



International Community
of Women Living with HIV
Eastern Africa (ICWEA)

International AIDS Candlelight Memorial Day 2025

May, 2025

They lived **FIERCE**, they led **FIERCE**.
Today, we remember the fearless women
who shaped our **movement**. We won't
wait for death to **Honor** greatness.

The International Community of Women Living with HIV Eastern Africa (ICWEA) stands in solidarity with communities around the world to commemorate the International AIDS Candlelight Memorial a powerful platform to honour those we have lost to AIDS, support people living with HIV, honoring the people who have dedicated their lives to supporting those affected by HIV and renew our commitment to end the HIV epidemic.

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Voices from the community

“We have lost many to AIDS, but let us also celebrate the fighters who keep the struggle alive. Join me in lighting a candle, honoring a life, and coming together—because behind every flame is a story.

This is more than a memorial to me; it’s a movement. When we come together, we reflect, heal, and reaffirm our commitment to ending HIV stigma once and for all.

Stand with us as we demand justice, ignite hope, and work toward a future where no one is left behind.”

Brenda Facy Azizuyo | Programmes Officer, ICWEA

“As we commemorate Candlelight Memorial Day, may the memories of those we have lost to HIV/AIDS continue to inspire us to fight for a world free from stigma, discrimination, opportunistic infections, rejection, and denial—a world where everyone can live a healthy life, free from HIV.”

Claire Nampenja | Programmes Officer, ICWEA

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Voices from the community

“In light of this special memorable day known to us all as the "International Candle light memorial Day" under the theme "Ending AIDS by 2030: Building a sustainable HIV response" reminds us of our comrades that were succumbed to AIDS but stood the ground of creating awareness by publicly declaring their status such as Philly Bongole Lutaaya remembered for his resilience.

This has come at a time when as a nation are facing Funding crisis towards HIV Treatment, prevention and care limiting availability, accessibility and quality of services We also continue to see growing new forms of violence towards women living with HIV among which are violation for bodily autonomy due to Assisted Partner Notification GBV among discordant couple due to declining trust in Undetectable equals to untransmutable.

This is a wakeup call for us to join forces to collaboratively contribute to sustainable solutions to address the gaps that we continue to face.

I therefore call upon our government, policy makers, decision makers, key stakeholders, private sector to carry on the mantle and ensure zero new infections, investment in prevention solutions as well as ensure availability, accessibility and quality of treatment and care in order to end AIDS by 2030.”

Kyakunzire Laura Angel | Social Justice and PLHIV Advocate

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Voices from the community

“As we gather across the world to light candles in memory of those we have lost to AIDS, we do more than mourn. We honour their lives by reigniting our collective commitment to end HIV/AIDS for good.

This year’s International AIDS Candlelight Memorial reminds us that behind every statistic is a name, a face, a story of courage, of resilience and of love.

These are not just lives lost, but voices that continue to call us to action. Their memory fuels our fight for a future free from stigma, injustice, and inequality.

We stand in solidarity with the millions living with HIV, and we echo the promise: You are not alone. Today, treatment works. Prevention is possible. And every life matters. But the struggle is not over.

We must speak louder for universal access to care, for lifesaving ARVs, for sexual and reproductive health rights, and for the protection of our most vulnerable especially young people, women, and communities still facing silence, shame, and marginalization.

Let our candles not only symbolize remembrance but also serve as torches lighting the path toward a world where no one dies from AIDS again, where everyone has the information, support, and services they need to live with dignity.

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Voices from the community

“Together, let us renew our advocacy. Let us demand political will, funding, compassion, and accountability. And let us keep the flame of hope burning in every heart, in every community, and in every nation.

As thrive to Ending AIDS by 2030, Building a Sustainable HIV Response, we need to remember that ending AIDS is not just possible it is a promise we must keep.”

Hope Mafaranga | Health and Science Journalist

“Every step forward in awareness brings us closer to a cure. Today, we remember, we honor, and we fight for a brighter tomorrow.

Your story matters. Your courage inspires change.
Together in strength—united against HIV&AIDS.”

Talemwa Victoria | DVR Champion

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Voices of the community

“In the light of every candle, we remember the lives lost, celebrate the strength of those living with HIV, and stand united in the fight to end stigma and spread love.”

Victoria Katamba | DVR Champion

Read our full statement:

**[ICWEA Statement on International AIDS
Candlelight Memorial Day 2025](#)**

We remember. We celebrate. We act.

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