PEPFAR Pledges $2B to Support HIV-Affected Women and Girls

Nearly $200 million of the pledge will go to DREAMS programs in Africa and the Caribbean.

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In an effort to support gender equality, the U.S. President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) pledged over $2 billion this year to support women and girls affected by HIV/AIDS.

Founded in 2003, PEPFAR has invested over $85 billion dollars so far in the global fight against HIV.

Nearly $200 million of the multibillion-dollar investment will be channeled into DREAMS programming for adolescent girls and young women, according to a PEPFAR press release. DREAMS is PEPFAR's public-private partnership with organizations that include the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, Girl Effect, Johnson & Johnson, Gilead Sciences, and ViiV Healthcare.

Since 2015, DREAMS has provided more than $800 million to women and girls living in Africa and the Caribbean, which respectively have the highest and second-highest prevalence of HIV in the world. Already, new HIV diagnoses among adolescent girls and young women in most of DREAMS' intervention regions have dropped by more than 25%.

The new funding will continue to be used to prevent girls from contracting HIV at birth and throughout adolescence and provide treatment and cervical cancer screenings to HIV-positive women. Furthermore, PEPFAR's investments will help address structural sexism and empower women and girls to take charge of their own lives by involving them in all decisions regarding their health care.

"We believe that every girl, every woman, deserves equality, health and the opportunity to realize her dreams," said Deborah L. Birx, MD, the U.S. global AIDS coordinator and head of PEPFAR, in the release.

Since 2003, PEPFAR has saved 17 million lives and prevented millions of HIV infections.

In May 2018, PEPFAR celebrated 15 years. To learn more about its accomplishments, read "PEPFAR Helps Over 14 Million People Access HIV Treatment." Below is a video marking the anniversary.

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