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DIRECTORATE OF INFORMATION & COMMUNICATION

Press Release No: /2020

Date: 26 July 2021

Venue: Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

MEDIA ADVISORY

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

What: The launch the Continental Study on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment and HIV in Africa: The Impact of Intersecting Issues and Continental Priorities. Whilst Africa has made tremendous progress in reducing the number of new infections, and HIV related deaths in the last decade, the study provides a contextual analysis on why the progress has not been consistently achieved across all the regions and countries on the continent.

When: 26th July 2021. 1400 Hours EAT.

Where: Registration is now open for the launch event-
https://unwomen.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_6d72E3iBTiWR6jElx3a2Pw

Who: Convened by the African Union Commission Directorate of Women, Gender and Youth, and UN Agencies, the meeting will bring together Experts form Ministries responsible for Gender and Women's Affairs in all AU Member States; the Regional Economic Communities, AU organs and Specialized Agencies, civil society organizations, media, and development partners, among other stakeholders.

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 fuelled 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 driven 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 make decisions about their health. These inequalities are more severe for marginalised, migrant and women with disabilities due to their heightened risk of discrimination and violence.

The continental study looks indepth into the issues and provides recommendations to address existing and emerging challenges.

For further information please contact:

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