

Capability Statement: Our Partnership Network



Founded in 1995 to spur the development of preventive HIV vaccines, today AVAC is a widely respected voice in the global response to HIV/AIDS and the push for global health equity. AVAC has longstanding, trusted and durable relationships with a wide spectrum of partners—from civil society advocates to policy makers, industry to academics, product developers to program implementers, and beyond. Throughout its history, AVAC has worked to expand and strengthen the reach and influence of civil society advocates and organizations to monitor, support and help shape the HIV prevention response from research to rollout.



AVAC partners gather in New York, October 2023

AVAC's greatest strengths and assets lie in:

- Being a trusted and credible convener with a unique ability to translate the perspectives and evidence of various partners, including civil society, industry, communities, academics, scientists, funders and policy makers.
- Building and partnering with civil society coalitions to advocate for highly effective HIV prevention options, particularly in African countries at the center of the epidemic.
- Working with civil society organizations and coalitions to strengthen and expand their ability to have impact on national, regional and global epidemics through skills-building, training, and partnership.
- Nurturing and expanding the global pool of HIV prevention advocates willing to engage with the research, influence policy, watchdog decision makers, capitalize on funding and ensure community voices are heard.
- Creating synergies between advocates and communities nationally and internationally to ensure that global HIV prevention reflects community and national priorities.

AVAC's Core Pillars:



Translate: *Bridging science and community through communication.* In the world of HIV and global health equity writ large, there is often a gap between science and product development and community perspectives and voices. Bridging “language” and communication among diverse stakeholder groups is essential to ensure that user needs inform research, product development and delivery systems, and that research findings and emerging evidence are shared with communities, advocates and implementers to enable effective use.



Advocate: *Mobilizing for inclusive and impactful programs products, and policies.* We advocate for a policy environment that supports and adequately finances equitable access to HIV prevention—research, services, interventions and products with communities at the center. AVAC supports and fortifies a robust network of bold and informed advocates and coalitions to advance inclusive, effective, people-centered policies and programs.



Catalyze: Cultivating and sustaining partnerships to spur advances in HIV prevention and nimbly apply those to emerging health needs and issues. Effective coordination and balanced partnerships are key to creating a policy environment, accelerating ethical product development and advocating for equitable access to emerging health solutions. We help to shape, uplift and leverage an ecosystem of diverse and committed partners and coalitions that collectively advance HIV prevention and global health equity.

AVAC and its Partnership Network influence the lifecycle of biomedical research from early stage studies to large scale rollout and eventual impact with a strong track record of success. This model is built on community-owned, rights-based, research-literate strategies implemented by a global network of informed and engaged health advocates. AVAC has expanded its global partnerships with HIV prevention advocates and works to build a wide array of skill sets and content areas among its partner network.

AVAC's partner network is at the forefront of global health advocacy

AVAC partners with a global movement of advocates whose effective advocacy strategies, supported by the latest evidence, bring community voices, sustained attention and greater accountability to science, policy, funding, media, health services and regulatory processes. This network of partners and their strategic advocacy ensure that prevention is on national and global agendas. AVAC translates clinical research and complex science into clear, accurate, actionable information and materials that can be used to strengthen evidence-based advocacy.

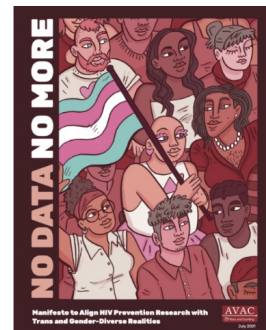
- The [Coalition to Accelerate & Support Prevention Research \(CASPR\)](#), designed by AVAC in collaboration with key partners and supported by USAID, is a set of partnerships and activities focused on accelerating biomedical HIV prevention research. The CASPR coalition is working together to change how HIV prevention is pursued and delivered. It leverages its expertise to contribute to a larger vision of integration—across HIV prevention, treatment, tuberculosis (TB), sexual and reproductive health (SRH) and global health R&D.
- The [Coalition to build Momentum, Power, Activism, Strategy & Solidarity \(COMPASS\) Africa](#) is a global civil society coalition that is changing the HIV response through high-impact advocacy campaigns led by civil society organizations representing communities most impacted by HIV. COMPASS uses data-informed, transnational activism to increase civil society's impact on HIV-related policies, budgets, programs and participatory engagement.
- The [AVAC Advocacy Fellows Program](#) fosters a network of deeply informed, skilled and confident advocates to strengthen and expand advocacy for HIV prevention locally, regionally and globally. It helps them hone their skills and strengthens their capacity to shape the agenda for HIV prevention research and influence both policy and programs. Since 2009, AVAC has provided technical and financial assistance to nearly 100 global advocates who have gone on to change policy, champion community perspectives, help strengthen healthcare systems, demystify HIV prevention research and insist on fairness and transparency locally, regionally and globally.
- AVAC's [PxROAR and CureROAR programs](#) have trained US, European and African partners in HIV cure and prevention research and implementation advocacy. The program has provided mentorship, peer support, networking opportunities, technical support and financial assistance with the goals of educating members on the science and implementation of HIV prevention and cure research and providing a platform for specific advocacy campaigns, including the elimination of structural barriers to HIV prevention.
- AVAC designed and launched an online platform for peer-to-peer resource sharing, collaborative learning and joint strategy development called [Engage](#). Engage provides a collaborative space that responds to the research literacy and advocacy capacity needs of HIV prevention advocates and other stakeholders. It includes free online courses, webinars and networking spaces.



AVAC works to center communities in global health responses

Communities' support for prevention must be earned. AVAC builds awareness and skills among researchers, funders and communities to speed the ethical development and delivery of new prevention options. AVAC partners with a robust network of bold and informed advocates to advance inclusive, effective, people-centered policies and programs.

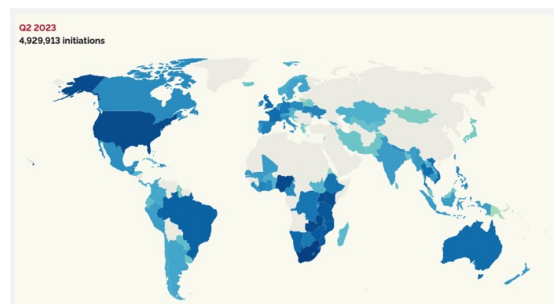
- The [Good Participatory Practice \(GPP\)](#) Guidelines, developed by AVAC and UNAIDS and adapted for use beyond HIV, provide trial funders, sponsors and implementers with systematic guidance on how to effectively engage with all stakeholders in the design and conduct of biomedical research. GPP is a linchpin to the ethical conduct of clinical trials, global health equity and pandemic preparedness.
- Trans and gender-nonconforming people are inadequately represented in HIV research and national strategic plans, though they carry disproportionate HIV risk. AVAC's TG ROAR program uses the 2021 [No Data No More: Manifesto to Align HIV Prevention Research with Trans and Gender-Diverse Realities](#) as a tool for engagement with donors and research networks and sites to fulfill the Manifesto's vision of an HIV prevention agenda for trans people.
- AVAC has facilitated Key Population peer trainings and mentorship for 100+ KP-led CSOs on governance, advocacy and strategic planning to better position them to receive KP-focused implementation funding from PEPFAR.
- AVAC helped found the Key Population-Transnational Collaboration (KP-TNC), made up of consortia in Kenya, Nigeria, Tanzania, Malawi, Mozambique and Zambia. The KP-TNC is a community of practice that strengthens KP-led and -focused advocacy for HIV prevention and treatment options and health equity through peer support and regional solidarity. AVAC is working to strengthen the KP-TNC through mentorship, facilitation and funding to support the development of a regional advocacy platform to engage with national governments and global funding mechanisms. AVAC provided trainings on data for advocacy, GFATM and PEPFAR engagement, and resource mobilization, along with mentorship for developing strategic plans and establishing operational and governance structures.
- AVAC has spent years investing in its Partnership Network in order to shift leadership roles to Global South partners. That work is paying off, with the co-creation of new Africa-led coalition governance structures and strengthening support for management of sub-granting and secretariats.



AVAC tracks and translates the field to arm advocates with information to hold leaders accountable

AVAC works with partners to maintain the field's focus and press for continued research into vaccines, other new prevention options, HIV cure and more. AVAC and its partner network generate data and hold global leaders accountable for results—demanding the resources, policies and evidence-based plans needed to deliver all of today's prevention options to the people who need them and to planning for the rapid rollout of new options as they emerge.

- AVAC's [PrEP Watch](#) is a dynamic, regularly updated clearinghouse to monitor PrEP research and rollout, explore trends in oral PrEP uptake and provide a centralized global hub for implementation resources. It includes a comprehensive database of national programs delivering oral PrEP, country guidelines and targets, and drug registration status.



Data from PrEP Watch: Q2 2023 Cumulative PrEP Initiations

- AVAC is working with partners to understand, track and ensure partner voices influence the complex and rapidly evolving landscape of [pandemic preparedness and response](#), including its structure, funding, programs and decision-making.
- [Tracking investment](#) in HIV R&D provides the field with vital information to chart the course forward. Monitoring funding trends allows the identification of promising areas where investment is needed, prioritization of research, analysis of the effects public policies have on funding trends and fact-based advocacy to support future investment in research. For 17 years, AVAC has been a part of various resource-tracking efforts—tracking funding for HIV across the research agenda.
- AVAC launched [STI Watch](#), the first online portal for information on vaccine and diagnostic development for sexually transmitted infections (STIs), which contains up-to-date information on the research and funding pipelines to support STI prevention awareness and advocacy.

AVAC works with partners to expand monitoring, evaluation and learning for global health advocacy

AVAC has developed and implemented an innovative Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) model for global health advocacy. AVAC has deep experience and field-tested MEL training modules and tools that can be adapted for use in a wide array of global health topics. AVAC works with local partners to build skills, tools and systems to incorporate MEL within their advocacy work.

- AVAC has developed collaborative, partner-centered approaches to providing MEL support, including designing an Africa-based MEL hub model for the COMPASS and CASPR projects that embeds its team members in the coalition and develops essential tools tailored to ongoing work. This includes supporting the development of MERL champions from among the COMPASS partners and embedding ownership and leadership of MEL among civil society partners.
- In collaboration with MEL partners, AVAC has built new MEL tools and systems that meet advocates' needs for tracking their work's impact, including tools to quantitatively assess advocacy wins and the SPARC method—a collaborative approach to outcome harvesting used to document and share impact stories.
- AVAC has funded the development of a MEL for advocacy handbook that centers on guiding advocates through the development and implementation of MEL systems in a user-friendly format.

Civil society activism and advocacy have effectively driven change throughout the HIV epidemic and continue to be part of a robust, ongoing movement to improve the HIV response for communities worldwide. AVAC works to expand the reach and influence of civil society partners to effectively advocate for population-appropriate services across the stakeholder landscape. AVAC uses its in-house expertise to enhance the technical skills of partners to quickly analyze and strategically act to influence the policies, budgets, service delivery approaches and social factors to improve access to HIV treatment and prevention options.

To stay updated on the state of the HIV prevention field and on AVAC programs, [sign up for our e-mail newsletters](#), follow AVAC on Twitter [@HIVpxresearch](#) and find more at [www.avac.org](#).