

VISUALIZE GENDER EQUALITY



Visualize Gender Equality - Viz5 - is an effort to help realize UN Sustainable Development Goal 5: achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls.

Happy New Year #Viz5 Community! We are so lucky to have your support, and can't wait to grow our community and expand our work in 2021. Thank you for helping us visualize a more equal world!

THEME 11: HIV/AIDS and Gender Inequality

This month, Viz5 is turning its attention to the dramatic gender inequality in new HIV infections among adolescents, with data showing that girls account for 75% of new HIV infections among 10-19 year olds in sub-Saharan Africa.

We're very excited to be partnering with a phenomenal NGO, this month. mothers2mothers (m2m) are implementing critically important work to deliver health, hope, and an HIV-free future for all.

About mothers2mothers

Founded in Cape Town, South Africa in 2001, m2m works across 10 African nations, reaching over a million people each year, with support and partnership from UNICEF (the source of this month's data).

The m2m model is simple—to train and employ African women living with HIV as frontline health workers. These "Mentor Mothers" deliver health education and services to their own communities, while earning a decent income and changing the narrative about what it means to be a woman living with HIV.

m2m initially focused on ending mother-to-child transmission of HIV, but has since evolved their peer-led model to include services tailored for adolescents and their families. Young women are employed by m2m to work with adolescents and families in their own community to equip them with the skills and knowledge to keep young people healthy and HIV-free, or to provide adolescent-friendly services to young people living with HIV. And, it's working. In 2019, 96% of m2m's adolescent clients living with HIV were initiated on treatment—compared to a benchmark of 56% across UNAIDS 35 Fast-Track countries.

To learn more about mothers2mothers, please visit www.m2m.org. You can help the organization by following them on [Twitter](#), [LinkedIn](#), [Facebook](#) or [Instagram](#) and spreading the word about their work, or

by [making a donation](#). And, of course, you're helping to raise awareness of their critically important mission and work by participating in this month's Viz5!

ABOUT THE THEME:

A multitude of inequities drives the HIV epidemic, but gender inequality is a major contributor to the continued spread of HIV globally: "HIV is not only driven by gender inequality, but it also entrenches gender inequality, leaving women more vulnerable to its impact."¹

Despite significant global progress in the work to reduce HIV infections and HIV/AIDS related deaths, women and girls continue to be disproportionately vulnerable to, and affected by HIV.

*"Early and forced marriage, gender-based violence, unequal access to information, including sexual health knowledge, and a lack of negotiating power and economic autonomy are among the factors that place women and adolescent girls at increased risk of HIV infection."*²

This month, the data we are sharing for Viz5 explores the gender disparities in HIV infections among adolescents (aged 10-19) in sub-Saharan Africa, from 1990-2019.

In terms of its connection to SDG 5, out of the nine targets contained within SDG 5, the following are directly linked to the work being done to reduce HIV infections and HIV/AIDS related deaths:

SDG 5	<i>Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls</i>
Target 5.1	<i>End all forms of discrimination against all women and girls everywhere.</i>
Target 5.2	<i>Eliminate all forms of violence against all women and girls in the public and private spheres, including trafficking and sexual and other types of exploitation.</i>
Target 5.5	<i>Ensure women's full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision-making in political, economic and public life.</i>
Target 5.6	<i>Ensure universal access to sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights as agreed in accordance with the Program of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development and the Beijing Platform for Action and the outcome documents of their review conferences.</i>
Target 5.c	<i>Adopt and strengthen sound policies and enforceable legislation for the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls at all levels.</i>

During the first decade of a child's life the gender disparities in HIV infection rates are relatively few. For example, "in 2019, there were 76,000 new infections among boys under the age of 9, and 73,000 among girls. Eighty-four per cent of these new infections occurred in Eastern and Southern Africa and

¹ Gender Inequality and HIV, [avert.org](#), April, 2020.

² UNICEF: Gender and HIV/AIDS, July 2020.

West and Central Africa, with the distribution of new infections between boys and girls being almost the same.”³ It’s during adolescence that the gender disparities emerge at full force: “In 2019, around 130,000 adolescent girls between the ages of 10 and 19 were newly infected with HIV compared to 44,000 boys of the same age. Girls therefore accounted for 75 per cent of new HIV infections among adolescents, globally.”⁴

These new infections disproportionately affect girls in countries where the HIV epidemic is driven by transmission during heterosexual intercourse, or in places where transactional sex is common. This is the case in Eastern and Southern Africa, and in West and Central Africa (the geographies of focus in this dataset) where girls account for 83 per cent and 78 per cent, respectively, of new HIV infections among adolescents in the 10-19 age group.

There has been a fall in HIV incidence in many countries - a symptom of adolescents adopting safer sex practices - but this is not the case in sub-Saharan Africa. There, only 38% of girls and 52% of boys aged 15-19, who are sexually active with a non-regular partner, used a condom. Further to this, fewer than a third of adolescent girls and boys aged 15-19 have comprehensive knowledge of HIV.

“Stigma around HIV bolsters the myth that it is a disease to be shunned and ashamed of, encourages those affected and their families and communities to conceal the illness and avoid treatment, perpetuates victim blaming, intensifies stress and anxiety, and reinforces inequality.”⁵

The negative impact of this high rate of adolescent HIV infection is long-term and even generational. With such high rates of transmission among adolescent girls, the prevention of imminent mother-to-child HIV transmission, becomes much harder.

“In 2019, it was estimated that 1.3 million pregnant women globally were living with HIV – approximately 90 per cent of whom reside in sub-Saharan Africa. Due in part to greater HIV testing coverage, 85 per cent of pregnant women living with HIV globally were receiving effective antiretroviral medicines for the prevention of mother-to-child transmission – but with significant regional disparities that range from 95 per cent in Eastern and Southern Africa to 52 per cent in Middle East and North Africa.”⁶

Before the introduction of effective treatment and support programs, up to 43% of mothers living with HIV in passed the virus on to their children. However, with effective intervention, this rate can be reduced

³ UNICEF: Gender and HIV/AIDS, July 2020.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ 2020 World AIDS Day Report: Reimagining A Resilient HIV Response for Children, Adolescence and Pregnant Women Living with HIV, UNICEF, Nov. 2020, p. 11.

⁶ UNICEF: Gender and HIV/AIDS, July 2020.

to almost zero.⁷ The stakes are high - if children living with HIV are not on effective treatment, half of them will likely die before their second birthday.

The UN has set the global goal of ending AIDS by 2030. If this goal is to be achieved there must be a deep and concerted effort to support the grassroots efforts and holistic approaches of organizations like mothers2mothers, in addition to a united effort and focus on the work to achieve SDG 5.

ABOUT THE DATA

This month's Viz5 dataset is a subset of UNICEF's 'Key HIV epidemiology indicators for children and adolescents aged 10-19, 1990-2019.'

This UNICEF data is sourced from UNAIDS 2020 estimates, which provide 'modeled estimates using the best available epidemiological and programmatic data to track the HIV epidemic'. Modeled estimates are used because counting the true numbers would require regularly testing entire populations for HIV, and investigating all deaths, which is 'logistically impossible and ethically problematic'. For more information on the methodology behind these estimates, see the full UNAIDS 2020 report.

The subset of data Viz5 has selected is focused on countries in sub-Saharan Africa, as this is where m2m has focused their work.

Sub-Saharan Africa is home to 88 per cent of the world's children under 15 years of age living with HIV, and mothers2mothers are actively working in the following 10 countries:

Angola	Ghana	Kenya	Lesotho	Malawi
Mozambique	South Africa	Tanzania	Uganda	Zambia

This dataset tells the story of the extreme need and profound gender inequality that affects adolescent women and girls in these countries. In your data visualizations, consider the human stories behind the numbers, and think about how your visualization and presentation might support and enable the brilliant work of mothers2mothers.

ABOUT VIZ5

The ultimate goal of Viz5 is to create a space where data advocacy and insights meet impact. This work seeks to ignite a data advocacy effort with the power to not only raise awareness of extreme gender inequality, but also catalyze global action to end it.

Viz5 is led by Operation Fistula, with #MakeoverMonday and Tableau Foundation operating as critical partners.

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⁷ How likely is mother-to-child transmission of HIV? - Roger Pebody, October 2020, NAM aids map.

Viz5 will mobilize the power of the #MakeoverMonday and Tableau communities, to visualize 12 data sets, over 12 months. These data sets will feature 12 themes, curated to present different areas of gender inequality. Collectively, these data sets and visualizations will begin to tell the story of where and how gender inequality is at its most extreme.

The visualizations that are produced during Viz5 will serve as advocacy tools, awareness-raising artifacts, and data-driven insight drivers for anyone working to end gender inequality.

Join us as we work to visualize a more equal world! Sign up to our community at www.viz5.org.