

# OPPORTUNITY **in** CRISIS

Preventing HIV from  
early adolescence  
to young adulthood

Fact Sheet - June 2011

## Overview

- Globally, 5 million young people were living with HIV in 2009<sup>1</sup>-- down 12 per cent from 5.7 million in 2001.<sup>2</sup> An estimated 2 million adolescents aged 10-19 were living with the virus in 2009.<sup>3</sup> Most of these adolescents and young people live in sub-Saharan Africa.
- Every day, some 2,500 young people are estimated to acquire HIV. In 2009 alone, an estimated 890,000 young people were newly infected with the virus.<sup>4</sup>
- In 2009, young people aged 15-24 accounted for 41 per cent of new HIV infections worldwide among people aged 15 and older.
- Globally, the number of new infections is thought to have peaked in 1997. Prevalence among young people in many countries is down.
- In 2001, the world made a commitment to reduce the prevalence of HIV among young people by 25 per cent by 2010. The actual reduction achieved -- 12 per cent -- represents less than half the target percentage.
- Reducing the number of new infections among the young requires a full continuum of HIV prevention, providing information, support and services to adolescents and young people throughout the life cycle.
- In several regions, the number of adolescent girls aged 10-19 living with HIV is about double that of adolescent boys. In Eastern and Southern Africa, an estimated 760,000 girls are living with the virus, compared to 430,000 boys. In West and Central Africa, the figure is 330,000 for girls and 190,000 for boys.
- Globally, 11 per cent of adolescent girls aged 15-19 reported to have had sex before age 15.

## Sub-Saharan Africa

- Twenty countries in sub-Saharan Africa accounted for an estimated 69 per cent of the world's new HIV infections among young people in 2009.
- About one out of every three young people newly infected with HIV in 2009 was from South Africa or Nigeria.
- An estimated 1,200,000 adolescents aged 10-19 in Eastern and Southern Africa were living with HIV in 2009.<sup>5</sup> The figure is 520,000 for West and Central Africa.<sup>6</sup>
- 1,100,000 girls<sup>7</sup> and 620,000 boys aged 10-19 were estimated to be living with HIV in sub-Saharan Africa in 2009<sup>8</sup>. An estimated 700,000 new occurred among young people ages 15-24 in 2009.<sup>9</sup>
- Twenty-six per cent of women ages 15-24 and 33 per cent of men in sub-Saharan Africa showed comprehensive knowledge of HIV in data from 2005-2010.
- In sub-Saharan Africa, according to the latest estimates, 14 per cent of girls and 11 per cent of boys aged 15-19 had sex before age 15. Among women aged 20-24, the number is 17 per cent; among men of the same age, 9 per cent.

## Adolescent girls and young women

- Young women make up more than 60 per cent all young people living with HIV. In sub-Saharan Africa, the number jumps to 72 per cent.
- Swaziland has the world's highest HIV prevalence among people aged 15-49 at about 26 per cent. Here, women aged 15-19 years old have a 10 per cent chance of HIV infection. By age 20-24, the figure more than doubles to 38 per cent. It reaches 49 per cent by age 25-29.

<sup>1</sup> 5 million [4.3 million-5.9 million]

<sup>2</sup> 5.7 million [5.0 million-6.7 million]

<sup>3</sup> 2 million [1.8 million-2.4 million]

<sup>4</sup> 890,000 [810,000-970,000]

<sup>5</sup> 1,200,000 [1.0 million-1.4 million]

<sup>6</sup> 520,000 [390,000-680,000]

<sup>7</sup> 1,100,000 [970,000-1,400,000]

<sup>8</sup> 620,000 [520,000-760,000]

<sup>9</sup> 700,000 [620,000-780,000]

## Central and Eastern Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States

- HIV prevalence is on the rise in the CEE/CIS countries, largely due to sharply rising levels of unsafe injecting drug use.
- Four of five people living with HIV in this region are under age 30; one in three new HIV infections occurs among young people aged 15-24.
- According to estimates, 9,000 girls<sup>10</sup> and 3,900 boys aged 10-19 were living with HIV in CEE/CIS in 2009. In the same year, 52,000 women<sup>11</sup> and 29,000 men aged 15-24 were estimated to be living with the virus.<sup>12</sup>
- 22,000 new infections were estimated among young people aged 15-24 for 2009.<sup>13</sup>

## Middle East and North Africa

- In this region, 22,000 girls<sup>14</sup> and 9,700 boys<sup>15</sup> aged 10-19 were estimated in 2009 to be living with HIV, as were 62,000 women<sup>16</sup> and 32,000 men aged 15-24.<sup>17</sup>
- The number of new infections among young people aged 15-24 in the region for 2009 was estimated to be 26,000.<sup>18</sup>

## Latin America and the Caribbean

- In 2009, 44,000 of the region's girls<sup>19</sup> and 44,000 boys aged 10-19 were estimated to be living with HIV,<sup>20</sup> as were 120,000 women<sup>21</sup> and 130,000 men aged 15-24.<sup>22</sup>
- In the region, 44,000 new infections young people aged 15-24 were estimated in 2009.<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> 9,000 [7,700-10,000]

<sup>11</sup> 52,000 [44,000-59,000]

<sup>12</sup> 29,000 [25,000-33,000]

<sup>13</sup> 22,000 [17,000-26,000]

<sup>14</sup> 22,000 [17,000-30,000]

<sup>15</sup> 9,700 [7,800-12,000]

<sup>16</sup> 62,000 [48,000-84,000]

<sup>17</sup> 32,000 [26,000-41,000]

<sup>18</sup> 26,000 [20,000-32,000]

<sup>19</sup> 44,000 [34,000-55,000]

<sup>20</sup> 44,000 [31,000-82,000]

<sup>21</sup> 120,000 [94,000-150,000]

<sup>22</sup> 130,000 [91,000-240,000]

<sup>23</sup> 44,000 [36,000-57,000]

## Asia

- In 2009, 77,000 girls<sup>24</sup> and 78,000 boys ages 10-19 were estimated to be living with HIV,<sup>25</sup> as were 210,000 women<sup>26</sup> and 240,000 men ages 15-24.<sup>27</sup>
- Young people in Asia ages 15-24 experienced an estimated 90,000 new infections for 2009.<sup>28</sup>
- Among young people in Asia aged 15-19, the latest estimates show 7 per cent of girls and 3 per cent of boys had sex before age 15. Among those age 20-24, 11 per cent of women and 2 per cent of men had sex before age 15.

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<sup>24</sup> 77,000 [60,000-75,000]

<sup>25</sup> 78,000 [62,000-83,000]

<sup>26</sup> 210,000 [190,000-230,000]

<sup>27</sup> 240,000 [210,000-290,000]

<sup>28</sup> 90,000 [73,000-110,000]