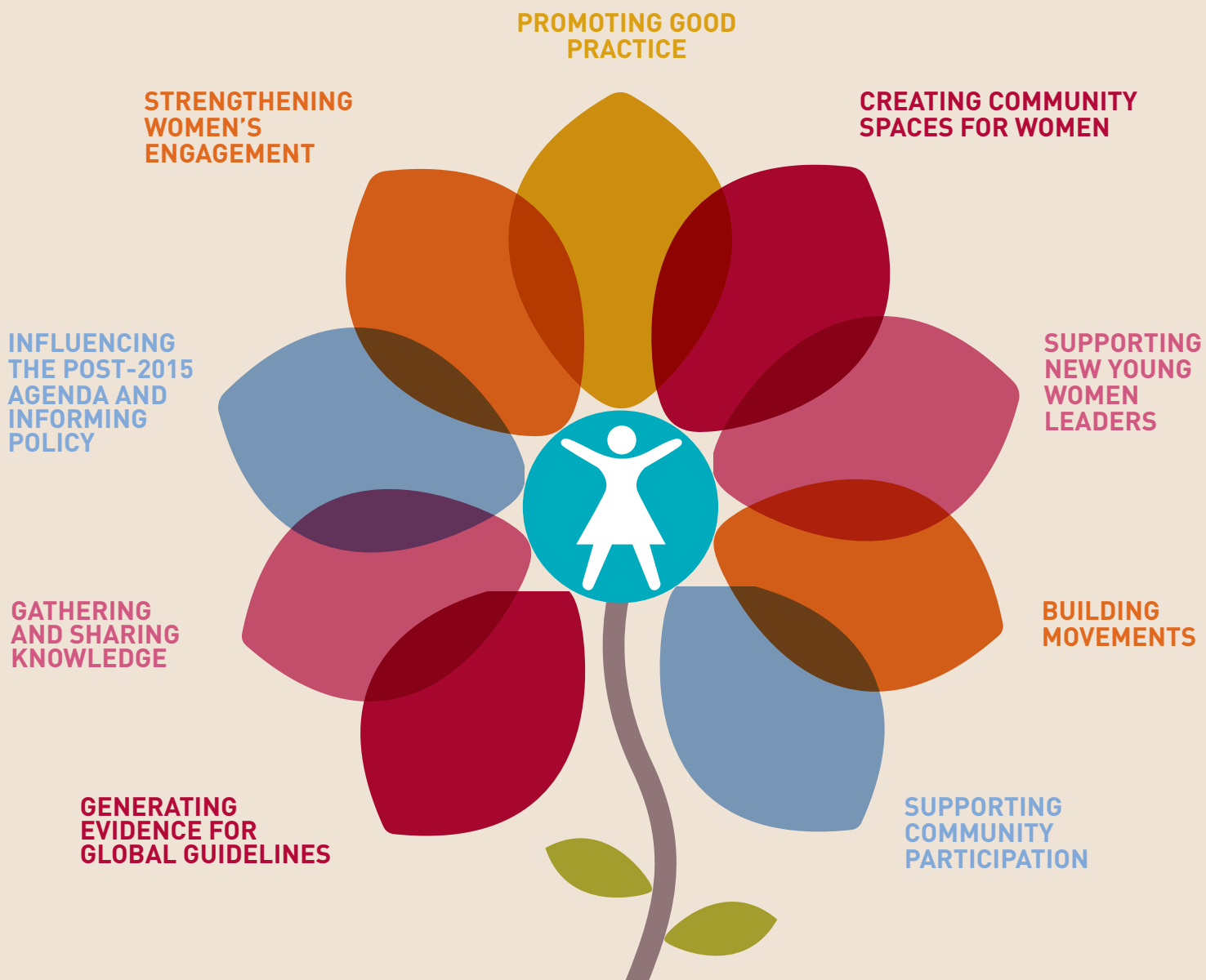


# SO THAT WOMEN AND GIRLS IN ALL THEIR DIVERSITY CAN REALIZE THEIR RIGHTS, WE ARE ...



PROMOTING GOOD PRACTICE

STRENGTHENING WOMEN'S ENGAGEMENT

CREATING COMMUNITY SPACES FOR WOMEN

INFLUENCING THE POST-2015 AGENDA AND INFORMING POLICY

SUPPORTING NEW YOUNG WOMEN LEADERS

GATHERING AND SHARING KNOWLEDGE

BUILDING MOVEMENTS

GENERATING EVIDENCE FOR GLOBAL GUIDELINES

SUPPORTING COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION



2014  
ANNUAL REPORT

## ATHENA's approach and achievements

The ATHENA Network is committed to working with women in all our diversity to realize all our rights. Our work is described in the flower on the cover of this report, and moves between community and global levels, building and facilitating links and ensuring that women's voices are heard in policy, research agendas, program development, and funding streams.

What we do:

- 1 Agenda-setting, policy formulation, and advocating for appropriate global resource flows;
- 2 Leadership and capacity-building of women in all our diversity; and
- 3 Movement-building and knowledge-sharing.



### 2014 ACHIEVEMENTS

<b>PROMOTING GOOD PRACTICE</b>	<b>Community Innovation:</b> We published the second in this series, <a href="#">Community Innovation: achieving an end to gender-based violence through the HIV response</a> . Developed by ATHENA Network and Global Coalition on Women and AIDS (GCWA), with UNAIDS support, the report presents twelve case studies exploring innovative and pioneering practice to address issues of gender-based violence and HIV, whilst reflecting women in all our diversity, women's leadership and innovative, community-driven approaches.
<b>CREATING COMMUNITY SPACES FOR WOMEN</b>	<b>Women's Networking Zone:</b> The Women's Networking Zone (WNZ) at AIDS 2014 once again offered a community-focused forum running parallel to the International AIDS Conference, building on more than a decade of collaboration between HIV and gender groups. See pages 6 and 7 for this 'herstory'.
<b>SUPPORTING NEW YOUNG WOMEN LEADERS</b>	<b>Young Women's Leadership Initiative:</b> ATHENA continued to grow and develop the Young Women's Leadership Initiative as part of our mentoring approach to support new young women advocates. See more on pages 4 and 5.
<b>BUILDING MOVEMENTS</b>	<b>Link Up:</b> ATHENA is a global policy partner in Link Up – a five country project that aims to improve the sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) of more than one million young people living with and affected by HIV in Bangladesh, Burundi, Ethiopia, Myanmar and Uganda. As part of Link Up, we worked with the Global Youth Coalition on HIV/AIDS (GYCA) to lead a global consultation of young people living with and most affected by HIV, to understand their visions, voices, and priorities for their sexual and reproductive health and rights. In 2014, the consultation findings were published as a <a href="#">suite of summary papers</a> and a <a href="#">global report</a> .  In each Link Up country, our work is led by a young woman living with HIV who acts as our focal point, participating in national level advocacy and program activities and leading community dialogues and consultations within her community. This year our focal points in Ethiopia and Myanmar participated in regional reviews for Beijing+20, and our focal point in Burundi designed and led a female condom project engaging young women and service providers. We worked with our focal point in Uganda to support a youth consultation to inform the Global Fund country dialogue process and concept note development.
<b>SUPPORTING COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION</b>	<b>Global review of HIV treatment access for women:</b> ATHENA is working with AVAC and Salamander Trust to lead a global review of HIV treatment access for women, commissioned by UN Women. Working with Salamander Trust, we have supported a series of community dialogues with women living with HIV from a range of key affected population groups in Bolivia, Nepal, Tunisia, and Cameroon led by members of the Global Reference Group (GRG) established to support the project. The GRG members are women living with HIV from diverse communities and regions, and are providing leadership to the review. The review will conclude in 2015. Innovative methodology developed to strengthen the participation and leadership of women living with HIV in the review will be presented at the International AIDS Society Conference on HIV Pathogenesis, Treatment and Prevention in July 2015.

<b>GENERATING EVIDENCE FOR GLOBAL GUIDELINES</b>	<p><b>Global values and preferences survey on the sexual and reproductive health (SRH) and human rights of women living with HIV:</b> ATHENA partnered with Salamander Trust to hold a survey among nearly 1,000 women living with HIV globally, with regard to their SRH and human rights. The consultation will inform the World Health Organization updated guidelines on SRHR for women living with HIV. The work represents an trailblazing approach to guidelines development and ATHENA is working with Salamander Trust to present the methodology and results through peer-reviewed publications and at the Federation of International Gynaecology and Obstetrics (FIGO) Congress in October 2015.</p>
<b>GATHERING AND SHARING KNOWLEDGE</b>	<p><b>Gender-based violence framework:</b> ATHENA is a member of a consortium working with UNAIDS to design and deliver an implementation and monitoring framework based on the latest evidence and promising practices related to gender-based violence and HIV. The consortium will work with community-based organizations in six countries (South Africa, Zimbabwe, Malawi, Kenya, South Sudan, and India) to refine and implement the framework, and report initial results. This applied research program, in collaboration with HEARD, AIDS Legal Network (ALN), Salamander Trust, and Project Empower, marks a concerted effort to document and bring to scale proven strategies to prevent gender-based violence and HIV at their intersections.</p>
<b>INFLUENCING THE POST-2015 AGENDA AND INFORMING POLICY</b>	<p><b>STOPAIDS and DFID:</b> ATHENA's Programs Director Luisa Orza is a Trustee of UK-based network STOPAIDS, and chairs the network's Gender Working Group. The network regularly interfaces with the UK's Department for International Development (DFID) on its positioning of HIV – including in the post-2015 agenda – and around issues such as violence against women, SRHR, drug policy, funding for key populations, and DFID's support to The Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria, and UNITAID. STOPAIDS supports the UK All Party Parliamentary Group on HIV and AIDS.</p> <p><b>Family Planning 2020 (FP2020):</b> ATHENA Director Tyler Crone sits on the Rights and Empowerment Working Group of Family Planning 2020 (FP2020), and has contributed to the advancement of a rights-based response by bringing the experience of the HIV movement to this initiative. ATHENA informed the development of the guiding principles launched in 2014.</p>
<b>STRENGTHENING WOMEN'S ENGAGEMENT</b>	<p><b>Women's engagement with the Global Fund:</b> With support from the German Development Agency (GIZ), ATHENA and ALN led a collaborative project, in partnership with Access Chapter 2 (AC2), South Africa, International Community of Women Living with HIV East Africa (ICWEA), Uganda, and Coalition of Women Living with HIV and AIDS (COWLHA) in Malawi. The project aimed to strengthen women's engagement with the Global Fund structures and processes at country level as it implements a new funding model. Lessons from the project are published in a learning paper, <i>Gender, Rights and Diversity: Connecting the Pieces</i>.</p> <p>ATHENA sits on an informal technical working group to support implementation of the Global Fund's Gender Equality Strategy.</p> <p>ATHENA has also continued to support the Women4GF platform, and is working with W4GF to bring women's voices to bear in the development of a new institutional strategy for the Global Fund, which will be implemented from 2016.</p>

## LEAVES AND SHOOTS

It is vital that research properly engages women and reflects their needs and priorities. We have worked to promote the ECHO trial and advocate for a full trial to explore the interaction between hormonal contraception and HIV acquisition, and engaged in a civil society working group.

We are also advocating for PrEP research to include women and reflect women's prevention needs.

In Burundi, our Link Up focal point Nadia has developed an innovative project on female condoms, engaging with service providers and women living with HIV to explore knowledge, access and availability of female condoms and promote their use.

We have continued to advocate against criminalization of HIV and the forced and coerced sterilization of women living with HIV, ensuring these issues remain on the agenda and the effect they have on women remains visible.

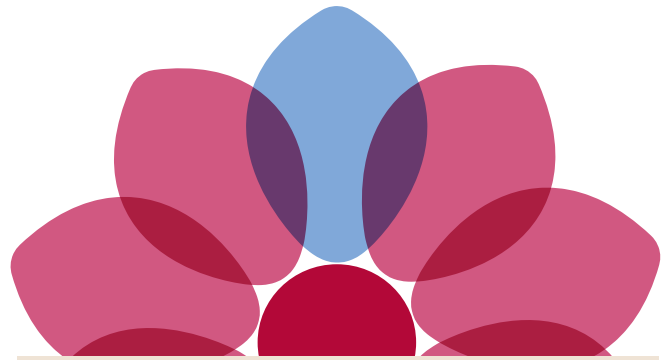
## ATHENA's Mentorship Strategy

ATHENA's mentorship strategy has been evolving, expanding, and developing over the last three years, combining leadership, advocacy, capacity building, and different levels of mentorship including:

- **Mentorship and institutional support from ATHENA** – including providing structure, program, facilitation, terms of reference, financial, logistical and technical support, networking and linkages to partners and allies to create as rich, meaningful, and sustainable experience as possible, as well as direct mentorship and capacity-building provided by ATHENA team members.
- **Peer mentorship among young women living with HIV**, cutting across-language, country, region, and experience; in conference settings young women support one another to navigate and make the most of the conference experience; in community dialogues peer engagement, sharing, and exchange is a powerful tool for transformation.
- **Inter-generational mentorship** – utilizing our networks to link younger/newer young women advocates with older/more experienced women living with HIV specifically.
- **Cross-movement mentorship** – utilizing our networks to link young women living with HIV to women from related movements – the LGBTI movement, sex worker movement, and women's rights movement more broadly.

Recognizing the dearth of avenues open to young women to engage meaningfully in the HIV response, ATHENA has utilized a number of different approaches and partnerships and opportunities to:

- **build the capacity** of young women living with and affected by HIV to become stronger advocates for young women's rights in the context of HIV
- **raise the voice, visions and visibility** of young women living with HIV and from key affected populations
- **create and expand spaces** for young women living with HIV and from key affected populations to meaningfully engage in decision-making and actions that affect their lives
- **develop adaptable and sustainable models of mentorship** (peer, inter-generational, cross-movement).



### YOUNG WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP INITIATIVE

Specific strategies and approaches that make up the Young Women's Leadership Initiative include:

- **Supporting young women to engage in national, regional, and international policy fora**, including conferences on HIV, sexual and reproductive health and rights, family planning and related fields. Through pre-event mentoring, daily debriefings, attendance at conference plenary sessions, and participation in events organized by and for HIV-positive women, these endeavors have enabled young women to engage with global and regional research and policy agendas, and catalyze longer term working relationships
- **Engaging and supporting young women living with HIV and from key affected populations** as country focal points to shape, inform and implement in-country project work
- **Supporting young women living with HIV and from key affected populations to conduct and participate in community dialogues** both to inform national and international policy advocacy, and also to provide space for exchanging stories and sharing experiences, and developing advocacy priorities
- **Engaging young women on global reference groups alongside more experienced women living with HIV activists** to ensure young women's perspectives are heard and influence the project
- **Advocating for and supporting the participation of young women** living with HIV and from key affected populations in capacity-building workshops
- **Utilizing the Women's Networking Zone and other ATHENA-led spaces** to platform young women's leadership, showcase their initiatives, and raise their visibility
- **Ensuring the supported and mentored participation of young women** living with and affected by HIV in panels and side-events.

# YOUNG WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP INITIATIVE

## 2011

**JUNE: IAS HIV Pathogenesis Conference, Rome** ATHENA, Salamander Trust and GCWA support the participation of 20+ young women living with and affected by HIV from around the world, with a focus on Eastern Europe.

YWLI 2011 participant Helena Nangombe (Namibia) now sits on the UNAIDS Dialogue Platform for women living with HIV, writes a regular blog, and is a tireless advocate for the SRH of women living with HIV and a leading activist in the Namibia Women's Health Network's campaign to end coerced and forced sterilization of women living with HIV.

**DECEMBER: ICASA, Addis Ababa** ATHENA and the National Network of Positive Women Ethiopians with support from GCWA coordinate a YWLI for 10 young women living with HIV, 5 from Ethiopia, 5 from across Africa.

YWLI 2011 co-coordinator Hereni Melesse is now an ATHENA team member supporting the Link Up partnership in Ethiopia and our focal points in Ethiopia, Uganda and Burundi, with language support, facilitation, mentorship, and advocacy.

**JULY: International AIDS Conference, Washington DC** ATHENA and GCWA support the participation of 10 young women living with HIV, 5 from USA, 5 from across the world.

YWLI 2012 participants Ayu Oktariani (Indonesia) and L'Orangelis Thomas Negron (Puerto Rico) went on to speak at AIDS2014, Melbourne; Ayu in the opening session, and L'Orangelis in a daily plenary. YWLI 2012 participant Cierra Foxx spoke at UNAIDS events during the UN General Assembly in 2011.

## 2012

**MARCH TO PRESENT** ATHENA supports young women living with HIV to be focal points in the 5 **Link Up** countries.

## 2013

**APRIL TO JUNE** ATHENA focal points convene **Community Dialogues** among young women living with HIV in their communities to explore key issues, share experiences and learn from one another.

Findings from the Community Dialogues have gone on to inform Link Up policy advocacy strategies in all 5 countries, as well as global policy advocacy and national programming.

**NOVEMBER: International Family Planning Conference (IFPC), Addis Ababa** ATHENA supports the participation of 2 young women from Ethiopia, and 2 from Uganda in mentor-mentee relationships.

A Think Tank event piloted at Addis Ababa and coordinated and led by the YWLI participants on the eve of the IFPC has provided a model for youth engagement in strategy development in the Link Up countries.

**DECEMBER: ICASA, Cape Town** ATHENA, AIDS Legal Network (ALN) and SAN! support the participation of 9 women from Uganda, Ethiopia, Burundi and South Africa to participate in the WNZ at ICASA.

YWLI participants from Uganda and Ethiopia were also supported to participate in a Women4GlobalFund gender workshop, and have subsequently co-convened and facilitated a youth pre-conference to develop a charter of priorities of issues affecting young people from key populations.

## 2014

**OCTOBER: HIVR4P (HIV Research for Prevention) conference, Cape Town**

**MARCH: Commission on the Status of Women (CSW), New York** Building on the YWLI@ICASA, ATHENA, ICW, ALN supported the participation of young women from South Africa and Uganda to participate in the CSW, with support from Sonke Gender Justice.

The ICASA2013-CSW2014-HIVR4P2014 forms a new thread of advocacy with a strong focus on the theme of "From Criminalization to Agency".

**FEBRUARY: Africa Sexual Health and Rights Conference, Yaounde** Nadia Ndayekezwa, ATHENA's focal point from Burundi, was supported to attend, with mentorship from Yaounde-based team member.

Nadia Ndayekezwa (a participant of YWLI ICASA 2013) has developed a youth-led and -driven pilot program to increase access to and utilization of female condoms by and for young women living with HIV in Burundi, on the basis of findings from the Community Dialogue she convened among young women living with HIV in 2013.

## 2015

# WNZ WOMEN'S NETWORKING ZONE

## THE HERSTORY OF THE WOMEN'S NETWORKING ZONE

In 2000, at the first International AIDS Conference (IAC) in Durban, a small group of women's rights advocates found that there was no place for women to meet. This led to Women at Durban 2000, Women at Barcelona 2002, and Women at Bangkok 2004. ATHENA grew out this parallel organizing and in 2006, with the Blueprint Coalition, held the first Women's Networking Zone (WNZ) in Toronto.

Women's Networking Zones are unique spaces for women and gender advocates – in all our diversity – to share experiences, showcase work, move the agenda and create new alliances between those otherwise unlikely to meet. We thank all collaborators and partners in this movement; one that places women and girls at the center of the HIV response and has contributed to the gains made to end AIDS. *Mujeres adelante!*



2006

AIDS2006  
Toronto

### IT'S TIME!

Launch of first WNZ. The 12 statements of ICW, the Blueprint Coalition's manifesto and the Barcelona Bill of Rights frame the week. Advocacy centers around the interconnectedness of women's rights – from motherhood, research and technology advances to having good sex.

2008

AIDS2008  
Mexico City

### ALL WOMEN, ALL RIGHTS!

Sharing our experiences and strengthening the global networks of women in the HIV response are high on the agenda, with women across Latin America leading the way. *Mujeres Adelante*, a daily newsletter on women's rights and HIV at the IAC, is produced in collaboration with ATHENA and AIDS Legal Network of South Africa.

2010

AIDS2010  
Vienna

### WOMEN'S RIGHTS HERE, RIGHT NOW!

Young women's voices take center stage. Women across the globe mobilize and network. Advocates and researchers establish that an absence of evidence does not equate to evidence of an absence when considering the woman-shaped gap in the research agenda.

2011

IAS Pathogenesis  
Conference, Rome

### WOMEN'S RIGHTS HERE, RIGHT NOW!

Launch of Young Women's Leadership Initiative (YWLI) and ATHENA launches *Community Innovation: achieving SRHR for all women through the HIV response*. The WNZ builds bridges between scientific and women's rights communities. Zena Stein traces the microbicide journey back to her call in 1990 for HIV prevention methods that women can use. Advocates ask "Where the hell is the gel?"

2011

ICASA 2011  
Addis Ababa

### WOMEN LEADING THE WAY: STRENGTHENING WOMEN'S ROLES IN THE HIV RESPONSE

A hub for local and pan-African women, and young women through the YWLI. Sessions include young women's leadership; SRHR; the *In Women's Words Action Agenda*; and launch of *In Women's Words Accountability Framework and Dialogue for African Action* to translate the 2011 Political Declaration on HIV/AIDS into reality for women and girls across the continent.

2012

AIDS2012  
Washington DC

### WOMEN AND GIRLS' RIGHTS TURN THE TIDE

Ambitious and active WNZ, bringing into focus how the issues affecting women of color in USA relate to issues facing women and girls globally. Priorities include: criminalization; unanswered questions on hormonal contraception and HIV risk; and reproductive justice for women everywhere.

2013

ICASA 2013  
Cape Town

### WOMEN AT THE CORE OF THE AFRICAN RESPONSE: NOW MORE THAN EVER

Program includes a strong YWLI collaboration with Link Up and WNZ. Young women living with HIV, and in all our diversity, lead and ask "When will realities on the ground shift for women?"

2014

AIDS2014  
Melbourne

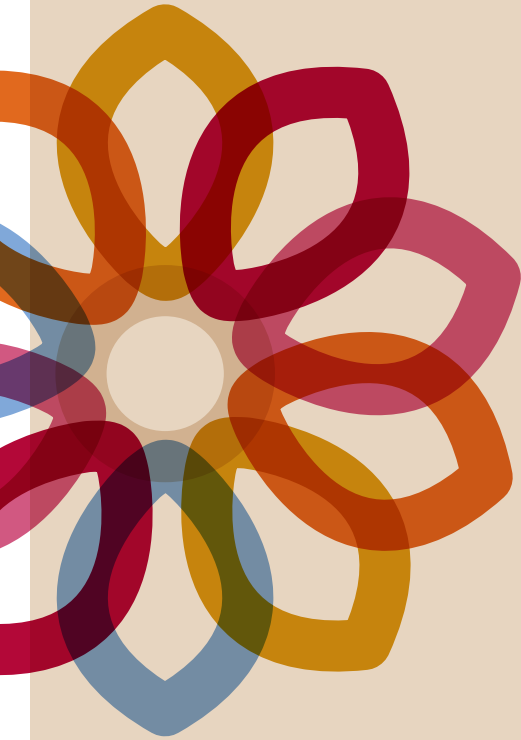
### STEPPING UP

Session themes reflect the diversity of women's concerns: access to ART and health services; SRHR; discrimination and violence; criminalization and justice.

2016

AIDS2016 Durban

As we look to AIDS2016 and the movement to "end AIDS", we have powerful lessons for what it means and takes to put women and girls in all our diversity at the center!



## About ATHENA

**ATHENA was created to advance gender equity and human rights in the global response to HIV and AIDS.**

ATHENA's mission is to:

- advance the recognition, protection, and fulfillment of women's and girls' human rights, comprehensively and inclusively, as a fundamental component of policies and programs to address HIV and AIDS;
- improve the life quality and longevity of women and girls living with HIV;
- ensure gender equity in HIV-related research, prevention, diagnosis, treatment, care, and support;
- promote and facilitate the leadership of women and girls, especially those living with HIV, in all aspects of HIV-related policies, programs, and research; and
- bridge the communities around the world that are addressing gender, human rights, sexual and reproductive health, and HIV.

[www.athenanetwork.org](http://www.athenanetwork.org)

ATHENA operates under the umbrella of a registered 501 (c) 3 entity, The Mirembe Project. The Mirembe Project was registered in 2000. ATHENA had its founding retreat in 2005 and was launched in 2006.