



Republic of Rwanda  
Ministry of Health



## Press Release

### **Rwanda launches the “Free to Shine Campaign” seeking to end paediatric AIDS by 2030**

**Kigali, September 10, 2018** – Today Rwanda launches the “Free to shine Campaign” to end paediatric AIDS by 2030. The Free to Shine Campaign is a continental initiative seeking to end paediatric AIDS by 2030 and keep infected mothers alive and healthy.

The objectives of this campaign include; supporting efforts of the high-level leadership to increase awareness, further strengthening, ownership and accountability to end AIDS in children and reinforcing partnerships and advocacy for action to mobilise resources to end paediatric AIDS. Also community involvement and participation to the cause will be fostered. The campaign key messages are “**start free, stay free, AIDS free**” emphasising that every child deserves the chance to start an HIV free life, elimination of mother-to-child transmission of HIV is achievable, all pregnant women need access to quality antenatal care services that include PMTCT and parents’ adherence to treatment and continued follow-up are required to ensure HIV negative babies and mother stays healthy.

The campaign comes in the right time as the national Prevention of Mother To Child Transmission (PMTCT) program moves to next step to look at individual case by case in the framework of elimination. Some Districts have already achieved zero cases of MTCT for the past 5 years; other districts are striving to achieve it; during this campaign, we will ensure those who made it, sustain it; and those who are looking to achieve EMCT are supported accordingly.

Right from the top leadership, Rwanda has pioneered in the fight against Mother to Child Transmission. In 2011, Rwanda’s First Lady Jeanette Kagame launched the national campaign for the elimination of mother-to-child transmission in collaboration with the Ministry of Health, PEPFAR, UNICEF, and other bilateral partners. The campaign set up the ambitious targets to reduce mother-to-child transmission in Rwanda from 4.3% in 2011, to less than 2.0% in 2015. Through the extension and improvement of prevention initiatives, treatment protocols and guidelines, and attention to equity, Rwanda’s current MTCT rate is 1.5% (2018).

Rwanda has made significant achievements in HIV response including the fact that over 97% of health facilities provide PMTCT services, 96,4% of neonates receive prophylacting antiretroviral regimens for prevention of Mother-To-Child HIV Transmission and 84,9% of men go with their partners for PMTCT.

The “Free to shine” campaign will feature different activities emphasizing the above initiatives, activities include; sharing HIV awareness messages on ending pediatric AIDS, Provision of Services including family planning methods and condoms distribution and HIV testing services, awarding best performing districts that already achieved zero transmissions of HIV from mothers to their children for the last 5 years.

.....  
**For more information, please contact:**

Malick KAYUMBA, Tel: +250 788 350 035/Email: [malick.kayumba@rbc.gov.rw](mailto:malick.kayumba@rbc.gov.rw)  
Liliane Gahima Nakayima, Tel: +250 733 389 451/Email: [liliane.gahima@rbc.gov.rw](mailto:liliane.gahima@rbc.gov.rw) ; [gahimalilliane@gmail.com](mailto:gahimalilliane@gmail.com)  
Martine Umukunzi, Tel: +250 788 802944/Email: [martine@imbutofoundation.org](mailto:martine@imbutofoundation.org)