



HER

# HIV EPIDEMIC RESPONSE

Empowering Women and Girls to end AIDS



## The Situation

HIV is preventable, and yet over 1,000 young women and girls are infected with HIV every day.

Despite great progress made against HIV globally, adolescent girls and young women continue to be disproportionately affected by the epidemic, especially in sub-Saharan Africa.

In the hardest-hit countries, girls account for more than 80 percent of all new infections among adolescents – and are up to eight times more likely to be living with HIV than their male peers.

Harmful gender norms, discrimination, violence, limited access to education and a lack of tailored services inhibit women's and girls' access to health care and fuel new infections.

The 15-24-year-old population is expected to double in the next decade in sub-Saharan Africa, so addressing the staggering HIV incidence among adolescent girls and young women is critical to preventing a catastrophic epidemic.

## We have reached a critical moment

We will win or lose the global fight against AIDS based on whether we win or lose the battle to protect adolescent girls and young women from HIV over the next few years.

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### A Movement for HER

**Together with partners, the Global Fund has set a bold target to reduce the number of new HIV infections among adolescent girls and young women by 58 percent in 13 African countries over the next five years.**

A collective global effort is needed to reach this goal. With more awareness, more funding and more energy driving new approaches, we can change the course of the epidemic.

The Global Fund is strongly committed to promoting gender equality and investing in programs for adolescent girls and young women. Our investments have increased significantly in the past seven years, with about 60 percent of the organization's total investments now directed to women and girls. And it is making a difference.

The Global Fund has already made available an additional US\$55 million in funding to catalyze the right investments for adolescent girls and young women in high burden countries. However, data has indicated

that in 13 high-risk countries, HIV infection among women and girls is disproportionately high compared with boys of the same age group. Therefore, without renewed and increased investment to scale up existing efforts, we risk the epidemic outrunning the response.

By urgently scaling up prevention programs that put the voices and needs of adolescent girls and young women first, and incubating new and innovative approaches, we have the opportunity to save lives.

Boys and men will be crucial to the success of this effort, and programs will be designed to engage with them. As partners, peers, friends and family, their supportive actions and attitudes are a necessary part of the solution.

With support from private sector partners and influential champions, the Global Fund aims to raise additional resources over the next five years to expand HIV prevention programs for adolescent girls and young women.



1. **Cameroon**
2. **Uganda**
3. **Kenya**
4. **Tanzania**
5. **Malawi**
6. **Mozambique**
7. **Zambia**
8. **Zimbabwe**
9. **Botswana**
10. **Namibia**
11. **Swaziland**
12. **Lesotho**
13. **South Africa**

### A Girl-Centered Approach

The specific needs of adolescent girls and young women are at the heart of programs supported through HER.

A girl-centered, rights-based approach to programs, with services that reflect the differing risks and opportunities for women and girls by their age group, country and community context, is key to fighting the epidemic.

HER Voice is a fund that has been launched to address the logistical barriers faced by groups and networks of adolescent girls and young women, to better enable them to participate in Global Fund country processes. It provides practical support, such as small grants to cover expenses, to ensure women and girls have a place at the table during key decision making forums related to country policy reform, funding applications and the design and implementation of programs for women and girls.

**Tackling HIV means addressing both biological and social drivers of the epidemic. The types of programs that create lasting change for adolescent girls and young women include:**

- Comprehensive, adolescent-friendly prevention programs that provide sexuality education, condoms and pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP), and HIV testing services – all free from stigma or discrimination
- Life skills, financial literacy and “know your rights” education, which can empower girls and young women to be advocates for their own health and well-being
- Cash incentives, peer networks, mentors and other social protection programs – including prevention of gender-based violence – to support girls as they complete their education
- Community engagement and education, and investment in resilient systems for health that will sustain progress initiated through HER



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### Education and HIV

There is strong evidence that keeping adolescent girls and young women in school reduces significantly their vulnerability to HIV infection. A recent study in Botswana showed that secondary school students who stayed in school for an additional year had an eight percent lower risk of HIV infection about a decade later. In countries with a high burden of HIV among adolescent girls and young women, including Kenya, Swaziland, and South Africa, the Global Fund is supporting programs that aim to keep girls and women in school - as well as provide social support.

*The Lancet 2015*

### Peer Support

19-year old Kgantsho Makegata leads weekly meetings at the RISE Young Women's Club in South Africa. The clubs provide a safe space for young women to share peer-to-peer experiences on sexual health, gender-based violence and HIV. This is one of many programs that target the needs of adolescent girls and young women in South Africa, and with the support of the Global Fund, South Africa launched a national campaign in 2015 to address the high prevalence of HIV among this high risk group.



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## How to Support HER

The Global Fund has created a collaborative platform for a range of partners to support adolescent girls and young women in countries with a high risk of HIV.



### Financial Support

Partners can contribute financial resources to accelerate the most impactful HIV prevention programs for adolescent girls and young women.



### In Kind Expertise

Expertise and know-how can be provided to support countries to design and implement innovative programs that are specifically tailored to meet the needs of adolescent girls and young women.



### HER Voice

Partners can support HER Voice, a fund which helps ensure young women's and girls' voices are heard at key decision-making forums related to funding applications, country policy reform, and the design of HIV prevention programs that meet their needs.



### Awareness Raising

Help drive awareness of the issue and give a voice to adolescent girls and young women through high-level advocacy moments at global, regional and country levels, to help keep the next generation HIV free.



**Invest in Girls for a Better Future**

By working together to galvanize the necessary strengths, technical expertise and financial support, we can support adolescent girls and young women to become healthy, empowered and financially independent women who are free to fulfill their potential. Addressing the disproportionate impact of HIV by investing in the

health and rights of adolescent girls and young women reduces gender inequality and creates a ripple effect that delivers numerous societal and economic gains – benefitting families, communities and countries.

**Invest in Girls for a Better Future**

When **10%** more girls go to school, a country's GDP increases by an average of **3%↑**



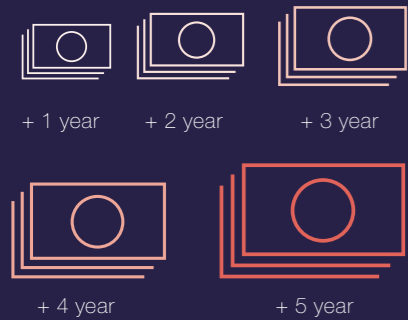
(USAID, 2011)

Advancing women's equality and closing the gender gap in work and society could add **11%** to global GDP by 2025



(McKinsey Global Institute Report, 2015)

Every additional year of secondary schooling equals a **15-25%** increase in a girl's potential income



(UNICEF, 2011)



Keeping a girl in school beyond grade 7 means they have an average of

**2.2** fewer children

(PMNCH, 2013)

Each additional year of schooling increases the average annual GDP by **0.37%**

(UNESCO, 2010)



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Investing in girls  
means investing in  
the future. Together,  
we can empower  
the next generation  
to stay free from HIV.

## The Global Fund

The Global Fund is a 21st-century partnership designed to accelerate the end of AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria as epidemics.

**For more information on how to support HER**

The Global Fund to Fight AIDS, TB and Malaria  
Chemin de Blandonnet 8  
1214 Vernier, Geneva  
Switzerland

T: +41 58 791 1179  
privatesector@theglobalfund.org  
[theglobalfund.org](http://theglobalfund.org)