

## Campaign to end paediatric HIV/AIDS launched in Africa

At the launch of the Campaign to End Paediatric HIV/AIDS (CEPA) on Thursday, advocate Grac Machel urged African leaders to redirect state spending to prevent and treat HIV infections among women and children, Agence France-Presse reports.

An estimated "1.8 million of the world's two million [HIV-positive] children" live in Sub-Saharan Africa, where mother-to-child prevention and treatment coverage currently averages 30 to 40% against a target of 80% the news service writes (10/22).

"No matter how small our budgets, we must do something. We will not get there (HIV reduction) with African leaders who don't get moved by people dying," Machel said, Reuters reports. CEPA will work with African governments to help ensure pregnant women living with HIV have access to antiretrovirals (ARVs) to help prevent the transmission of the virus to newborns (Govender, 10/22).

### **Aims is to improve access to care and ARVs**

The program also aims to improve HIV-positive children's access to care and ARVs, Inter Press Service reports. "CEPA is a three-year campaign that will initially focus on six countries: Uganda, Kenya, Tanzania, Mozambique, Zambia and Nigeria. Of these six countries, Kenya has the highest number of HIV-positive children, 155,000," the news service writes. The article includes details about how Nigeria's decision to offer free ARVs increased the number of HIV-positive pregnant women on the drugs (Kalideen, 10/22).

According to a CEPA press release, the campaign seeks to overcome implementation and policy "bottlenecks," which "include inadequate health care worker training, and insufficient transportation system for health care commodities; policy bottlenecks include lack of long-term predictable financing, and the lack of clear national policies and targets for scaling up access to paediatric HIV/AIDS services" (10/22).