

Report Highlights Increased Risk of HIV/AIDS in Adolescent Girls and Young Women

✘ The overall global decline in new HIV infections and AIDS-related deaths masks the realities of pockets of high prevalence in specific populations. According to a report just issued by the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS), 15- to 24-year old adolescent girls and young women in eastern and southern Africa—infected at rates two to five times higher than boys their age—is one of these groups.

In response to this stark reality the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) partnered with the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and the Nike Foundation to significantly reduce new HIV infections in adolescent girls and young women. The DREAMS (Determined, Resilient, Empowered, AIDS-Free, Mentored and Safe) Partnership's goal is to reduce incidence in 10 high-burden "hot spots" by 25% in two years and by 40% in three years.

These girls account for 80% of all new HIV infections among adolescents—with 7,000 girls and young women aged 15-24 infected every week—and with HIV/AIDS the leading cause of death for girls aged 15-19

While the gap in addressing girls in the global HIV response has been long understood by those providing HIV/AIDS services, this recent data created a clarion call to action. Ambassador Deborah Birx, US Global AIDS Coordinator says this is "an incredible, compelling time to make a huge difference."

DREAMS will focus on the most vulnerable: those whose parents

have HIV or have died of AIDS; those engaged in cross-generational or transactional sex; those married as adolescents; those who have experienced gender-based violence; those who are food insecure; and those who are mobile or whose parents are mobile.

“The obstacles to reaching these ambitious targets are many,” said Anita Smith Children’s AIDS Fund International (CAFI) President, “but having worked with thousands of vulnerable girls in these same countries we know first-hand how critical and effective interventions are. This is absolutely the right initiative at the right time.”

CAFI friends and supporters like you have provided livelihood skills, education scholarships, nutrition support, prevention education and much more over nearly 30 years. Visit the CAFI store on our website to become part of this urgent intervention for vulnerable girls at this important time.

Addressing HIV Risk in Adolescent Girls and Young Women can be downloaded at the CSIS website: www.csis.org.