

G.Bissau warns AIDS patients without treatment since coup

November 21 2012

HIV-positive people in Guinea Bissau have been without access to treatment since the Global Fund to fight AIDS suspended funding over an April military coup, the west African nation's AIDS boss said Wednesday.

"Our main funders, the Global Fund, suspended [financial aid](#)" following the April 12 coup, said Joao Jose Silva Monteiro, coordinator of the national secretariat to fight AIDS.

"Our staff and volunteers are no longer being paid and the drugs have dried up," he warned. "Many patients no longer come to us because they are demoralised and are convinced they are going to die."

He stressed that his organisation, which is part of the [health ministry](#), did not conduct work of a political nature and appealed for funding to resume.

"One cannot punish it as if it were part of the government," Monteiro said.

According to government figures, Guinea Bissau has an [HIV prevalence](#) rate of 3.3 percent, one of the highest in western Africa.

The April coup leaders have handed over power to a civilian administration following a transition deal but many of the country's Western partners do not recognise the new authorities and have frozen

aid.

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