

# AVAC REPORT 2008 AT A GLANCE

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## Chapter 1

### THE WHOLE WIDE WORLD

Who needs to weigh in on male circumcision?

Why PrEP research is a top priority

Increasing developing country leadership

## Chapter 2

### WHAT'S (Y)OUR POSITION

Is NIAID spending wisely?

Should the next planned efficacy trial, PAVE 100, go forward?

Are T-cell vaccines dead?

Is an AIDS vaccine possible?

## Chapter 3

### WHAT WE KNOW FOR SURE

Going site by site to learn from STEP and Phambili

How AIDS vaccine research must help address the African-American epidemic

Getting our messages straight

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### MOVING FORWARD, LOOKING BACK

What's worked, what hasn't—and what it all means

How IAVI, an original maverick, can contribute in the post-STEP era

A "to-do" list for the Global HIV Vaccine Enterprise

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Every section in this year's AVAC Report takes on a different facet of the question that the AIDS vaccine field has faced since September 2007, when the STEP study halted immunizations: *Where to from here?*

The first chapter, **The Whole Wide World**, looks at this question in terms of the broader HIV prevention research agenda and calls for a re-direction of attention to the PrEP research agenda, implementation of gender-sensitive male circumcision programs, and implementation of Good Participatory Practice (GPP) guidelines for biomedical HIV prevention trials. The search for an AIDS vaccine has to happen in the context of creative, concerted efforts to find other strategies and to deliver what we already have.

The second and third chapters, **What's (Y)our Position** and **What We Know for Sure**, look directly at the STEP and Phambili trials and the debate that they sparked about whether the AIDS vaccine field had lost its way. Some important questions have been raised about how to strike a balance between basic science and clinical trials. As we discuss in these chapters, we believe the field must develop an agenda for human discovery trials and heed calls for more stringent criteria for advancing candidates into and through human trials. We also believe that trial sponsors must be clear about the scientific questions that a given study is asking, and what the value of the information will be for the field. Discovery trials must fit into a coordinated research agenda that has been designed to answer the question:



“What’s the suite of studies that’s needed, at this time, to help guide development of better vaccine candidates?”

**Moving Forward, Looking Back** looks at the International AIDS Vaccine Initiative (IAVI) that was founded 13 years ago as a maverick leader in the search for an AIDS vaccine. As the whole field faces what to do next, this article examines the strengths and challenges of IAVI’s program with an eye to what we can all learn from IAVI and what’s needed most in the future.

There are important questions that need to be asked of all the organizations in the field, not just of IAVI. As stated in last year’s Report, one of our priorities in each of our annual surveys of the field is to examine a core organization with the potential of being a game-changing player and make recommendations for improving its effectiveness. Last year we looked at the Global HIV Vaccine Enterprise; this year we focus on IAVI because we believe its entrepreneurial history, unique identity and diverse financial support position it as a leading AIDS vaccine research organization.

Finally, our **Science Snapshot** is a quick take on some of the scientific questions and research areas demanding priority attention in the post-STEP era. We’ve included what we think are some of the most important and intriguing suggestions that have emerged in recent months. It makes for an eclectic to-do list that we’ll revisit more systematically in an upcoming publication.