



Let's make HIV powerless - Become a Champion for Children and Adolescents Living with HIV

29 June 2017 - The World Council of Churches - Ecumenical Advocacy Alliance is looking for Religious Leaders and representatives of faith-based organizations who are willing to become Champions for Children and Adolescents Living with HIV!

Children, Adolescents and AIDS: A justice issue

5 million children aged 0-14 have died from AIDS-related illnesses since the start of the HIV epidemic. 91% of them lived in Sub-Saharan Africa. The majority of these deaths were preventable! The problem is that of the 1,800,000 children aged 0-14 who are now living with HIV, only half are receiving the treatment they need to live a long and healthy life. Without treatment, half of children with HIV will die by their second birthday. A critical reason for the low treatment coverage is the low detection rates. Globally in 2015, only 47 percent of HIV-exposed infants received the recommended diagnostic test within the first two months of life.

Adolescents and young people represent a growing share of people living with HIV worldwide and HIV is the second largest cause of adolescent deaths globally. In 2015, 250,000 adolescents aged 15-19 were newly infected with HIV. Only 13 percent of adolescent girls and 9 percent of adolescent boys aged 15-19 in sub-Saharan Africa have been tested for HIV in the past 12 months and received the result of the last test. No test result means no access to treatment!

Speak out for children and adolescents

People of faith cannot remain indifferent to the 400 children who are newly infected with HIV each day and to the 300 children who die of AIDS-related causes daily. We cannot remain silent knowing that many adolescents do not receive proper information about HIV and AIDS and knowing that all these infections and deaths are entirely avoidable!

To change this situation, the WCC-EAA is mobilizing faith leaders, representatives of faith-based organizations and faith-based media representatives to speak out for and with children and adolescents living with HIV and HIV/TB co-infection. Unless concrete action is taken now, hundreds of thousands more will become HIV-positive and die needlessly in the coming years.

To change this situation, the WCC-EAA is mobilizing faith leaders, representatives of faith-based organizations and faith-

The faith contribution to the Start Free, Stay Free and AIDS Free Framework

This initiative is one of the faith contributions to the Start Free, Stay Free and AIDS Free Framework launched by UNAIDS and PEPFAR in 2016.

We want children to be born free from HIV; children and adolescents to remain free from HIV; and children who are HIV-positive to have access to timely testing and quality treatment.

Be a Champion for Children and Adolescents Living with HIV

Champions will inspire political change and inform their faith communities about children and adolescents' issues related to HIV.

We count on your powerful voices as religious leaders to make and shape national policies, call for justice, protect the rights of children and adolescents, address stigma and discrimination, and mobilize people to take up testing, prevention, treatment and care.

We count on journalists and editors to inform the public about children, adolescents and HIV and raise the level of the debate. Together, champions will be powerful agents for action to make sure that 1.6 million children and 1.2 million adolescents living with HIV will be provided with treatment by the end of 2018 – as agreed by all United Nations Member States in the [2016 UN HIV High Level Meeting on Ending AIDS](#).

Tasks

Champions for Children and Adolescents Living with HIV are asked to support at least one of the following actions:

- Religious Leaders to sign the WCC-EAA Call to Action “[Act now for children and adolescents living with HIV](#)” and promote it
- Share information on children, adolescents and HIV within your faith community, including through sermons. Get inspired by the [Khutbah and Sermon Guides on children and HIV for Religious Leaders](#) from IMA Health World, INERELA+ Kenya and AIDSFree
- Advocate with key decision makers to address paediatric AIDS bottlenecks (government officials; pharmaceutical and generic companies; diagnostic companies, donors) at global level and in your country; and set up meetings with them!
- Issue a [video message](#) on paediatric AIDS testing and treatment for adolescents
- Organize events to raise awareness about children, adolescents and HIV for instance during occasions such as: Universal TB Day (24 March); Universal Health Day (7 April); Universal Children Day (20 November); Universal Human Rights Day (10 December); World AIDS Day (1 December).
- Write articles, open editorials for your local or national newspapers, your website, or make a contribution to the [WCC Pilgrimage blog](#) and share them with us!
- Work with radio stations and media outlets, as well as on social media to share all that you do. The WCC-EAA will be honoured to highlight your advocacy actions on the Live the Promise Campaign [Facebook page](#), [twitter feed](#) and on the [WCC Pilgrimage blog](#)!

To become a Champion for Children and Adolescents Living with HIV, please contact francesca.merico@wcc-coe.org

Additional resources on children and adolescents living with HIV

1. [For Every Child, End AIDS: Seventh Stocktaking Report, 2016, UNICEF](#)
2. [Acceleration Children's HIV/AIDS Treatment Initiative: Promising Practices and Lessons Learned from Implementation of the ACT Initiative, 2017, PEPFAR & Children's Investment Fund Foundation](#)
3. [Advocacy Tool Kit on Pediatric HIV Treatment, 2016, Organization of African First Ladies Against HIV/AIDS & EGPAF](#)
4. [Pediatric advocacy toolkit: for improved pediatric HIV diagnosis, care and treatment in high HIV prevalence countries and regions, 2011, WHO & UNICEF](#)
5. [Resources for Paediatric HIV Advocacy Toolkit, Drugs for Neglected Diseases Initiative](#)

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6. [Expert Patient Programme Improving antiretroviral treatment access and quality of care for infants, children and adolescents - Zambia & Zimbabwe, 2016, Paediatric AIDS Treatment for Africa \(PATA\)](#)
7. [Clinic-CBO Collaboration \(C3\) Programme Linking health facilities and communities for improved PMTCT and paediatric HIV outcomes, 2016, Paediatric AIDS Treatment for Africa \(PATA\)](#)
8. [Project REACH Re-engaging adolescents and children in HIV treatment and care, 2016, Paediatric AIDS Treatment for Africa \(PATA\)](#)
9. [Community-Facility Linkages to support the scale up of lifelong treatment for pregnant and breastfeeding women living with HIV - A conceptual framework, compendium of promising practices and key operational considerations, 2015, UNICEF](#)
10. [Consolidated guidelines on the use of antiretroviral drugs for treating and preventing HIV infection: Recommendations for a public health approach - Second edition, 2016 WHO](#)
11. [Driving the HIV Response - A community guide to the WHO 2013 Consolidated Guidelines on the Use of Antiretroviral Drugs for Treating and Preventing HIV Infection, 2014, GNP+](#)
12. [Children and HIV: Christian Sermon Guide for Religious Leaders, 2017, Strengthening High Impact Interventions for an AIDS-free Generation \(AIDSFree\) Project](#)
13. [HIV and adolescents: Guidance for HIV testing and counselling and care for adolescents living with HIV, 2013, WHO](#)
14. [Moving Towards Expanded HIV Services for Children: Readiness Assessment Checklist and Discussion Guide, 2015, Inter Agency Task Team](#)



Photo Credit: Albin Hillert/WCC

Live the Promise 

The Live the Promise Campaign of the Ecumenical Advocacy Alliance seeks continued priority on the response to HIV and AIDS, the elimination of stigma, and a significant faith-based contribution to the vision of ‘getting to zero’ – zero new infections, zero discrimination, and zero AIDS-related deaths.



The Ecumenical Advocacy Alliance, an ecumenical initiative of the World Council of Churches, is a global network of churches and related organizations committed to campaigning together on common concerns for justice and human dignity. Email: eaa@e-alliance.ch