

# Mobilizing African Civil Society for a 5 Years PEPFAR Reauthorization

Hosts: AY+, EANNASO, KPTNC, COMPASS and AVAC

Monday 28th November 2023

# Presenters



Moderator



# The Outline

- Annette Gaudino: The current state of affairs in the reauthorization process of PEPFAR
- Joan Chamungu: PEPFAR and life affirmation for PLHIV in Africa
- Lawrence Khonyongwa: Calling for bi-partisan support for PEPFAR
- Tumaini Mbibo: Call to Action: The letter to PEPFAR
- Cyprian Komba: Continuous Strategies for PEPFAR engagement

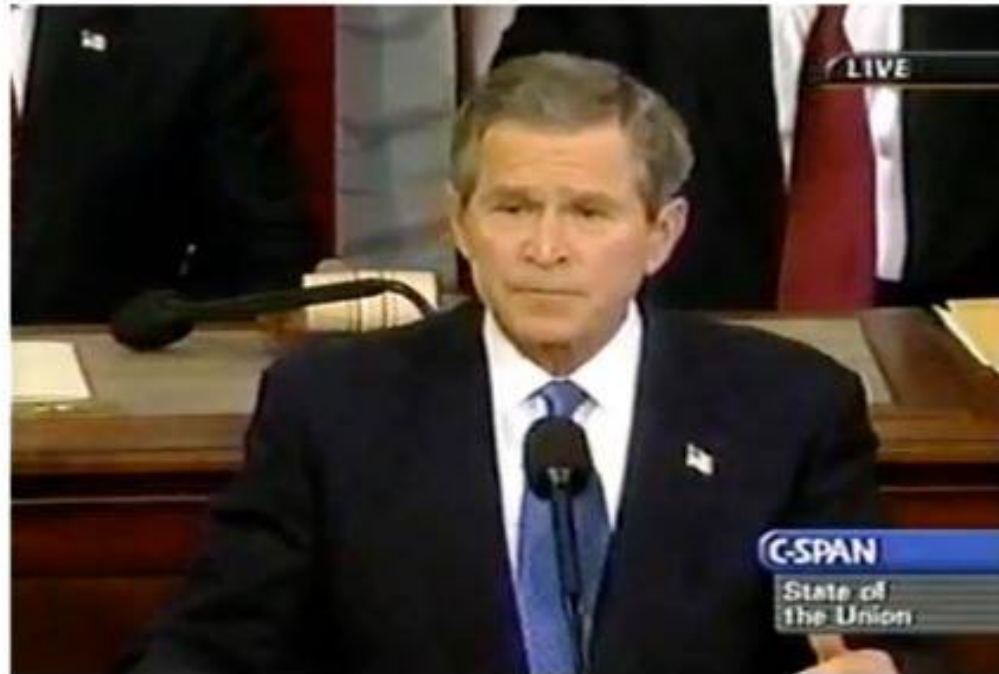
# The current state of affairs in the reauthorization process of PEPFAR

- In May of this year, the Heritage Foundation, a right wing, conservative think tank, published a **broad attack on PEPFAR**, claiming President Biden was using the program as a vehicle to spread a 'radical' pro-abortion, pro-LGBTQ agenda.
- Un-elected pressure groups are demanding that PEPFAR reauthorization include legislation **making the Mexico City Policy permanent**
  - The Mexico City Policy aka the Global Gag Rule bans US funding to any organization that promotes or provides abortion information, referrals or services
- **PEPFAR is a permanent USG program** that cannot be ended without Congressional action. Even without reauthorization, Congress can continue to appropriate funding for the program as part of the annual budget process. With or without reauthorization, Congress controls funding levels and the release of funds to recipient countries.
- **The path forward is attachment of a clean 5 yr reauthorization to a larger spending bill**, known as an omnibus.

# U.S. President George W. Bush establishes PEPFAR

January 28, 2003

U.S. President George W. Bush announces the creation of the U.S. President's Emergency Plan For AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) in his State of the Union address. The President pledges \$15 billion over 5 years and sets targets of 2 million people on treatment, 7 million infections prevented, and 10 million receiving care and support.



# PEPFAR and life affirmation for PLHIV in Africa

- **PEPFAR Investments:**

- As an African who is living with HIV for more than 22 years, I am grateful to PEPFAR for being instrumental in saving millions of lives in Africa by providing critical support in HIV response
- PEPFAR funding has totaled more than \$110 billion since its launch by President George Bush in 2003. Much of this investment was made in Africa with great positive results on the lives of many people
- **Life and Hope:** We who live with the virus today have no fear anymore. Some of us despite our HIV status have lived on to see our children becoming adults and bearing us grandchildren. We also have many amazing stories of HIV+ mothers who give birth to negative babies and of positive babies living on to become adults and living their full lives.

# PEPFAR and life affirmation for PLHIV in Africa

- **20 Years of Strong life affirmation:** More than 25 million lives have been saved
  - The days of gloom experienced in late 90s and early 2000 are now a thing of the past, Thanks to PEPFAR
  - The helplessness of our countries to handle a great crisis never seen before was quelled
  - The loss of the young men and women is no longer there, thanks to PEPFAR
- **Our Health Systems Are becoming better:**
  - Great procurement capabilities
  - Better and effective human resources for health
  - Structural barriers are lessening with each passing day
- **Sustaining the Gains**
  - Under PEPFAR support ARVs have remained the single most effective mode of reducing the number of new HIV infections
  - PLHIV in Africa expect that US will continue this life saving leadership that will eventually end the pandemic

# John Nkengasong says 5.5 million babies have been born HIV-free because of PEPFAR, the U.S. President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief



## Why Christian Organizations Want Congress to Reauthorize PEPFAR

*By: Doug Fountain, Executive Director, Christian Connections for International Health, with Dr. Samuel Mwenda, General Secretary, Christian Health Association of Kenya, and Dr. Tih Pius Muffih, Director of Health Services, Cameroon Baptist Convention Health Services*

The President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) became a beacon from the U.S. to the world; a light that ameliorated the darkest days of the HIV/AIDS epidemic. But its fate is in question.

Nineteen years ago today, my family and I arrived in Uganda to work at a local University. Among the many joys we anticipated was connecting with Grace, a student, who had visited our church in the U.S. Nobody could tell us where she was and why she hadn't responded to our messages. I vividly remember a mutual friend coming to our door, informing us our friend had just died from AIDS. We had no idea she was sick; it was kept a secret from us, the University, and her church. She suffered in silence, with no medicine and no hope. I was angry — in our community, was there no light for her in this dark time?

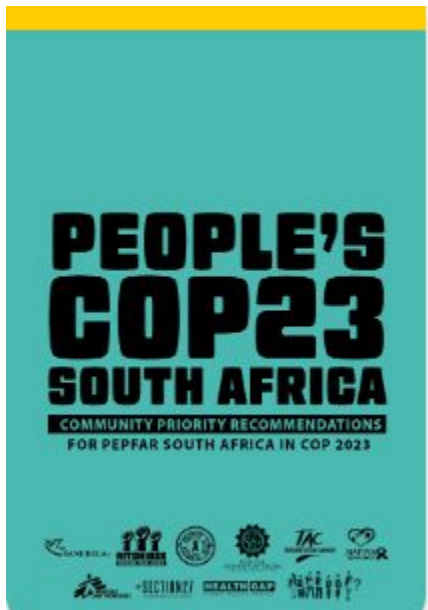
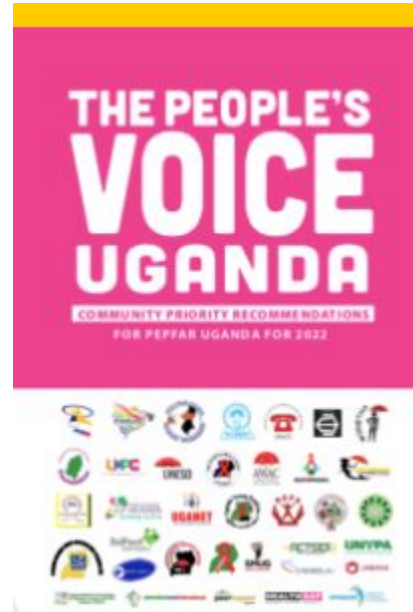
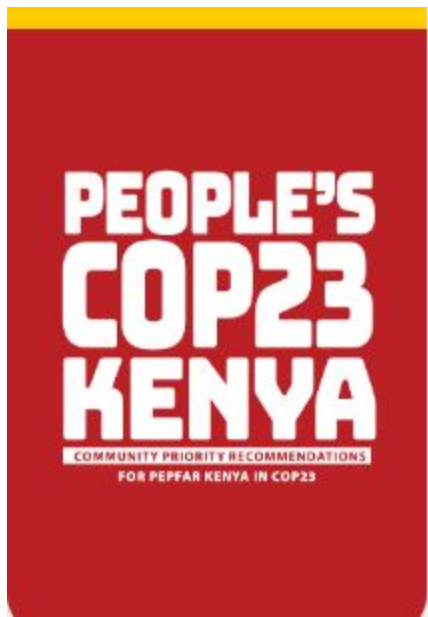


PEPFAR limps into uncertain future after failure of US Congress to authorise five-year plan



# Calling for bi-partisan support for PEPFAR

- We are here to affirm that this has been a life saving program like no other. We call that differences may be set aside so as we may be able to get the clean 5 years reauthorization.
- Great leadership: America has demonstrated through this program about the power of standing together with those who face immense difficulties. It has been a great leadership in fighting a pandemic of all times. Millions of lives have been saved with the support provided by PEPFAR and The US government. The US government is the largest contributor so far to The Global Fund for AIDS, TB and Malaria.
- PEPFAR is a great model of decolonization: PEPFAR does not impose. PEPFAR teams with country teams develop priorities together. Nothing is being imposed
- Matter of life and death: Non reauthorization of PEPFAR will pose a big threat and have a deleterious effect on the HIV response gains achieved so far.
- UNIQUE programming: PEPFAR has contributed to high quality programming and innovation in HIV and AIDS. The support to orphans and children living with HIV has been so unique. These children are part of the leadership in Africa and can stand to testify of the work of the American people through PEPFAR.



“We need PEPFAR to continue it’s life sustaining work and to maintain the Global Leadership in the fight against HIV/AIDS and other pandemics”



# Call to action from the African CSOs

- A letter has been designed with the assistance of AVAC, COMPASS, EANNASO, and Y+ to request for a clean 5 years PEPFAR reauthorization
- This letter has been addressed to US senate and congress requesting for a bi-partisan support for a five years clean reauthorization of PEPFAR. The letter is [found here](#) while the sign on is [found here](#)
- You are all requested to sign on to the letter and to encourage your networks to sign onto it.
- The US congress and senate need to hear the voices of all of us from the beneficiary countries. They need to hear our voices .

# Call to action from the African CSOs

Accordingly the letter written:

- Expresses concern on the failure of congress and senate to arrive at a five years clean reauthorization of PEPFAR
- It goes on to show how PEPFAR has been beneficial to the African communities
- It demonstrates how PEPFAR is unique both in Approach and mission - a great model of decolonization
- Some statistical picture is provided by the letter to demonstrate the transformational power of PEPFAR
- The letter ends by demonstrating that American leadership is still needed in fighting the HIV pandemic and its absence would be felt as a great loss

# Need for Continuous Engagement Strategies for PEPFAR

- Letters to American Embassies: We may need to learn from GFAN Africa on this. The GFAN campaign has assisted push up the GF pledges GF with each pledging year.
- Create a critical mass of CSOs around this campaign and ensure that they develop some positive messages for PEPFAR centered around real lives change stories of people that are as a result of PEPFAR.
- Need for continuous engagement with the members of US senate and congress as African CSOs via twitter, letters, youtube, videos and emails

**Your sign on is needed**

**CALL TO ACTION**

**KINDLY sign on to the letter requesting the US Senate and Congress to recommit for a 5 Years clean reauthorization of PEPFAR.**

**“THANK YOU FOR TAKING ACTION!”**