### *PRESS RELEASE*

**EMBARGOED until 00.01 AM GMT, 1 December 2023**

**Despite progress, adolescent girls continue to bear the brunt of the HIV epidemic with 98,000 new infections in 2022 - UNICEF**

*Children and adolescents face significant treatment gaps in testing and access to medication*

**NEW YORK, 1 December 2023** **–** Nearly 98,000 adolescent girls aged 10-19 were infected with HIV in 2022 – or 1,900 new infections every week – according to UNICEF’s latest [Global Snapshot on Children with HIV and AIDS](https://www.childrenandaids.org/world-aids-day-2023), released ahead of World AIDS Day.

While total infections among girls aged 10-19 have almost halved since 2010 – from 190,000 to 98,000 – girls were still more than twice as likely to contract HIV last year, than boys. Globally, there were 270,000 new HIV infections among all children and adolescents aged 0-19 in 2022, bringing the total number of young people living with HIV to 2.6 million.

“It is unacceptable that adolescent girls, who should be planning their futures, continue to bear the heaviest burden of HIV infection,” said UNICEF Associate Director of HIV/AIDS Anurita Bains. “We – the UN, communities, governments and organisations – must eradicate the obstacles that make HIV a threat to their health and wellbeing. This includes ensuring the sexual and reproductive health and rights of adolescent girls and young women are met.”

Girls continue to bear the brunt of the HIV epidemic due, in-part, to gender inequalities which often result in girls being disempowered to negotiate safe sex; poverty that manifests in communities being located far from healthcare centres; and a lack of access to HIV prevention and sexual and reproductive health programmes.

In sub-Saharan Africa, HIV prevalence among adolescent girls and young women, aged 10-24 years, is persistently over three times higher than among their male counterparts.

The latest data shows that Eastern and Southern Africa continues to carry the overwhelming burden of HIV infection, with 137,000 new infections among the 0-19 age group in 2022, followed by West and Central Africa (66,000 new infections among 0-19), East Asia and the Pacific (21,600 new infections 0-19), Latin America and the Caribbean (16,300 new infections 0-19) and South Asia (14,400 new infections 0-19).

The Global Snapshot further highlights how children and young adolescents face considerable inequities when it comes to access to treatment, compared to adults. Globally, nearly one million people aged 0-19 living with HIV are not receiving treatment, and more than half of this group – about 60 per cent – are in Eastern and Southern Africa.

Cumbersome diagnostic processes for children; specific testing requirements for infants that are not always available in middle- and lower-income countries; and a lack of age-appropriate antiretroviral medication for younger age groups are among the reasons that just 57 per cent of children aged 0–14 years are receiving antiretroviral treatment, compared to 77 per cent of people aged 15 and above.

Progress toward ending AIDS remains slow, with 99,000 children and adolescents aged 0-19 years dying globally due to AIDS-related causes in 2022, accounting for 15 per cent of all AIDS-related deaths, even though this age group comprises just 7 per cent of people living with HIV.

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**Notes to Editors**

Table showing child and adolescent HIV population figures in highest burden regions:

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Indicator by age** | **Eastern and Southern Africa** | **West and Central Africa** | **East Asia and the Pacific** | **South Asia** | **Latin America and Caribbean** |
| **Children 0-14 years**  |
| **HIV population** | 940,000 | 390,000 | 51,000 | 78,000 | 42,000 |
| **New infections 2022** | 60,000 | 50,000 | 6,600 | 5,800 | 5,300 |
| **Adolescents 15-19 years** |
| **HIV population** | 690,000 | 180,000 | 48,0000 | 58,000 | 43,000 |
| **New infections 2022** | 77,000 | 16,000 | 15,000 | 8,600 | 11,000 |

Access the 2023 Data Snapshot [here](https://childrenandaids.org/world-aids-day-2023).
Download multimedia content [here](https://weshare.unicef.org/Package/2AM4089PKFL7).

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**For further information, please contact:**
Nadia Samie-Jacobs, UNICEF New York, nsamie@unicef.org, Tel: +1 (845)760 2615