

Date: 04 July 2007
AI Index: ACT 77/003/2007

Global conference on women's leadership on HIV/AIDS in Nairobi, Kenya

Violence against women and HIV/AIDS

Over 40 million people worldwide live with HIV/AIDS. Almost half are women and the number affected is increasing. Violence against women is a key factor in placing women at high risk of contracting the virus.

Violence against women increases risks of HIV infection:

- when women are subjected to sexual violence
- when women face violence for refusing sexual activity
- when girls are subjected to genital mutilation

Many women are exposed to sexual violence, inside and outside of marriage. Rape and other sexual violence during times of conflict is also helping to drive the AIDS pandemic as well as having damage consequences for health systems

Women face both the virus and discrimination.

Many lack access to information on the virus and how to prevent it, and to vital healthcare and medication. Social practices make it more difficult for women to take control of all areas of their lives. Denial of property and inheritance rights, employment and access to finance can cause women to be dependent on men. Exclusion from the participation in decision-making can leave women unable to act on issues which affect them.

Women taking action against the spread of HIV/AIDS

Despite these barriers, women are leading the fight against the AIDS pandemic. Grassroots activism by women, particularly those living with the virus, has grown in recent years with some striking successes.

Members of AI's Stop Violence Against Women Campaign team are now at the YWCA International Women's Summit on 'Women's Leadership on HIV and AIDS' in Nairobi. Read their diary [link to conference feature page]

Read their diary [link to conference feature page]

[activism pictures]

[box link to the conference feature page]

Read more about Women, HIV/AIDS and human rights

<http://web.amnesty.org/library/Index/ENGACT770842004>

International Women's summit: Women's Leadership Making a Difference on HIV and AIDS, 4-7 July, 2007

Women call for action in the fight against HIV and AIDS

The International Women's Summit on 'Women's Leadership on HIV and AIDS' is now taking place in Nairobi. The meeting, which is hosted by the Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA), is the first ever global conference on women and HIV/AIDS, and aims to mobilize urgent responses to rising infection rates.

The conference brings together over 1500 women, and will include discussions on how to strengthen women's leadership in the fight against HIV/AIDS. The conference will also be attended by members of youth organizations, the UN, and over 500 women living with the virus.

Amnesty International's Stop Violence Against Women Campaign team is at the meeting in Nairobi. Read their diary:

[INSERT SVAW team 'feature blog']

[link to YWCA

http://www.worldywca.info/index.php/ywca/world_council_07/iws_women_s_summit]

[Dr Kanyoro web clip] Listen to Dr Kanyoro talk about violence against women and HIV/AIDS.

[Dr Kanyoro bio] Dr. Musimbi Kanyoro is the General Secretary of the World YWCA, a global movement of 25 million women and girls in 125 countries. Guided by her leadership, the World YWCA empowers women and girls to lead social and economic change around the world.



Dr. Musimbi Kanyoro, World YWCA General Secretary
[Copyright] YWCA