

- Salute&Benessere - Medicine

HIV is still a scourge in Africa, especially for women

President of the science academy, 38.4 million people live in it

ANSA Editorial Staff TRIESTE May 26, 2023 1:39 pm



(ANSA) - TRIESTE, MAY 26 - "The incidence of HIV infections in young African women is marked: in the 18-19 age group, 13.6% of girls are HIV positive; for boys of the same age, the positivity rate is just 1.5%; values that still grow for women aged 30 or more, with infection rates of 70%".

This was stated by Quarraisha Abdool Karim, president of the World Academy of Sciences for the Scientific Progress of Developing Countries (Twas), based in Trieste, speaking for the fortieth anniversary of the institute.

Today there are 38.4 million people living with HIV worldwide, a large share of this number living in sub-Saharan Africa.

The South African epidemiologist outlined her country's response to the COVID-19 pandemic and the impact the virus has had on HIV and tuberculosis (TB) positive people. "We understood how important it is to jointly treat all patients co-infected with tuberculosis and HIV with antiretroviral drugs - explained Abdool Karim - In this way, with integrated treatments, we managed to reduce deaths from HIV and TB by 56%" .

Twas is regarded as a driving force for developing scientific capacity in the Global South; it was founded 40 years ago by a group of scientists from the south and north of the world led by the Pakistani physicist and Nobel laureate Abdus Salam and was inaugurated in 1985 by the then Secretary General of the United Nations Javier Pérez de Cuéllar. Abdool Karim has been a Twas Fellow since 2015, in 2014 he won the prestigious Twas-Lenovo award for scientific contributions to the fight against HIV; she is the first female president of the Academy. The 40th anniversary celebrations that have just begun will last 3 years; the Academy has more than 1,380 Fellows, some of the most accredited scientists in the world - including 12 Nobel Prize winners - from 110 countries. Twas has awarded thousands of research grants to scientists in developing countries, and, recently, he celebrated his 1,000th PhD graduation thanks to his support. (HANDLE).

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