implementation of the key recommendations of the study

Format: Virtual launch of the publication followed by a moderated discussion with key stakeholders

4. Expected outcomes

- The policy paper on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment and HIV in Africa: The Impact of Intersecting Issues and Continental Priorities popularized

5. Participants

The event will be attended by Experts from Ministries in charge of Gender and Women's Affairs, Regional Economic Communities (RECs), UN Agencies, policy makers, representatives of CSOs and organisations representing women and girls living with HIV, youth representatives, Development Partners, AU Organs and Specialized Agencies, AUC Staff from different Departments and the media,

6. Proposed time and date

The launch will be conducted virtually on 26 July 2021 at 14:00 – 16:00 PM East African Time (EAT)

7. Language

Simultaneous interpretations will be available in – English and French languages



Contacts of focal persons

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Meeting link

https://unwomen.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_6d72E3iBTiWR6jElx3a2Pw

Provisional Agenda

Launch of the study on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment and HIV in Africa: The Impact of Intersecting Issues and Continental Priorities

26 July 2021 Time: 14:00 – 16:00 EAT

Moderator: Dr. Tapiwa Uchizi Nyasulu Rweyemamu, Head of Gender Policy and Development Division; Women Gender and Youth Directorate (AUC-WGYD)

Time	Agenda Item	Speaker
14:00-14:15	Opening remarks: setting the scene, the purpose of the publication	Ms. Prudence Nonkululeko Ngwenya, Officer In Charge, African Union Commission Women, Gender, Youth Directorate (AUC-WGYD) Ms. Letty Chiwara, UN WOMEN Representative to Ethiopia, AU and UNECA Mrs. Berthilde Gahongayire, UNAIDS Country Director for Ethiopia and Director a.i. Liaison Office to AU and ECA
14 :15- 14 :30	Keynote speech & official launch	H.E. Amira El Fadil, Commissioner, Health, Humanitarian Affairs and Social Development (HHS)
14:30-14.35	Group picture	
14 :35-14.45	Young woman living positively with HIV/AIDs	TBC
14:45-15:00	Presentation of the study on : Impact of gender inequality and intersectionalities on HIV outcomes in Africa	Dr. Mary M. Nyikuri Independent consultant
15:00-15:30	Moderated discussion on perspectives and experiences on practical approaches for	Voices from the field :

	tackling intersecting issues to improve HIV outcomes among women and girls	Traditional leader-HRH Queen Martha Sekhothali Mabena CSO- Dr Angela Akol, Executive Director , Ipas Africa Alliance AUC-DHHS- Ms. Nena Thundu Coordinator of the African Union Harmful Practices Project and Policy Expert.
15:30-15:40	From policy to action – way forward on dissemination, implementation, and reporting on progress	Dr. Tapiwa Uchizi Nyasulu Rweyemamu
15:40-15:55	Closing remarks and vote of thanks	Ms. Prudence Nonkululeko Ngwenya, Officer In Charge, African Union Commission Women, Gender, Youth Directorate (AUC-WGYD)