

U.S. Remarks
UNICEF Executive Board First Regular Session 2021
Friday, February 12, 10:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.

Agenda Item 6 – HIV/AIDS

The United States is encouraged by the continued inclusion of UNICEF in the next UNAIDS strategy, thereby recognizing and bringing to bear UNICEF's capabilities: "to enhance health and community systems to respond to the needs of children, adolescents, and pregnant women to improve HIV results."

We appreciate UNICEF's continued differentiated programming focused on the elimination of maternal-to-child transmission through Global Fund proposals to improve program quality and efficiency.

We also commend UNICEF's work to reduce stigma due to its impact on adolescents.

We strongly concur that there should be more focus on the HIV/AIDS response among children and adolescents, particularly adolescent girls.

The United States' President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief - or PEPFAR - program is committed to children and adolescents. With partners including UNICEF, PEPFAR invests in and works to ensure infants are born HIV-free, that young people and their partners can stay HIV-free through adolescence, and children and adolescents living with HIV have access to the life-saving treatment and care needed to remain AIDS-free.

Since 2015, PEPFAR's flagship DREAMS public-private partnership, enables adolescent girls and women to be Determined, Resilient, Empowered, AIDS-Free, Mentored, and Safe. Data released on World AIDS Day 2020, showed that in all geographic areas that implemented DREAMS, HIV diagnoses declined among adolescent girls and young women. In 96 percent of areas that implemented DREAMS the decline was more than 25 percent, and in nearly two-thirds of areas the decline was greater than 40 percent.

Newly expanded DREAMS programs increase support for economic strengthening, skills training, and job readiness for young women, and accelerate the availability of Pre-exposure Prophylaxis (PrEP), a proven HIV prevention method.

Building on this progress, the next UNAIDS strategy must be centered on stopping HIV transmission and supporting those with HIV to live strong and complete lives. This requires an increased focus on youth and children in the HIV/AIDS response and so, UNICEF's contribution to this effort is key to achieving our shared goals.