

Concept Note on Addressing the Prevention of Mother-to-Child Transmission (PMTCT) and Elimination of New-born Infections in Africa

High Level Meeting ICASA 2023, 2nd December, Elephant Hills Hotel, Victoria Falls, Zimbabwe

Introduction

In Africa, the burden of mother-to-child transmission (MTCT) and new-born infections remains high, primarily due to various factors such as limited access to quality healthcare services, inadequate awareness among healthcare providers and communities, and weak healthcare systems. Mother-to-child transmission refers to the transmission of HIV and other infections from an infected mother to her child during pregnancy, childbirth, or breastfeeding. Pregnant women often face difficulties in accessing timely and comprehensive services, including HIV testing and treatment.

During the early stages of life, new-born infections, particularly bacterial and viral infections, pose significant threats to the health and survival of infants. Preventing mother-to-child transmission (PMTCT) of HIV and eliminating new-born infections are major public health priorities in Africa. These efforts are crucial not only for the well-being of mothers and children but also for Africa's broader objective of significantly reducing the number of infants living with HIV to zero and achieving sustainable development.

At the Society for AIDS in Africa (SAA), our aim is to contribute to the UNAIDS goal and the African Union's catalytic framework of ending the AIDS epidemic by 2030 and achieving the 95-95-95 targets by 2025 in Africa. We also strive to support the African Union's Agenda 2063 and strengthen healthcare systems in Africa towards universal coverage.

To fulfil this mandate, we propose a comprehensive approach that involves enhancing healthcare systems and human resources, promoting community engagement and empowerment, and implementing robust monitoring and evaluation systems. Through these efforts, we seek to make significant progress in preventing mother-to-child transmission and eliminating new-born infections, ultimately improving the overall health and well-being of mothers, children, and communities in Africa.

In January 2018, the AU commission co-launched the Free to Shine campaign with the OAFIAD to reinforce the political commitment of African nations to end childhood AIDS and keep mothers healthy. The campaign is implemented in 24 countries by Ministries of Health and respective Offices of the First Lady, national stakeholders, and community leaders.

Goal and Objective

Recognizing the critical situation of vertical transmission of HIV and paediatric HIV in Africa, the Society of AIDS in Africa, in partnership with the OAFIAD, national and international partners, is organizing a High-Level Meeting (HLM) to accelerate the implementation of strategies and interventions aimed at addressing, preventing, and eliminating vertical transmission and preventable child infections across the continent. The significance of the HLM is that it will take place just before the 2023 International Conference on AIDS and STIs in Africa (ICASA) and intended to galvanize political commitment of policy and decision makers towards this critical issue. African First Ladies can leverage on the 2023 ICASA and renew their commitment towards an AIDS-free Africa. The HLM also is an excellent opportunity to affirm

OAFLAD`s support to the Global Alliance to End AIDS in Children and the Triple elimination of HIV, Syphilis and Hepatitis B agenda.

Objectives of the HLM:

- To share experiences of leadership role that African First Ladies play in eliminating vertical transmission and strengthening paediatric HIV services, and discuss their achievements, challenges, lessons learned and new and emerging opportunities.
- To build and strengthen partnerships to advance the elimination of vertical transmission, agenda with other global and regional initiatives and movements, such as Global Alliance to End AIDS in Children and Triple Elimination of HIV, Syphilis and Hepatitis b.
- To agree on way forward and renew vows to eliminate vertical transmission of HIV, Syphilis and Hepatitis B.

Expected outcomes:

- Increased awareness and understanding of OAFLAD`s role.
- Partnerships strengthened to advance the Global Alliance to end AIDS in Children and Triple elimination initiatives in Africa.
- Renewed commitments to eliminate vertical transmission of HIV, Syphilis and Hepatitis B and improve paediatric HIV services.

Participants

1. OAFLAD members
2. Senior Ministry of Health officials (Permanent Secretary or Director-General of the Health Ministries)
3. Partners, including multilateral organizations, donors, and relevant stakeholders
4. Communities, including women living with HIV and community-based organizations

Prevention of Mother-to-Child Transmission (PMTCT) and Elimination of New-born Infections in Africa

LEADERSHIP OF AFRICAN FIRST LADIES IN THE FIGHT AGAINST HIV AND AIDS

Ending AIDS in Children and Mothers by 2030

Date: 2nd December 2023

Venue: Elephant Hills Hotel, Victoria Falls, Zimbabwe

The high-level event at the 22nd International Conference on AIDS and STIs in Africa (ICASA) will reaffirm the commitment of the African First Ladies and Governments towards an AIDS free generation by presenting and promoting their roles in influencing political ownership, increasing sustainable domestic financing, and strengthening partnerships among governments, civil society, and development partners to end AIDS in children and mothers.

Methodology (Duration: 2 and half hours)

This session will be split into two panel discussions.

The first panel is dedicated to global and regional initiatives for children (the Global Alliance to end AIDS in children by 2030) and mothers (EMTCT), their impact, country action plans and how they will contribute to shape the global AIDS architecture to end AIDS by 2030.

The second panel highlights country actions and experiences in achieving the 95-95-95 goals for children and mothers, including challenges faced. Each high-level speaker will highlight one key area within the allocated time, with agreed/ predetermined questions to bring out the issues during their intervention. Both panels will have a 15-minute discussion period.

The facilitators will also be dedicated to agreeing on key action points with presenters, panelists, and attendees in the room. Each segment will have specific facilitators. Through each discussion commitment from OAFAD, development partners and all stakeholders to support the Global Alliance to End AIDS in Children.

MC: Tariro Makanga

Draft Agenda: The meeting will start at 09:00 AM Local Time

Time	Session/Activity	Speaker
08:30-09:00	Arrival and Cultural performance	
09:00-09:05	Introduction by the President of the Society for AIDS in Africa (SAA) and ICASA 2023	Dr. David Parirenyatwa
09:05-09:10	Welcome Remarks by the Minister of Provincial Affairs and Devolution, Matabeleland North Province	Hon. Richard Moyo
09:10-09:15	Solidarity Remarks by WHO Regional Director for Africa, to be delivered by the WHO Representative to Zimbabwe	Dr. Matshidiso Moeti
09:15-09:20	Solidarity Remarks by ICW Africa representing Networks of People Living with HIV: Roles of Communities in achieving results for children and mothers	Lillian Mworeko
09:20-09:25	Remarks and introduction of the Guest of Honour by the Minister of Health and Child Care (Zimbabwe) and ICASA 2023 Vice President	Hon. Dr. Douglas T. Mombeshora
09:25-09:35	Keynote address by the First Lady of the Republic of Zimbabwe: The role of OAFIAD: achievements, lessons learned and way forward.	Her Excellency Dr. Auxillia Mnangagwa
09:35-09:45	Entertainment	
60 minutes	Panel Discussion	Facilitators: Dr. Pierre Mpele, SAA Board of Trustee Lydia Zigomo, UNFPA East & Southern Africa Regional Director
09:45-10:00	Joint Presentation by WHO and UNICEF on Technical update on HIV epidemic situation and response among children and women: Global Alliance to End AIDS in Children by 2030 and Triple Elimination of HIV, Syphilis and Hepatitis.	Dr. Meg Doherty Director Global HIV, Hepatitis and STIs Programmes, World Health Organization, Geneva, Switzerland Ms. Anurita Bains, Associate Director HIV/AIDS, UNICEF
10:10-10:20	AU Sustainable financing and other initiatives for eMTCT	Hon. Dr. Litha Musyimi-Ogana, Commissioner, African Union
10:20-10:30	Health financing for triple elimination (HIV, syphilis and HBV) and comprehensive care among pregnant women and babies	Michael Ruffner, Deputy Coordinator for Financial and Programmatic Sustainability, Bureau of Global Health, Security and Diplomacy (GHSD)/PEPFAR
10:30-10:40	Cultural Performance	
60 mins	Panel Discussion	Facilitators: Ms. Etleva Kadilli, Regional Director for Eastern and Southern Africa, UNICEF
10:40-10:50	Where we are (Setting the scene): children and adolescents lag behind and what should be done	Winnie Byanyima, Executive Director,

	reduce the gap. (10 minutes)	UNAIDS
10:50-11:50	Panel discussion: First Ladies role in eliminating vertical transmission: achievements and future commitments.	<p>First Lady of the Republic of Zimbabwe, H.E. Dr Auxilia Mnangagwa (10 minutes)</p> <p>First Lady of the Republic of Botswana, H.E. Madam Neo Jane Masisi (10 minutes)</p> <p>First Lady of the Republic of Mozambique H.E. Madam Isaura Nyusi (10 minutes)</p> <p>H.E. First Lady of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, Madam Remi Tinubu (10 minutes)</p> <p>Egypt (5 minutes)</p> <p>Burundi (5 minutes)</p> <p>Angola (5 minutes)</p>
11:50-12:00	Wrap-Up of the Session	OAFLAD Secretariat
12:00-12:05	Closing Remarks	Dr. David Parirenyatwa
Group Photograph		