

GHANA ON TARGET TO ACHIEVING ZERO NEW HIV INFECTIONS - FIRST LADY

The First Lady, Mrs. Lordina Mahama, has disclosed to her First Lady colleagues that Ghana has made a remarkable in-road to achieving zero new HIV infections, Zero Discrimination and Zero AIDS related deaths. She said the launch of OAFLA Ghana Chapter campaign for the elimination of Mother to Child transmission of HIV and other programmes has contributed immensely to the government's efforts to achieve the feat.

Mrs. Lordina Mahama made this known when she addressed the 13th General Assembly of the Organization of African First Ladies Against HIV/AIDS, OAFLA, held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

The 13th General assembly of the Organization of African First Ladies against HIV/AIDS, OAFLA, was on the theme "Zero new HIV infections through access to health services for mothers and children".

The First Ladies converged at the African Union Plenary Hall, to deliberate on various interventions and activities being carried out to achieve OAFLA's mandate, which basically is to provide quality health care for and empower women and children in Africa. The President of OAFLA, Madam Hinda Deby Itno, the First Lady of the Republic of Chad, made a commitment to prioritizing the health and welfare of African women in their totality.



The First Lady, Mrs. Lordina Mahama, the First Vice President of OAFLA, shared Ghana's success story with her colleagues.

"It is now clear, that the vision of "Zero new HIV infections" lies within our reach, yet its attainment depend upon strong coordination and collaboration, within OAFLA, with our Governments and our partners.

In Ghana, we have recorded over 25 percent decline in new infections among our youth, and 76 percent decrease in new HIV infections among children, over just three years. This is due to a gradual strengthening of our health system, through the establishment of Testing and Counseling centres, PMTCT and effective HIV treatment programme, even though treatment coverage is only

at 61%." Mrs. Mahama reminded the First ladies that it remains their collective duty to be the voices of the voiceless, and through affirmative action by the African Union Commission, and ensure that the Global



response to HIV and AIDS stays high on the post-2015 development agenda. OAFLA and the Social Affairs Commission of the African Union signed a partnership Memorandum of Understanding, to work together to achieve the objectives of OAFLA. The Commissioner, Dr. Mustapha Sidiki Kaloko said the negative implications of early marriage are too high for the welfare of girls, and for that the development of countries. He therefore charged the First Ladies to take up the issue with all seriousness so as to salvage the girl child.