

Tuesday, January 23, 2024

**Reporting the
African Science Story:
Decoding Scientific
Research to Support
Public Health in Africa**



Thank you for joining us.



HIV prevention research - a new forum
for advocacy on the latest

avac.org/project/choice-agenda

- Dull
Asake
- Sempe
L.A.X.
- Supalife 4
Harley
- One Side
Iyanya
- GWAGWALADA
Bnxxn, Kizz Daniel, Seyi Vibe
- Holiday
Rema
- Asiwaju
Ruger
- Monalisa
Lojay, Sarz, Chris Brown
- Basquiat
Asake
- Ma Cheri
Bien



TCA Afrobtz playlist via DJ MCG

The **Adolescent Medicine Trials Network (ATN)**

& the **CHOICE Agenda** invite you to a webinar on

Research addressing HIV health inequities among US adolescents and young adults

February 15, 2024; 9am to 1030am EST

Register @ tinyurl.com/prioritizingyouth



Adolescent Medicine
Trials Network
for HIV Interventions



A large, spreading tree with a thick trunk and dense green foliage stands in a savanna landscape. The ground is covered in tall, golden-brown grass. The sky is a clear, vibrant blue with a few wispy white clouds. The entire scene is framed by a white, hand-drawn style border.

**Thank you to everyone who submitted
questions for our speakers.**



Moderators:
Kay Marshall, AVAC
Zarina Geloo, Zambia Media Cafe Convener

Speakers:
Esther Nakkazi, Uganda Media Cafe Convener
Anna Miti, Zimbabwe Media Cafe Convener

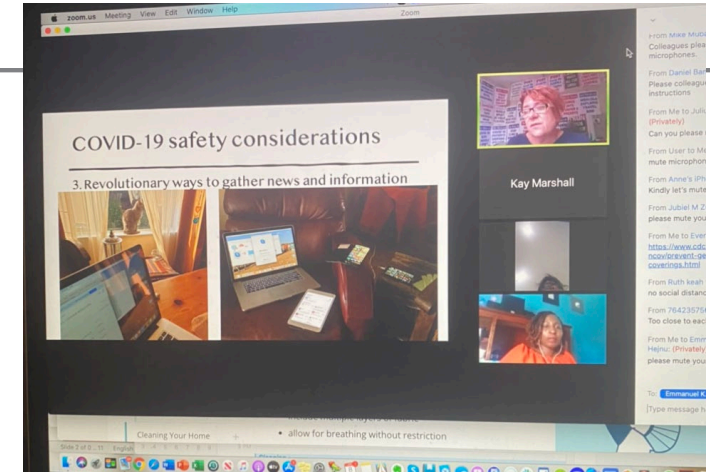
Reporting the African Science Story: Decoding scientific research to support public health in Africa

TCA Webinar
23 January 2024

What is a media science café?

- Cafés are **vibrant, journalist-led discussion spaces** that bring together journalists with scientists, implementers, advocates, policymakers and other experts to discuss timely issues.
- A decade ago, conceived as HIV prevention-focused to:
 - Build journalists’ knowledge of HIV science and the research process
 - Help journalists prepare for and understand key trial results
 - Build trust between researchers and journalists
 - Bring advocates’ voices into key HIV stories
 - Improve quality of HIV prevention coverage
 - Build capacity of local journalist associations
- 2020: Expansion to COVID science and policy, vaccine confidence, pandemic preparedness and the nexus of climate change and health
 - Café journalists well placed to take on these new important health stories.
- Learn more on [AVAC.org](https://www.avac.org) and in a Rockefeller Foundation Case [Study](#).
- Reach us at media@avac.org





Kenya: Media for Environment, Science, Health and Agriculture

Malawi: Journalists Against AIDS with The Centre for Investigative Journalism Malawi

Tanzania: Tanzania Media Women's Association

Uganda: Health Journalist Network of Uganda

Zambia: The Media Science café (MESICA)

Zimbabwe: Humanitarian Information Facilitation Centre (HIFC) and Health Communicators Forum



Why support media science cafés?

- Outreach to and sustained relationships with key journalists – ideally those linked to an existing health or science journalist association to help further amplify information – are key to helping journalists understand and explain complicated science and leads to better and more nuanced coverage of even the most complicated science stories.
- AVAC funders have invested in this program to help ensure ongoing, sustained support for accurate, nuanced science and health reporting.



HOPE FOR AN HIV VACCINE STILL ALIVE DESPITE DISSAPOINTING RESULTS IN THE IMBOKODO TRIAL.

BY KELVIN MBEWE

According to UNAIDS 2019 statist... See More



AVAC

25 Years and Counting

How do the programs work?

Localized to the media environment and needs

- **Monthly cafés:** meetings with 20-30 journalists, expert speakers – researchers and/or policymakers and always representatives from civil society – in an informal setting “under the trees,” – usually with no slides – to discuss timely topics, including HIV prevention research, COVID vaccines, cholera outbreaks, pandemic preparedness and more.
- **Cross-border cafés:** Moving to Zoom in the pandemic opened an opportunity for cross border collaborations. Online cafés with experts from café countries and beyond covering topics like how vaccines are developed, the WHO pandemic treaty and the impact of climate change on the HIV response.
- Café programs support a **cadre of science journalists** who come month after month and improve their reporting over time and develop good relationships with experts
 - Regional cafés: support for journalists out of the major cities, often in **local languages**
- **Conveners support journalists** through mentoring, checking stories, vibrant WhatsApp groups that provide information, check misinformation and provide links to experts
- Advocates and researchers come to **trust** journalists through building real relationships
- **Editors’ engagements** build support for the cafés in media houses and facilitates better reporting.

How do the programs work?

Support from AVAC and Internews

- **CASPR partner [Internews](#)** works with AVAC to support cafes through mentorship, trainings, ongoing information sharing
- AVAC team provides contacts and capacity building for conveners and strategizes with them to:
 - Track the field and help conveners make sense of the science and what's newsworthy
 - Update conveners on what's happening in the field and help refine café topics
 - Link café journalists to global experts and the AVAC partner network.
- **Regional trainings** to focus on deep dives into science and policy.
- Latest innovation: **[Translation Index](#)**: 100 HIV, COVID, vaccine and health terms in 10 languages from East and Southern Africa.

Discussion and questions...

So many great questions. Here are a few to start us off:

- How can researchers be engaged proactively to appreciate the beauty of translating their research products into news stories? How do we get the media to be interested in our research even if it is not "trending" research?
- How should media engagement be conducted in a meaning way? What is the difference between media engagement and PR?
- How do we increase the public trust and knowledge of public health? How does one deal with misinformation and disinformation in this context? Do you have any lessons to share regarding pre-bunking?
- How can we sensitize the press to the use of people-centered, non-judgmental language re: sexual health issues? How best should we sensitize the media on the terminologies they use Key Populations?