

# FLANDERS AND UNAIDS

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A common goal of ending AIDS

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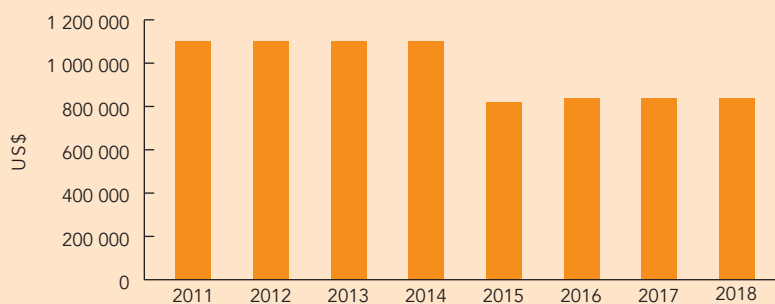
## A common goal of ending AIDS

Flanders has been a valued and prominent partner since the founding of UNAIDS, and it continues to be actively involved in the planning and implementation of global HIV priorities. Flanders has invested energy and resources to meet the needs of communities affected by HIV, with a focus on vulnerable populations and girls in southern Africa. Civil society in Flanders has also played a key role in keeping HIV on the agenda.

**“In some parts of the world we see a resurgence of the HIV and AIDS pandemic. Flanders fully endorses the call for a quarter for effective combination prevention, thereby involving all communities of most vulnerable populations, including LGBTQI+ worldwide and female adolescents in Southern Africa.”**

— Jan Jambon, Minister-president of Flanders

Annual core funding to UNAIDS from Flanders



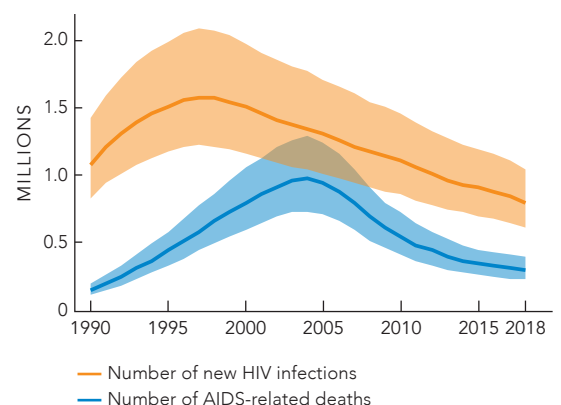
The Government of Flanders has committed a total of US\$ 1.7 million to UNAIDS for 2019 and 2020. Flanders' support to UNAIDS is primarily designated for eight Southern African Development Community countries, with a focus on key populations and young women and girls. UNAIDS greatly values Flanders' partnership on shared priorities and its continued commitment to ending AIDS as a public health threat by 2030.

Among the 37.9 million people living with HIV worldwide, 23.3 million now have access to antiretroviral therapy. In eastern and southern Africa, major progress has been made: deaths from AIDS-related illness have been reduced by 69% since the peak in 2004, and new HIV infections have been reduced by 50% since the peak in 1997. Together, Flanders and UNAIDS have made an important contribution to this unprecedented response to the largest public health threat in modern history.

There is still much work to do, and Flanders' valued partnership will become even more important to end AIDS and build sustainable health systems in southern Africa and globally. Eastern and southern Africa remains the region most affected by the HIV epidemic, accounting for 46% of global new HIV infections and 54% of people living with HIV. In 2018, 20.6 million people in this region

were living with HIV, but 6.8 million did not have access to treatment and 3.1 million did not even know they had the virus. AIDS is not over—but it can be.

New HIV infections and AIDS-related deaths, eastern and southern Africa, 1990–2018



Source: UNAIDS 2019 estimates.

## SHARED PRIORITIES: PREVENTION

In alignment with Flanders' focus on prevention, UNAIDS co-chairs the **Global HIV Prevention Coalition**, which strengthens and sustains political commitment for HIV prevention by setting a common agenda among key policy-makers, funders and programme implementers. Among the 28 countries that have endorsed the HIV Prevention 2020 Road Map, including all eight of Flanders' focus countries in southern Africa, the Coalition has transformed national HIV prevention responses, which are now consistently aligned to appropriate HIV primary prevention pillars: adolescent girls and young women, key populations, condoms, voluntary medical male circumcision and antiretroviral-based prevention.

## SHARED PRIORITIES: YOUNG WOMEN AND GIRLS

Flemish development cooperation places particular focus on adolescent girls, who are disproportionately affected by the AIDS epidemic. Every day, more than 40 adolescent girls die from AIDS-related illness globally, and approximately 380 adolescent girls are newly infected with HIV—more than half of whom are in eastern and southern Africa. Gender inequality and power imbalances must be redressed: the empowerment of women and girls and the advancement of their sexual and reproductive health and rights are essential to ending AIDS.

To address this imbalance, UNAIDS has developed the **HIV Gender Assessment Tool**, a detailed plan to support countries to assess their HIV epidemic, context and response from a gender perspective. This multipartner process allows countries to identify gaps, develop gender-specific programmes and policies, and include key recommendations in national strategic plans, country investment cases and submissions to the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis



Adolescent mother, stakeholder of the Flemish Development Cooperation – Tete, Mozambique. Credit: Flanders Department of Foreign Affairs.

and Malaria (the Global Fund). Gender assessments, which have been conducted in more than 70 countries, ensure that nationally driven and country-owned HIV responses are gender-transformative, equitable and rights-based.

## SHARED PRIORITIES: KEY POPULATIONS

Flanders' financial contribution supports UNAIDS to address the needs of key populations in southern Africa, including gay men and other men who have sex with men, sex workers, transgender people, people who inject drugs, and prisoners and other incarcerated people. These key populations are particularly vulnerable to HIV and frequently lack adequate access to services.

Estimates show that around half of all sex workers in Eswatini, Lesotho, Malawi, South Africa and Zimbabwe are living with HIV. In South Africa, UNAIDS reviews and provides direct inputs into the National Sex Worker HIV Plan to ensure equal access to health and legal services for sex workers. UNAIDS also supports civil society AIDS responses with their target achievement, data collection and reporting, and linkages with other programmes and campaigns. Finally, UNAIDS works closely with sex worker organizations and supports their participation in national, regional and global consultations and fora.

Flanders native, Dr Peter Piot, was Executive Director of UNAIDS from its creation in 1995 until the end of 2008. Credit: UNAIDS/P. Viroit



## UNAIDS: AT THE FOREFRONT OF ENDING AIDS

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As the world takes stock of progress towards the UNAIDS **Fast-Track Targets**, as agreed by United Nations Member States in the **2016 Political Declaration on Ending AIDS**, UNAIDS is providing the strategic direction, coordination and technical support needed to meet the time-bound targets and ensure that no one is left behind.

By connecting governments with **civil society** and the private sector and making sure that people living with HIV are at the centre of decision-making processes, UNAIDS is helping to ensure that everyone in need has access to life-saving HIV prevention, treatment and care services. As part of this work, UNAIDS' collaboration with UNFPA to establish the **Global HIV Prevention Coalition** is uniting partners to reduce new HIV infections by 75% by 2020.

Through the **90-90-90** treatment targets, UNAIDS is pushing progress so that 90% of people living with HIV know their HIV status, 90% of people who know their HIV-positive status are accessing treatment and 90% of people on treatment have suppressed viral loads, keeping them healthy and preventing transmission of the virus. UNAIDS is also helping to bring the world one step closer to achieving an AIDS-free generation by keeping the world focused on eliminating new HIV infections among children and keeping their mothers alive through a Super-Fast-Track approach.

UNAIDS is working to end gender inequalities and all forms of violence and discrimination against **women and girls** by providing platforms for their participation and working with partners and governments. Furthermore, its efforts to champion and protect the rights of women, adolescents and **key populations** are ensuring that women in all their diversity, gay men and other men who have sex with men, sex workers, transgender people, people who inject drugs, prisoners and other incarcerated people, and migrants can access the HIV services they need.

UNAIDS is also ensuring that progress towards **universal health coverage** is truly universal by

advocating for progress on equity, inclusion and social justice. Its people-centred, human rights-based approach promotes community-led service delivery and advocates for the need to address the social determinants of health, including pursuing necessary law and policy reforms and removing stigma and discrimination.

Having generated the world's most extensive **data collection** on HIV epidemiology and programme coverage, UNAIDS is the most authoritative and up-to-date source of information on the HIV epidemic—which is vital to informing and guiding an effective response to HIV. UNAIDS works with countries to determine their AIDS investment needs and advocates for increased resources from both domestic and international sources, thus ensuring funds are available and impact is maximized.

The **2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development** takes to scale what the AIDS response has been working towards for 30 years: a multisectoral, rights-based and people-centred approach that addresses the determinants of health and well-being. UNAIDS makes the link between the many intersections between the AIDS epidemic and other health, human rights and broader development issues to advance progress towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals.

The only Joint Programme in the United Nations system, UNAIDS unites the experience and expertise of 11 United Nations **Cosponsors**: UNHCR, UNICEF, WFP, UNDP, UNFPA, UNODC, UN Women, ILO, UNESCO, WHO and the World Bank. UNAIDS draws on this experience to engage actively in the United Nations reform agenda, sharing both successes and lessons learned.

UNAIDS has a vision of zero new HIV infections, zero discrimination and zero AIDS-related deaths, and a principle of leaving no one behind. With support from our donors, UNAIDS is working to make this vision a reality.



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