



SASKATCHEWAN  
HUMAN RIGHTS  
COMMISSION

**For Immediate Release**

March 8, 2013

**Observing International Women's Day 2013  
"Women Leading the Way for Change: Ending HIV/AIDS Transmission"**

REGINA – Community organizers in Regina are raising awareness about the devastating local and global effects of HIV/AIDS transmission as part of the 2013 International Women's Day (IWD). The theme of this year's annual March 8 event is "Women Leading the Way for Change: Ending HIV/AIDS Transmission."

Saskatchewan has the highest rate of new infections in Canada – 20.8 in every 100,000 residents. It is estimated that there are currently over 1,400 people living with HIV/AIDS in communities across our province.

"We know that women have been, and will likely continue to be, leading the effort to reduce the transmission of HIV/AIDS. We also know that, at the same time, women are the most likely to become infected," said Heather Monus, Community Engagement Consultant for the Saskatchewan Human Rights Commission.

HIV/AIDS is also associated with violence towards women. The award-winning documentary "SASA!" produced by Raising Voices based in Kampala, Uganda, and screened at the IWD event, demonstrates the need for increased understanding about the relationship between poverty, gender, and violence. A recent study by Statistics Canada reveals that, in our society, health, economic and social inequality, age, and marital status are risk factors for violence towards women.

"We needed an event that brought together the people that know what the issues are in our community," said Monus. "Community-based education, information for at-risk populations, and motivating youth to educate themselves and their peers are some of the actions that will help halt the spread of HIV/AIDS in our province."

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