

Written by Editor

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**DATE:** 2004

**PUBLISHER:** UN Secretary General's Task Force on Women, Girls and HIV/AIDS in Southern Africa

This Report was commissioned by the United Nations Secretary General, Kofi Annan. Under the leadership of Ms Carol Bellamy, Executive Director of UNICEF, the Task Force on Women and Girls in Southern Africa comprises twenty seven members from Botswana, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, South Africa, Swaziland, Zambia and Zimbabwe. The members represent a broad spectrum of stakeholders including government, NGOs and people living with HIV and AIDS. The purpose of the Task Force is to provide recommendations to the Secretary-General for action to reduce the impact of HIV and AIDS on women and girls in southern Africa. The Task Force, supported by the UNAIDS Inter-Country Team for Eastern and Southern Africa, UNIFEM, UNFPA, other United Nations Agencies, undertook country visits to examine the situation of women, girls and HIV and to gather concrete suggestions for action in nine countries in southern Africa most affected by HIV/AIDS: Botswana, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa, Swaziland, Zambia and Zimbabwe. This culminated in a regional consultation of the Task Force. Together, the country visits and regional consultation provided the basis for this Report.

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