

Advocates Call for Ethical Research for COVID-19 Solutions
8 April 2020

The COVID-19 pandemic has dramatically transformed how research and development can happen. We have seen potential new COVID-19 treatments, vaccines and other prevention options move into human trials with unprecedented speed and with strong, innovative global collaboration. But at the same time, we've heard politicians and national leaders tout unproven treatment and prevention options.

It is essential to state clearly: *There are currently no approved treatments, cures, vaccines or other biomedical prevention options for COVID-19.* Treatment and prevention options are needed across the globe, and ethical and inclusive research and development is critical to meet this need.

Everyone is impacted by the SARS Coronavirus 2, the causative agent of COVID-19 disease. The virus knows no borders and doesn't care about our social circumstances. Yet early data is exemplifying that underlying health inequities persist with COVID-19 along racial and socioeconomic lines. Research to find solutions to the pandemic must take into account the social, economic, racial, gender and geographic inequities that exist for both individuals and communities where research takes place and pay particular attention to those who are most vulnerable, in whatever community or country they live.

A recent interview with two French researchers speculating about the possibility of doing COVID-19 research in Africa—and suggesting it might be more efficient to conduct research where people might be “more exposed to the virus”—is repugnant. History is littered with examples of the most marginalized communities being exploited “in the name of research”, and no crisis, no matter how dire, should send us back to the times that have exhibited the worst of our humanity.

We know it is possible to conduct ethical research quickly and safely, but only when those participating in research and the communities where the research is happening are central to the process, as codified in the UNAIDS/AVAC [Good Participatory Practice Guidelines](#).

COVID-19 research is an essential, global priority. As HIV and global health advocates, we know that an inclusive, cooperative response is needed to address an international crisis. We are especially happy to see the announcement of the [COVID-19 Clinical Research Coalition](#), a new global effort to accelerate COVID-19 clinical research in resource-limited settings.

As research moves forward, individuals must be given clear information about the potential risks and benefits of study participation; trial communities must be meaningfully involved in developing and implementing study protocols; product developers must make concerted and genuine efforts to ensure historically underrepresented groups be included in clinical trials and have a comprehensive product development plan for all populations who may benefit from a potential product as well as a clear commitment to delivering access for all; and research must follow the World Health Organization's [Good Participatory Practice for Trials of Emerging Pathogens \(GPP-EP\)](#).

We call on researchers, pharmaceutical and biotechnology companies, regulators, policy makers, and funders of COVID-19 research to commit to upholding globally agreed-upon ethical and Good Participatory Practice standards for research. We also call on them to commit to ensuring rapid and equitable access to proven COVID-19 treatments, diagnostics, vaccines and other prevention options for people worldwide. If anyone is left behind, everyone is vulnerable.

Signed (in formation – [click here to add](#)):

Organizations:

AVAC
Advocacy for Prevention of HIV and AIDS (APHA)
Advocates for Youth
AfNHI
African American Health Alliance
Afrocab Treatment Access Partnership
AgeOptions
AIDS Action Baltimore
AIDS and Rights Alliance for Southern Africa
AIDS Foundation of Chicago
AIDS Research Consortium of Atlanta
AIDS Treatment Activists Coalition (ATAC)
Aidsfonds
American Academy of HIV Medicine
amfAR, The Foundation for AIDS Research
Arcfrancis Foundation
Association of Nurses in AIDS Care
ATHENA Network
Bar Hostess Empowerment and Support Program
Black AIDS Institute
CAMI Health
Canadian HIV/AIDS Legal Network
Cascade AIDS Project
CENTA
Center for Public Health, Laws, Social Economic Right and Advocacy
Central Illinois Friends
Centre for Family Health Initiative (CFHI)
Centre for Health Advocacy, Research & Program
Centre Stage Media Arts Foundation Zimbabwe
Champaign County Health Care Consumers
CHANGE (Center for Health and Gender Equity)
CHISA
CNS (Citizen News Service)
Coalition for Health Promotion and Social Development (HEPS Uganda)
Coalition of Women Living with HIV and (COWLHA) Malawi
Cross World Care Foundation Kaduna
defeatHIV Community Advisory Board
Development for Peace Education
EBMG
Environmental and Rural Mediation Centre (ENVIRUMEDIC)
European AIDS Treatment Group
Facilitators of Community Transformation (FACT)
Fiocruz
Fort Lewis College
Forum for Collaborative Research

Frontline AIDS
Global Black Gay Men Connect
Global Health Liaisons
Global Health Technologies Coalition
Global Network of Black People working in HIV
GNP+
GSSG : Gemeinnützige Stiftung
Guardian Angels Care and Support
Health GAP
Health Strategies, Solutions & Systems LTD
HEDECS
HepCoS (Hepatitis collation of Sikkim)
HIV + Aging Research Project--Palm Springs
HIV i-Base
HIV Medicine Association
HIV Modernization Movement-Indiana
HIV Survivors and Partners Network
Home of Joy Foundation
House of Blahnik, Inc.
Howard Brown Health
Hwupenyu Health and Wellbeing Project
IAVI
Ibis Reproductive Health
Impulse Bangkok
Independent Learner
Integrated Health Organization Rwanda
International Association of Providers of AIDS Care
International Community of Women living with HIV Eastern Africa (ICWEA)
International HIV Partnerships
International Partnership for Microbicides
International Rectal Microbicide Advocates (IRMA)
International Treatment Preparedness Coalition (ITPC) Global
Iskorak
John Snow, Inc. (JSI)
Joint Adherent Brothers and Sisters Against AIDS (JABASA)
Kenguelekeze
Kenya Progressive Nurses Association
Kenya Sex Workers Alliance (KESWA)
Key Population Consortium of Kenya
Kiambu Sex Workers Advocacy Group
Latino Commission on AIDS
Legal Council for Health Justice
LILA Italian League for Fighting AIDS
Love to Love Organization
Men Against AIDS Youth Group
Mobilizing Our Brothers Initiative (MOBI)
MPact Global Action for Gay Men's Health & Rights
NAM aidsmap

NASTAD (National Alliance of State & Territorial AIDS Directors)
National Association for Supporting People living with HIV/AIDS (ANSP+)
National Association for Young People Living with HIV in Malawi
National Black Gay Men's Advocacy Coalition
National Coalition for LGBT Health
National Community Advisory Board (NCAB)
National Working Positive Coalition
New HIV Vaccine and Microbicide Advocacy Society (NHVMAS)
Nyanza Reproductive Health Society
Pangaea Zimbabwe AIDS Trust (PZAT)
Parkers Mobile Clinic (Nigeria)
Partners In Health
People Living with HIV (PLAS) LYANTONDE
Planned Parenthood Global
PleasePrEPMe
Population and Development Initiative
Positive Council Switzerland
Positive Voice
Reigners in Life (RIL)
School of Public Health, KIIT University, Bhubaneswar, Indianeswar
Setshaba Research Centre
Shanduko Yeupenyu Child Care
Shanti Project
Shriver Center on Poverty Law
SisterLove
TANACOF
Thai Red Cross AIDS Research Centre
Thailand National Community Advisory Board on HIV Research
The "DIRT" Advocacy Movement
The AIDS Institute
The Aurum Institute
The Desmond Tutu HIV Foundation
The Tuke Institute CIC
The Well Project
TPAN
TRCARC
Treatment Action Group
Treatment Advocacy & Literacy Campaign (TALC)
Treatment Educat10n Network (TEN)
Uganda Network of AIDS Service Organisations (UNASO)
University of California San Francisco
University of KwaZulu-Natal
University of Oxford
US People Living With HIV Caucus
Vaccine Advocacy Resource Group (VARG)
We Think 4 A Change
Weaker Section Welfare Association
Wings To Transcend Namibia

Zambia Association for Prevention of HIV/AIDS and Tuberculosis (ZAPHIT)
Zambia Network of Religious Leaders Living with or Personally Affected by HIV and AIDS - ZANERELA+
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