Since the start of the response to the AIDS epidemic 27 years ago, significant efforts have been made to empower women and girls around HIV, and to address harmful gender norms that make men and women vulnerable to HIV.

Despite this good work, responses to HIV largely ignore that many women and girls are not accorded equality in law or in fact and that this makes it impossible to avoid sex that puts them at risk of HIV infection, violence, or to receive the information, education, and health services that will protect them from HIV. And few national programmes dedicate adequate resources to strengthen AIDS responses for women and girls.

The Global Coalition on Women and AIDS (GCWA) is a worldwide alliance of civil society groups, networks of women living with HIV, women’s organizations, AIDS service organizations, and the United Nations system, committed to strengthening AIDS programming for women and girls.

Our mission is to mobilize leadership and political will to influence laws, policies, programmes, and funding to promote action that gives girls and women the power to prevent HIV infection, and to live fulfilling and productive lives when living with HIV.

WHAT WE DO

- We convene partners around common issues to deliver results
- We build knowledge and share information by linking partners around the globe to share their expertise with others seeking to accelerate action for women and girls within national responses to AIDS
- We align advocacy agendas towards common goals
- We help empower local organizations to better address the HIV-related needs of women and girls
ENABLE WOMEN AND GIRLS TO LEAD CHANGE

The power and resilience of women and girls to lead change in their own lives and in their communities must be recognized, promoted, and facilitated. The Coalition recognizes the importance of uniting women and girls in solidarity, regardless of HIV status, age, creed, race, gender, sexual orientation, disability or ethnicity. It is committed to engaging women living with HIV as core partners in shaping its advocacy. It advocates for the involvement of women and girls as decision makers, contributors, and implementers of action, as well as beneficiaries of support.

PROTECT GIRLS AND YOUNG WOMEN

The AIDS response must ensure the physical, sexual and psychological safety and security of girls and young women. All women and girls need access to comprehensive education and information, skills, services and resources that allow them to avoid exposure to HIV, to deal positively with their health if living with HIV, and to fulfil their role as the primary carers in the HIV response. All women have the right to comprehensive sexual and reproductive health care and to the protection of their sexual and reproductive health rights, enabling them to lead full and productive lives.

ACHIEVE GENDER EQUALITY AND PROTECT HUMAN RIGHTS

The promotion, protection and realization of women’s human rights are fundamental to an effective AIDS response. GCWA partners aim to bring attention and action to laws, policies, practices, and mechanisms that undermine the rights of women and girls. Work must continue to eradicate stigma and discrimination and violations of the human rights of all women and girls.

ENGAGE MEN AND BOYS

Men and boys can and must serve as positive forces in changing gender inequalities. GCWA recognizes that addressing gender inequalities which impinge on HIV prevention, treatment and care will require collaboration from all stakeholders, and it is committed to involving men and boys in its efforts to realize effective HIV strategies that work for all.

INVEST IN WOMEN AND GIRLS

Investing in women and girls is an investment in society. To create change that will bring about women’s empowerment and greater access to HIV services, national AIDS responses must give priority to allocation of resources for prevention, treatment and care, and research programmes that address the reality of women’s lives.

TAKE ACTION TO BRING ABOUT SOCIETAL TRANSFORMATION

Given sufficient attention, commitment, and resources, the factors that make women vulnerable to HIV can be changed. The GCWA is committed to raising awareness about the actions necessary to bring about change, to taking action to catalyse change, and to holding leaders accountable. By uniting in strength, GCWA partners commit to supporting the transformation, both within our own organizations and in society, which is critical to improving the lives of all women and girls, and men and boys, in communities across the globe.
GCWA SEEKS TO

MOBILIZE our partners, decision makers and society at large to advance the AIDS response for women and girls at national level;

INFLUENCE the response through placing emerging or unaddressed issues firmly on global and national agendas;

ACT by reaching out to a broad array of partners to gather the technical resources needed by countries and communities to address programming challenges; and,

EMPOWER women and girls to participate in and influence national responses, and build accountability for results.

BECOME A PARTNER

As country, regional and global actors move forward toward universal access to AIDS prevention, treatment and care goals, GCWA partners are engaging in an advocacy campaign at global and national level to achieve concrete results for women and girls in national responses to AIDS.

To join, organizations sign on to the GCWA Pledge and Principles and agree to work toward the NGO Code of Good Practice in their own organizations. Partners are asked to lend their expertise and experience to common initiatives and to the advocacy campaign where possible.

CONTACT US

Global Coalition on Women and AIDS
20, avenue Appia
CH-1211 Geneva 27 - Switzerland
http://womenandaids.unaids.org
Email: womenandaids@unaid.org
Telephone: +41 22 791 3770