

that will bring sustainable peace to the young nation of South Sudan. are not dashed even more. Over 2.3 million South Sudanese added.

said.

Men warned against prostitutes ahead of Christmas festivities

By Lillian N. Magezi

As we celebrate Christmas, Ugandans, especially men, have been reminded that HIV/AIDS still presents a major public health, economic challenge and, thus, urged to celebrate responsibly by not engaging in risky sexual behaviour that will increase their chances of catching or spreading HIV/AIDS.

"Christmas is a time of celebration, merry making and socialising that tends to be characterised with excitement and alcohol abuse, which make

one lose self-control, exposing one to HIV infection," the acting director general of the Uganda AIDS Commission, Dr Nelson Musoba, said.

Speaking at a press conference at the commission headquarters in Ntinda on Wednesday, Musoba, said as people celebrate Christmas, they may engage in unprotected sex with those whose HIV status they do not know. He urged the public to ensure that they protect themselves and their loved ones from acquiring HIV by avoiding risky sexual behaviour with prostitutes and

other people, other than their official partners.

Men and HIV/AIDS

Musoba noted that worldwide, men are generally more vulnerable to the risk factors that are driving the HIV epidemic. These include having concurrent multiple sexual partners, engaging in commercial sex, having sex with irregular partners whose HIV status they do not know, abuse of alcohol and drugs, in addition to failing to use condoms consistently.

Other factors driving the

spread of HIV/AIDS in Uganda include lack of access to prevention, care and treatment services.

Dr Karusa Kiragu noted that research has shown that men are less likely to test for HIV, less likely to access HIV treatment and more likely to die of AIDS-related illnesses. She said only 47% of men living with HIV/AIDS are on treatment. Men are also known to be more likely than women to start HIV treatment late, to interrupt treatment and to be lost to treatment follow-up.

Kiragu explained that

fighting HIV/AIDS among men will reduce chances of new infections among women and young girls.

Tips

Musoba urged all members of society to get involved in curbing the spread of HIV during the festive season and in the coming year by drinking responsibly and in moderation in addition to discouraging minors from drinking alcohol.

Musoba appealed to all Ugandans to re-dedicate themselves to fighting HIV-related stigma that leads to

discrimination.

Kiragu urged every one to continue with the ABCD (abstaining, being faithful, using condoms and drug taking) strategy in the fight against HIV/AIDS, explaining that in addition to abstaining, being faithful and using condoms consistently, adhering to drugs for those who are living with HIV/AIDS.

Musoba urged the Ministry of Health to prevent the stock-out of HIV/AIDS drugs by increasing funding and reducing dependence on foreign funding.

New Section3
STANDARD WASH