**First Lady calls for bold approach to fight disease**

[More by this Author](http://www.nation.co.ke/-/1148/1958926/-/view/asAuthor/-/126cq96/-/index.html)

Residents of Mombasa County Sunday joined the rest of the globe in marking World Aids Day at the Mbaraki Sports Grounds.

The day is set aside to reflect on measures the world has put in place to fight the disease.

First Lady Margaret Kenyatta said there was tremendous progress in the management and control of HIV/ Aids, adding that the success was attributed to the recognition of the scourge not just as a health issue but a disease that impacts on the socio-economic development of the nation.

Mrs Kenyatta called for boldness and sincerity to reach out all vulnerable citizens.

Officials present include US Ambassador Robert Godec, Principal Secretary Fred Segor and Mombasa County Governor Hassan Ali Joho.

The First Lady said there was urgent need for Kenyans to re-examine their values and cultural practices that put people at the risk of contracting HIV/Aids.

“As parents, we must begin honest dialogue with our children and young people to empower them against contracting HIV,” she added.

During the event to mark the day in western Kenya, it was noted that reluctance by individuals to get tested for HIV in the region hindered the fight against new infections.

County executive for health Elsie Muhanda said 53 per cent of the population remained in the dark over their HIV status.

Kakamega National Aids Control Council field coordinator Edwin Lwanya said patients infected with the virus were still being discriminated against.

“Stigma continues to draw back our efforts to fight infection rates in rural communities. We have intensified campaigns to promote prevention,” he said.

Kisumu Governor Jackton Ranguma said: “Despite recent achievements, the trend is not pleasant enough to Nyanza, which is rated the highest in terms of HIV incidence.”