

Media Update

1st December 2024

UNITED NATIONS SECRETARY-GENERAL MESSAGE

THE SECRETARY-GENERAL MESSAGE FOR THE INTERNATIONAL DAY FOR THE ABOLITION OF SLAVERY 2 December 2024

On this International Day for the Abolition of Slavery, we shine a light on the estimated 50 million people worldwide trapped in horrific conditions – from human trafficking to forced labour, sexual exploitation and forced marriage.

Around the world, perpetrators prey on those made vulnerable by poverty, discrimination and conflict — including women and children — and profit from immeasurable human suffering.

These outrageous abuses have no place in the 21st century. They are not only an affront to basic human rights — they slow development, entrench inequalities, and undermine sustainable economic development.

The recently adopted Pact for the Future calls for the eradication of forced labour, an end to modern slavery and trafficking in persons, and the elimination of all forms of child labour.

To transform words into deeds, governments must strengthen law enforcement, uphold human dignity, protect, liberate and support victims, and bring perpetrators to justice. And businesses must ensure supply chains are free of exploitation and promote fair and transparent labour practices.

Everywhere, let us join forces to detect, report and abolish contemporary forms of slavery in all its forms.

UNICEF

PRESS RELEASE

FAST FACTS: Critical gains in HIV response, but adolescents, especially girls, remain disproportionately affected, UNICEF warns on World AIDS Day

NEW YORK/Islamabad, December 1 2024 – While there has been a notable decline in new HIV infections among children and adolescents globally over the past decade, adolescent girls still struggle to access tailored prevention services and support, according to the latest available estimates.

Without urgent action to address the disproportionate impact of HIV on adolescent girls and young women – particularly in sub-Saharan Africa – hard-won gains in the HIV response could be lost, UNICEF is warning ahead of World AIDS Day on 1st December.

“Many countries have made remarkable strides towards ending AIDS,” said UNICEF Associate Director of HIV/AIDS Anurita Bains. “Yet children and adolescents are not fully reaping the benefits of scaled up access to treatment and prevention services. Children living with HIV must be prioritized when it comes to investing resources and efforts to scale up treatment for all, this includes the expansion of innovative testing technologies.”

According to the latest available data (2023):

- Globally, 96,000 girls and 41,000 boys aged 15-19 were newly infected with HIV in 2023, meaning seven out of 10 new adolescent infections were among girls. In sub-Saharan Africa, 9 out of 10 new HIV infections among 15-19 year-olds are among girls.
- In 2023, 330 children aged 0-14 acquired HIV every day.
- There were 250,000 new HIV infections in the 0-19 age group in 2023, bringing the total number of children and adolescents living with HIV globally to 2.4 million.

- While 77 per cent of adults living with HIV have access to antiretroviral therapy (ART), only 57 per cent of children aged 0-14, and 65 per cent of adolescents aged 15-19 do.
- Last year over 90,000 children and adolescents died of AIDS-related causes – that’s 250 lives lost each day – 73 per cent of which occurred among children under the age of 10.
- Children aged 0-14 make up only 3 per cent of people living with HIV, yet they account for 12 per cent (76,000) of AIDS-related deaths in 2023.
- The rate of new HIV infections in Eastern and Southern Africa has decreased by 72 per cent among 0-14 year-olds and 57 per cent among 15-19 year-olds since 2010, making it one of the top global public health achievements in decades.
- Despite a decrease in overall rates of infection in most parts of the world since 2010, 74,000 new HIV cases among children and adolescents aged 15-19 were recorded in Eastern and Southern Africa in 2023, 18,000 in West and Central Africa, 8,900 in South Asia, 5,800 in Eastern Europe and Central Asia, and 16,000 in East Asia and the Pacific.
- Latin America and the Caribbean has not seen a meaningful reduction in the HIV infection rate among adolescents in at least a decade, while in the Middle East and North Africa, new infections among adolescents have increased by 70 per cent since 2010.
- 19 countries and territories have achieved certification for eliminating mother-to-child transmission of HIV and/or syphilis, including 11 in the Americas, with recent certifications for Belize, Jamaica, and St. Vincent and the Grenadines. In Africa, Botswana and Namibia are certified as being on the path to elimination.

Notes to Editors

The adolescent HIV infection data is derived from UNAIDS Estimates 2024. Numbers may not add up due to rounding off.

Watch UNICEF Executive Director's World AIDS Day message [here](#). World AIDS Day 2024 global snapshot and other assets can be found [here](#).

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