

More women, children now on lifesaving HIV treatment worldwide

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The Elizabeth Glaser Pediatric AIDS Foundation (EGPAF) applauds today's announcement from the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) that the goal of providing 15 million people with lifesaving antiretroviral therapy (ART) by 2015 has been met nine months ahead of schedule. The report, titled "How AIDS Changed Everything" provides a detailed breakdown of the progress made toward achieving Millennium Development Goal (MDG) 6: Halting and reversing the spread of HIV.

A key success has been the unprecedented global response to treating and preventing AIDS in [children](#). In 2000, approximately 520,000 children became newly infected with HIV. In the absence of ART, children were dying in large numbers. However, global scale-up of prevention of mother-to-child transmission of HIV (PMTCT) services has yielded remarkable results. Between 2000 and 2014, the percentage of pregnant women living with HIV with access to ART rose to 73 percent and new HIV infections among children dropped by 58 percent—leading to 1.4 million averted pediatric HIV infections worldwide.

"What the global HIV/AIDS community has achieved is truly extraordinary," said Charles Lyons, EGPAF president and CEO. "We can end AIDS in children. What we need now is continued global commitments to dramatically scale up HIV treatment and prevention services and access to them, especially for women and children."

Despite this tremendous progress, more than 220,000 children were newly infected with HIV in 2014; meaning more than 600 children are still infected every single day. The majority of these children don't have access to the treatment they need—only 32 percent of the 2.6 million children living with HIV had access to ART in 2014. Without treatment, half of these children will die before age 2, and 80 percent won't live past age 5.

"No parent should ever have to endure the pain of losing a child to AIDS, and no child should be orphaned by the virus," said EGPAF Ambassador Florence Ngobeni-Allen, whose personal story of losing her first daughter to AIDS and later realizing her dream of having a family despite her HIV-positive status is featured in the new report.

"Fortunately, so much has changed for women and children who are living with and affected by HIV. More mothers than ever before can now access lifesaving medications that will ensure their babies will be born and remain HIV-free. I am so proud to be one of those of mothers."

The report's findings are especially significant as the global HIV/AIDS community looks to create a new framework for achieving UNAIDS's ambitious goal to end AIDS by 2030. As both the MDGs and the Global Plan are set to sunset later this year, new Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are scheduled to launch at the upcoming UN General Assembly in September 2015 and are expected to include new HIV/AIDS targets as part of a broader health goal.

"Millions of lives have been saved and changed," said Lyons. "Under the transformational leadership of the U.S. President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR), UNAIDS, and other partners, EGPAF has reached more than 22 million women with lifesaving services that protect their health and keep their babies HIV-free. However, we have many more women and children to reach in order to end the AIDS epidemic. And we can't do it alone. Only by accelerating our work

together as a global community, with common intention and resources, will we be able to create a world where no child has AIDS."

Provided by Elizabeth Glaser Pediatric AIDS Foundation

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