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16/12/2025

AFRICAN WOMEN LEADERS CONDEMN ANY MOVE TO SUNSET UNAIDS: "AIDS IS NOT OVER"

As global leaders convene at the Programme Coordinating Board (PCB), the African Women's Prevention Community Accountability Board (AWPCAB), together with African women leaders and community advocates, issues a strong warning against any discussion or proposal to sunset the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS).

AWPCAB emphasizes that the AIDS epidemic remains a major public health threat and poses serious human rights violations across Africa, particularly for women, adolescent girls, and key populations. Despite significant scientific advances in HIV prevention and treatment, new infections continue, inequalities persist, and community-led prevention efforts remain underfunded.

"Any attempt to sunset UNAIDS at this moment is premature and dangerous," says AWPCAB members. "UNAIDS remains essential for global coordination, political accountability, and ensuring that the voices of affected communities especially African women are heard in decision-making spaces."

UNAIDS has played a critical role in aligning global HIV targets, mobilizing political commitment, supporting national responses, and holding governments accountable to the people most affected by HIV. Weakening or dismantling this architecture before the epidemic is ended risks reversing hard-won gains.

African women leaders stress that discussions of transition or sunsetting ignore the lived realities on the ground. Adolescent girls and young women in sub-Saharan Africa still account for a disproportionate share of new HIV infections, driven by structural inequalities, gender-based violence, stigma, and limited access to comprehensive prevention options.

"We cannot speak of an 'end' while women and girls are still being left behind," the statement continued. "There will be no sunsetting until we finish the job."

The conversation on UNAIDS sunsetting is meant to keep us away from discussing and strategizing better as truly the AIDS response and people living with and affected by HIV are at a crisis and cross-roads!

AWPCAB and its partners call on governments, donors, UN Member States, and multilateral institutions to reaffirm their commitment to UNAIDS, ensure sustainable financing, and strengthen community-led accountability mechanisms that are central to ending AIDS as a public health threat by 2030.

Key Demands

- Publicly reaffirm political commitment to UNAIDS.
- Reject any proposals to sunset or weaken the UNAIDS mandate.
- Protect meaningful community and civil society leadership in global HIV governance.
- Sustain and increase financing for HIV prevention, treatment, and accountability.

We, African women leaders, advocates, and community representatives, express our deep concern and firm opposition to any discussions aimed at sunsetting UNAIDS. The AIDS epidemic continues to disproportionately affect women, adolescent girls, and key populations across Africa, and UNAIDS remains critical to global coordination, political accountability, and the meaningful inclusion of communities most affected by HIV.

We call on governments, donors, and multilateral partners to protect, strengthen, and fully resource UNAIDS. Any move to sunset UNAIDS before ending AIDS as a public health threat is premature and unacceptable.

No sunsetting until we finish the job. AIDS is not over.

About AWPCAB

The African Women's Prevention Community Accountability Board (AWPCAB) is a pan-African platform of women leaders and advocates working to advance choice, equity, and accountability in HIV prevention and sexual and reproductive health and rights. AWPCAB centres the voices of women, adolescent girls, and key populations in shaping policies and programmes that affect their lives.

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AWPCAB partner organizations

