

*Spotlight* captures the role AVAC Advocacy Fellows continue to play in shaping the ever-evolving landscape of HIV prevention. On display are last year's achievements and the ambitious plans for this year.

## Gathering Again: Strengthening partnerships and sharing priorities

*2014 Annual Advocacy Partners' Forum: Research & Reality*



*Peter Michira at 2014 Advocacy Partners' Forum*

In February, AVAC gathered 80 colleagues from across Africa in Zimbabwe for its annual Advocacy Partners' Forum. The three-day meeting in Harare was as intensive as it was informative (and fun) while participants took stock of recent developments in HIV prevention research and implementation and charted shared actions for the coming year.

This fourth Partners' Forum, dubbed *Research & Reality*, was driven by AVAC's 2013 annual report of the same name, and revolved around the three D's: *Deliver, Demonstrate and Develop*.

> continues on page 8

## INSIDE

- Gathering Again **1**
- Meet and Greet **2**
- Remembering Taiwo **3**
- Moving Mountains **4**
- 2013 Awards **5**
- LGBT Advocacy **6**
- Trendspotting **7**
- Where Are They Now? **9**
- Best Part **10**

## CALL FOR APPLICATIONS

## 2015 AVAC Advocacy Fellowships

Read more about the program, download application materials and find an information session near you.

[www.avac.org/2015fellowships](http://www.avac.org/2015fellowships)

> more on page 12

## Meet and Greet

### *An introduction to the 2014 Advocacy Fellows*

AVAC is delighted to welcome seven 2014 Advocacy Fellows and their host organizations. They come from Kenya (2), Malawi (1), South Africa (2), Uganda (1), and Zimbabwe (1). In its fifth year, the program grows to 38 current and alumni Fellows with this new class. They're off to a great start and we look forward to all they will accomplish.



**Charles Brown**, Infectious Diseases Institute, Makerere University, Uganda

Charles has been involved in HIV research for seven years, mobilizing and recruiting for PrEP and herpes/HIV studies. As an Advocacy Fellow, he is helping facilitate the policy and community acceptance necessary for introduction of PrEP in Uganda. Specifically, he is advocating for the development of guidelines for tenofovir-based PrEP rollout; he is working with serodiscordant couples to amplify their perspectives on and demand for PrEP; and he is documenting the decision-making process leading to the introduction of PrEP in Uganda, using the findings from a series of interviews with policy makers and advocates to develop recommendations.



**Khanyisa Dunjwa**, Networking HIV/AIDS Community of South Africa

Khanyisa is an HIV and sexual and reproductive health advocate from South Africa's Eastern Cape, and she is a member of SANAC's (South African National AIDS Council) Women and NGO sectors. As an Advocacy Fellow she is advocating for safe traditional male circumcision—the integration of voluntary medical male circumcision into the customary practice. She will achieve this by supporting the revision of the Ministry of Health's VMMC guidelines to take into account the different approaches necessary in different medical, cultural and religious settings, and by fostering popular support, particularly with mothers, for an alternative to traditional circumcision in the Eastern Cape. Additionally, she is

working with media and civil society groups to help differentiate the WHO-prequalified PrePex device from the unproven Tara Klamp.



**Eric Mcheka**, National Association for People Living with HIV/AIDS in Malawi

Eric has 12 years experience in HIV development and communications. His AVAC Fellowship focuses on the acceleration of VMMC rollout and uptake in Malawi, which has begun to scale up its VMMC program in recent years—later than some other countries, which have already made significant progress to meet VMMC targets. Specifically, Eric is advocating for VMMC as a priority in Malawi's National Strategic Plan; he is enhancing civil society engagement in VMMC by working with existing coalitions; he is advocating for increased national financial resources via PEPFAR and Global Fund; and, lastly, he is promoting the revision of the number of national targeted circumcisions to a lower and more realistic goal than that set in 2007.



**Definate Nhamo**, Pangaea Zimbabwe AIDS Trust

Definate is a social science researcher with a concentration in adolescent sexual and reproductive health (SRH). Her AVAC Fellowship focuses on increased access to integrated SRH and HIV services and preparations for future prevention options for young women in Zimbabwe. Specifically, she is advocating for national policies broadening Zimbabwe's contraceptive method mix and pave the way for microbicide, PrEP and multi-prevention technologies for women. She is also working to strengthen a coalition of adolescents to inform policy, research and other young women. Her work builds on a decade of experience with the SHAZ! (Shaping the Health of Adolescents in Zimbabwe) Project.



**Everlyne Ombati**, Kenya Medical Research Institute

Everlyne has expertise navigating Kenya's regulatory systems and a background in medical microbiology. For her AVAC Fellowship, she

is advocating for policy and regulatory preparation for vaginal microbicides and multi-prevention technologies (MPTs) for women. Specifically, she is preparing women for the forthcoming microbicide efficacy trial results and sensitizing regulators about the early-phase MPT research. She is also increasing involvement of civil society groups focused on women's health in the processes related to moving a product from positive trial result to eventual piloting and introduction.



**Teresia Njoki Otieno**, African Gender and Media Initiative, Kenya

Teresia is a long-time champion of sexual and reproductive health rights for women living with HIV and the newly elected Global Chair for the International Community of Women Living with HIV. As an Advocacy Fellow, she is advocating for the scale-up of PrEP in Kenya and helping amplify women's voices with respect to the uncertainty regarding some hormonal contraceptives' impact on HIV risk. She is developing a coalition of women advocating for the inclusion of PrEP for serodiscordant couples in the Kenya National Strategic Plan IV.



**Yvette Raphael**, Johns Hopkins Health and Education in South Africa

Yvette is a human rights activist with an emphasis on people living with HIV and LGBT communities. Her AVAC Fellowship will focus on preparation for the forthcoming microbicide gel trial and vaginal ring results as well as the introduction of PrEP. She is concentrating on building a cohort of young women advocates in the Mpumalanga district as champions of prevention options, using the ZAZI campaign as the platform. She is also developing materials and advocacy tools as part of her advocacy campaigns on biomedical HIV prevention. She is working with various South African National AIDS Council (SANAC) sectors to ensure a cohesive national plan for the support of female-initiated options. Yvette is also spreading the word on prevention for women through social media, where she has a following of over 10,000 fans. ●

## Remembering Taiwo



**Oladayo "Taiwo" Oyelakin:** Young man, newly-wed, son, activist, 2013 AVAC Fellow lauded for generously working to better the lives of HIV-positive pregnant women and youth.

Taiwo died tragically in a road accident in Lagos on 17 April at the age of 30. His loss is a great blow to the AVAC community and to all those whose lives he touched through his kind spirit and easy way. He was a dogged overachiever with big ambitions (see *Moving Mountains*, page 4). In his youthfulness, he explored it all: One day he dreamed of a career as a photojournalist, the next day he would become a politician. His minor setbacks were taken with a dash of humor, like when Nigeria Airways maddeningly prevented him—twice!—from getting to his destination. At times, Taiwo let his work get in the way of his own health, and he required prodding to take time off to visit the doctor. In sum, Taiwo was a selfless and endearing man who will continue to bring a smile to those of us who knew him.

In Taiwo's memory, AVAC will launch an annual 'Taiwo Oyelakin' webinar series focusing on HIV prevention and treatment for African youth. The first in this series is a status update on Option B+ rollout and women's engagement—the primary project of Taiwo's Fellowship. For information on the upcoming webinar series, go to [www.avac.org/oladayo-taiwo-oyelakin](http://www.avac.org/oladayo-taiwo-oyelakin). ●

## Moving Mountains

### 2013 Advocacy Fellows' accomplishments

**Josephine Kamarebe** used her Fellowship to advocate for the implementation of PrEP in Rwanda. She methodically identified and reached out to key decision makers including Ministry of Health, UNAIDS, the media and civil society. While Rwanda moved slower than its neighbors implementing PrEP-demonstration projects, Josephine organized civil society pressure to catalyze action. She worked with her supervisor Cassien Havugimana at Health Development Initiative (HDI) to secure a government commitment to PrEP rollout once WHO updates its 2012 *Guidance on oral pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) for serodiscordant couples, men and transgender women who have sex with men at high risk of HIV: Recommendations for use in the context of demonstration projects*.

**Cai Lingping**, the first AVAC Advocacy Fellow in China, introduced Good Participatory Practice Guidelines to a research culture unfamiliar with community engagement. Against all odds, PrEP stakeholders hewed to the idea of community education and ownership. Cai worked with her supervisor Professor Ruotao Wang at the China HIV/



Cai Lingping (second from left) at AVAC/CHAIN HIV Vaccine Awareness Day event in Beijing

AIDS Information Network (CHAIN). Using their far-reaching connections to the gay community, they were also able to reach tens of thousands of gay men to survey and teach about PrEP. By her Fellowship's end, Cai had a commitment from the National Center for AIDS/STD Prevention Control within the Chinese Center for Disease Control and Prevention for her assistance with the implementation of GPP in current and planned PrEP trials in China.

**Rumbidzai "Rumbi" Mapfumo** entered her Fellowship with relatively little experience in advocacy and finished as a seasoned advocate leading sex workers and advising government ministries. She convinced Zimbabwe's

Ministers of Justice and Health of the importance of safe, accessible and respectful HIV treatment and prevention services for sex workers. She catalyzed a government-civil society collaboration to draft the *National Guidelines for Implementation of HIV Prevention Programs for Female Sex Workers in Zimbabwe*, with an emphasis on treatment as prevention, to be released this year. Rumbi informed these Guidelines, bringing voices from the sex worker coalition she helped build through her host organization Center for Sexual Health & HIV/AIDS Research (CeSHHAR) and United Nations Population Fund. She achieved her goals in spite of the closing down of parliament after elections, new repressive laws, and her detention by the police for calling a meeting without government consent. Her Fellowship culminated in a closed meeting with high-ranking government officials including President Robert Mugabe!

As part of the Partners PrEP study team in Kenya, **Peter Michira's** Fellowship bridged the divide between research and advocacy. People outside the study setting needed to know what the trials had revealed—that PrEP worked to reduce HIV risk. He spent the year fostering a favorable environment particularly for those who would benefit most—gay men and other men who have sex with men, sex workers and serodiscordant couples. He brought together civil society partners to understand the status of PrEP in Kenya, engaged media to help create demand for PrEP and developed simple, accessible messages including *Take PrEP, choose safer sex; Life is good with PrEP; and Ask me about PrEP for HIV*.

**Maureen Milanga**, the go-to Global Fund, PEPFAR and treatment access expert built on the success of previous Kenyan Fellows. Using 2012 Fellows' *The Kenya People Living with HIV Manifesto* as a springboard, Maureen successfully mobilized civil society and policy makers alike to understand and adopt treatment as prevention. Specifically, she and her host AIDS Law Project (ALP) pushed PEPFAR to support Option B+ rollout, helped win her country's commitment to adopt WHO's new Consolidated guidelines on treatment and prevention and to align its National Strategic Plan with the goals of PEPFAR and the Global Fund. She also helped secure three years of fully-funded viral load testing. A key achievement was her meeting with the US Congress to ask for more money for PEPFAR. Since the ending of her Fellowship, Maureen carries forward her work at ALP in collaboration with Health GAP.

## 2013 AVAC Advocacy Fellow Awards



2013 Fellows (with AVAC Fellows team). From left to right, with awards: Taiwo Oyelakin; Maureen Milanga; Ntando Yola; Cindra Feuer accepting for Cai Lingping; Rumbi Mapfumo; Cassien Havugimana accepting for Josephine Kamarebe; Peter Michira

AVAC honored 2013 Fellow achievements, victories and unique contributions. The celebration was held in February at the 2014 AVAC Partners' Forum in Harare, Zimbabwe.

- The **“We Can All Be Sex Workers, Mr. President” Award** to Rumbidzai “Rumbi” Mapfumo for transforming the face of what fighting for the rights of sex workers looks like, for her relentless spirit, her charm and those fabulous shoes.
- The **Poise, Power and Perfection Award** to Maureen Milanga for excellence in moving complicated processes

**Oladayo “Taiwo” Oyelakin** was the first AVAC Fellow in Nigeria. Through persistent presence at the National Prevention Technical Working Group, he was eventually invited to officially join. He used this platform to share perspectives and recommendations of young pregnant women living with HIV to inform Option B+ policy. These recommendations will be included in Nigeria’s forthcoming National Strategic Plan. During his Fellowship, Taiwo was tapped for a new job at the Network of People Living with HIV. PATA (Positive Action for Treatment Action), his host organization, continues his legacy of amplifying community voices at the national level. (See *Remembering Taiwo*, page 3.)

**Ntando Yola** has many years of experience in community engagement for HIV prevention trials. During his Fellowship he applied these skills, engaging a broad array

and discussions forward, for maintaining calm in the face of change, and for achieving everything—and more—that she puts her mind to.

- The **Break the Door Down Award** to Oladayo “Taiwo” Oyelakin for refusing to be shut out of the national prevention processes, for amplifying the voices of young, pregnant, HIV-positive women, and for “this and this and that and that.”
- The **Being PrEPared for Change Award** to Peter Michira for transforming from researcher to advocate, for not being afraid to learn lessons and change himself and others, and for going through a prevention revolution of his own.
- The **Putting the G in GPP Award** to Ntando Yola for braving to change the way Good research is conducted, for making himself a Guy to reckon with and his Genuineness around challenges of moving from researcher to advocate.
- The **Fearless Pioneer Award** to Cai Lingping for her bravery in challenging China’s lack of community engagement in PrEP research, for being the first Asian Fellow and for her unrivaled Gangnam Style dancing.
- The **Watch Out for the Quiet Ones Award** to Josephine Kamarebe for her strategic moves—even in her tranquility, for bringing a fantastic partner organization into the network, and a new baby Fellow into the program. ●

of stakeholders to support Good Participatory Practices (GPP) in research. While hosted at the Networking HIV/AIDS Community of South Africa (NACOSA), he succeeded in securing buy-in from key research entities and governing bodies including the Medical Research Council of South Africa, the Medicines Control Council and the Department of Health. Additionally, he worked with advocates and community advisory boards at the district and provincial levels to develop a cohesive South African framework for community engagement. Ntando is back at his previous organization, the Desmond Tutu HIV Foundation, building on this work to ensure GPP is adopted throughout South Africa, home to robust, state-of-the-art HIV prevention research.

For videos of 2013 Fellow project summaries, go to [www.avac.org/2013\\_wrap\\_up\\_videos](http://www.avac.org/2013_wrap_up_videos). ●

## Advocating at the Crossroads

### *The assault on LGBT people undermines HIV prevention and care*

As the year unfolds, there have been serious developments increasing repression of LGBT and HIV-positive people in many African countries and around the world. In January, Nigeria instated a new, more restrictive ban on same-sex relations, known as the Same Sex Marriage Prohibition Act. Following suit, the trumped up Uganda Anti-Homosexuality Act was passed in February.

These new laws are in violation of human rights and also defeat public health by driving gay men and other men who have sex with men (MSM) underground, further alienating them from HIV services. Moreover, the deepening criminalization of MSM threatens HIV prevention research. Such is the case of the Makerere University Walter Reed Project (MUWRP) in Uganda that was temporarily shuttered after a police raid. As a result, its MSM prevention research was discontinued and fewer HIV services are now available to MSM.

Uganda's tougher anti-gay legislation is part of a progressively repressive, stigmatizing environment. In May the country's parliament passed the HIV Prevention and Management Bill. The innocuous sounding bill actually criminalizes the transmission of HIV and violates confidentiality by allowing medical providers to disclose a patient's HIV status. Even before the bill's passage, an HIV-positive nurse was sentenced to prison for allegedly trying to infect her patient with HIV. Ugandans await the decision of President Museveni to sign the bill.

Below, *Spotlight* profiles two alumni Fellows working at the crossroads of HIV and the rights of sexual minorities to create an environment free from stigma, violence, or criminal prosecution.



**Brian Kanyemba**, Desmond Tutu HIV Foundation (DTHF), South Africa, 2011 Fellow

Brian continues his work as a research assistant on HIV biomedical prevention studies at the DTHF but since his Fellowship he has also become a leading national LGBT advocate. In 2012 he

was chosen to be the National Coordinator of the LGBT Community for the South African National AIDS Council (SANAC). Through this position that same year, he was appointed Civil Society Representative to the Global Fund for AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria, where he assesses how well recipient LGBT organizations serve the community.

Brian has learned that promoting HIV combination prevention in Africa is synonymous with addressing human rights. Even in South Africa, where sexual orientation is constitutionally protected, he says "gay men are [still] being killed and beaten." In the recent presidential elections, one religious party called for the removal of the structures that protect and "promote homosexuals." Brian adds, "If you're talking about HIV prevention without addressing these issues [LGBT people] are dealing with, it's not going to work."

He is concerned that other East African countries might enact laws similar to the ones put in place in Uganda. He points to recent threats by the Tanzanian government to withdraw the registration of the Sisi Kwa Sisi Foundation, an LGBT youth organization. And the halting of MSM research at the MUWRP site in Uganda has him on edge: "I'm worried these issues will affect our own studies," he says about the groundbreaking research at DTHF.

DTHF is home to Africa's first rectal microbicide study. The phase II tenofovir gel trial is enrolling gay men and transgender women in Cape Town. Brian leads its community engagement and retention activities.



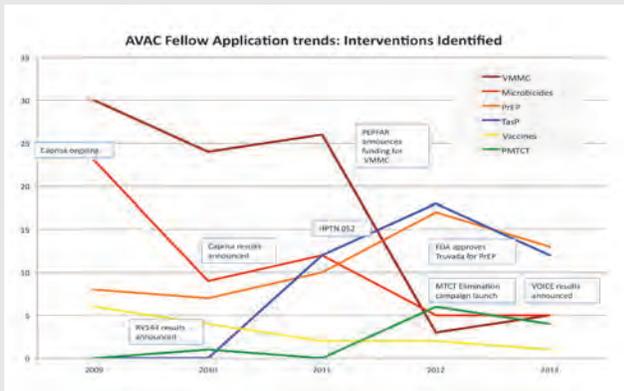
**Gift Trapence**, Center for the Development of People (CEDEP), Malawi, 2010 Fellow

Gift was a Fellow in 2010 when

his offices at CEDEP were raided by police and he was forced into hiding for his economic and social justice activism. Flash-forward to 2014: now he develops policy for the United Nations Development Programme on key populations; he is a representative on Malawi's Community Coordinating Mechanism for the Global Fund; and he heads CEDEP, conducting epidemiologic research on gay men, funded by Malawi's own National AIDS Commission. Furthermore, the government finances his organization to provide comprehensive prevention to gay men and other men who have sex with men and they

## Trendspotting:

*How do the Fellowship program applicants determine their area of interest?*



AVAC recently carried out an in-depth analysis of five years of Fellows' applications to better understand possible reasons for their chosen advocacy focal areas. Not surprisingly, in many cases trends show a close correlation between applicants' area of focus and events in the HIV prevention field, like the release of efficacy trial results. While it's important to track and respond to emerging and timely issues, it's just as necessary to advocate on behalf of other areas of research. For example, vaccine research requires vigilant advocacy over the long trajectory even when there are no ongoing, late-stage clinical trials.

Since 2009, AVAC has received 284 eligible applications out of a total of 400. Here's what we uncovered and what we speculate to be the reasons:

### VMMC

Eighty percent of the 91 VMMC-focused applications were submitted between 2009–2011. This occurred as countries ramped up and PEPFAR increased funding for VMMC programs to reach the targets announced in 2012.

### Microbicides

Out of a total of 58 microbicide-focused applications, 23 were received in 2009 and only 9 in 2010, soon after CAPRISA 004 results were announced when there was confusion about what happens next.

### PrEP

PrEP was identified in 57 applications with a surge in 2012 after the US FDA approved Truvada for PrEP.

### TasP

Treatment as Prevention was identified in 41 applications, all of which were received from 2011–2012 after the HPTN 052 clinical trial results were announced, showing viral suppression with antiretrovirals to be highly protective against HIV.

### Vaccines

Applications with a vaccine focus were highest in 2009 just after the RV144 vaccine trial showed positive results. ●

receive USAID monies for condom and lubricant scale-up. On the horizon are plans to expand gay men and MSM outreach, continue HIV incidence research and implement PrEP acceptability and pilot studies in this population in collaboration with Johns Hopkins University.

So while the climate trends toward further criminalization of LGBTs across Africa, how has Gift managed to help Malawi (and himself) veer from this course? "I take the multi-sectorial approach, creating allies and synergies where possible with different sectors: HIV, human rights, media, government officials, religious leaders," he says. "I receive a lot of encouragement and support from them."

Gift employs twin tactics in his advocacy, messaging the LGBT struggle through public health and human rights frameworks. "We have HIV policies recognizing individuals. We convince politicians that these rights extend to LGBTs and as a result improve public health,"

he says. This is where his high-placed allies come in, helping to convey the messages in whatever language is understood.

Gift explains the recent spate of homophobia in Africa as an easy political deterrent from entrenched issues of corruption, poverty, and abuse of the electoral process, such as the case in Uganda. But he himself is not deterred. "I learned from AVAC to use data to back up my advocacy." He points to the high HIV incidence rates in gay men to make his case that without addressing this, neither Malawi, nor Africa, will defeat AIDS.

To access an open letter from public health clinicians, researchers, and academics regarding Uganda's Anti-Homosexuality Bill, go to [www.avac.org/ugandan\\_open\\_letter](http://www.avac.org/ugandan_open_letter). For guidelines to support LGBT rights in Uganda, go to [www.ugandans4rights.org](http://www.ugandans4rights.org). ●

## Gathering Again *continued from page 1*



2014 AVAC Partners' Forum panelists, from left to right: Margaret Happy; Dr. Mike Chirenge; Sethembiso Mthembu; Teresia Otieno

Participants discussed how best to deliver what we have today, including voluntary medical male circumcision and treatment as prevention scale-up to achieve virologic suppression. Key to delivery is finding how best to work within the Global Fund and PEPFAR processes to expand prevention, specifically targeting groups at highest risk, including gay men, sex workers and young women.

Meeting participants also strategized how best to move PrEP and new non-surgical circumcision devices (such as PrePex and Shang Ring) through demonstration projects and ensure policy for timely rollout.

And finally, detailed discussions took place on the development of an AIDS vaccine, an HIV cure and scenario planning for the forthcoming results of the vaginal microbicide trials—the confirmatory tenofovir microbicide gel study and the two vaginal ring studies. In addition, the proposed trial to explore hormonal contraceptive and potential risk of HIV acquisition was prioritized, representing an expanded area of focus for AVAC and our partners.

Download 2014 Partners' Forum recommendations at [www.avac.org/pf2014/what\\_we\\_heard](http://www.avac.org/pf2014/what_we_heard).

Blog entries from the Partners Forum at [www.avac.org/blog/avac-partner-forum](http://www.avac.org/blog/avac-partner-forum) and [www.avac.org/blog/good-morning](http://www.avac.org/blog/good-morning).

For an in-depth view of topics discussed at the Partners' Forum, check out Research & Reality, a year-long webinar series on the array of timely biomedical prevention advocacy issues at [www.avac.org/research-reality](http://www.avac.org/research-reality).

### *Fellows Wrap-up & Orientation Workshop 2014*

The two-day workshop was a wrap-up for the 2013 Fellowship year and orientation for the 2014 Fellows and their host organizations. The meeting book-ended the Partners' Forum, taking place the day before and the day after. Needless to say, it was an arduous yet rewarding week for the incoming and outgoing Advocacy Fellows.

The intimate workshop of Fellows and host supervisors was an opportunity for prevention advocacy capacity building and to welcome and introduce new Fellows to the Fellowship program and AVAC culture. It was also a valuable space where veteran 2013 Fellows showcased their year's work (see *Moving Mountains*, page 4) and built ties with new Fellows. On the last day of the Workshop—post-Partners' Forum—the 2014 Fellows revisited their work plans to incorporate the new ideas and strategies heard throughout the week.

Read AVAC's Advocacy Fellow Workshop blog post at [www.avac.org/blog/fellows-2014-workshop](http://www.avac.org/blog/fellows-2014-workshop). •

## Where Are They Now?

*Catching up with alumni Advocacy Fellows*



**Clever Chilende**, Treatment and Advocacy Literacy Campaign (TALC), Zambia, 2012 Fellow

Clever ticks off a list of advocacy wins since his 2012 Fellowship: Zambia aligned its treatment guidelines with the World Health Organization to initiate treatment at a CD4 count of 500—though the original demand was to treat all those testing positive,

regardless of health status; everyone on treatment undergoes viral load testing at least once a year; and the Ministry of Health has committed to improve its HIV services to the elderly, disabled and children. The work, he says, was done in alliance with the Zambia HIV Prevention Coalition he helped form as an Advocacy Fellow.

Living up to his name, Clever performed fancy footwork in his country as a 2013 Global Lube Access Mobilization (GLAM) grantee, advocating for safe, condom-compatible

lubricants (or lube). He portrays the subject of lube as a sexual issue pertaining to all, specifically to women and sex workers. “When you’re talking about lubricants, you’re not talking about men who have sex with men; you’re talking about additional protection against HIV,” he reasons. And it worked. Lube access made it into Zambia’s National Strategic Plan with a funding request to PEPFAR in the Country Operational Plan.

In March, Clever was appointed M&E Officer at TALC, where he ensures community input in to the national HIV agenda, and PEPFAR and Global Fund processes. Not bad for a former banker!



*Clever Chilende attending 2014 Advocacy Partners' Forum*



**Nomfundo “Nono” Eland**, Emthonjeni Consultants, South Africa, 2010 Fellow

Nono was elected Chairperson of the Women’s Sector of South

African National AIDS Council (SANAC) during her AVAC Fellowship. The nomination was based on her work at the Treatment Action Campaign (TAC) where she was the National Coordinator for the Women’s Rights Campaign. The most important work in HIV in South Africa is around women—just look at the statistics, she says. South African women make up more than half of the country’s 6.1 million people living with HIV. Nono has been nominated to lead the Women’s Sector for another five years, continuing the struggle as HIV rates linked to gender based violence (GBV) are on the rise.

Every two years Nono helps SANAC organize a Women’s Summit to inform the National Strategic Plan. She rattles off three of the latest priorities. First, there’s a need to revitalize advocacy around microbicides. “The vibrancy that was there is slowly vanishing,” she says. Second, the increase in GBV must be addressed. She speculates that incidence is up because of better reporting but also because support systems for women are losing funding. Third, SANAC’s Women and Men’s sectors must start to work together.

After leaving TAC in 2011, Nono founded and directs her own organization, Emthonjeni Consultants, where she continues her focus on women and HIV advocacy. *Emthonjeni* is an Nguni word for well. It’s not just a place to get water, but rather a place where women congregate and mentor one another, far away from men. Her year with AVAC helped pave the way for this work. “It really opened doors in terms of working closely with researchers, learning to interpret the science and giving us credibility,” she says.

In the immediate future, Nono will stay home with her second baby—another boy! As a feminist, she admits she has her work cut out for her. ●

## The Best Part of Being a Fellow

- > **Jacqueline Wambui Mwangi:** “That one gets to network with many stakeholders during the annual Partners’ Forum. I learned a lot from the various people I met and we exchanged numerous ideas to further our work in the HIV research field. And of course, meeting fellow Fellows and discussing our fellowships was very ideal.”



- < **Ntando Yola:** “Going in and becoming overwhelmed by what you get yourself into. Looking back there’s no door to go out; the only way is forward. You then realize these people see potential in you and they hold your hand towards bringing about change you never imagined yourself capable of.”

- > **Maureen Milanga:** “Looking back and seeing what 12 months of targeted advocacy can do in different countries.”

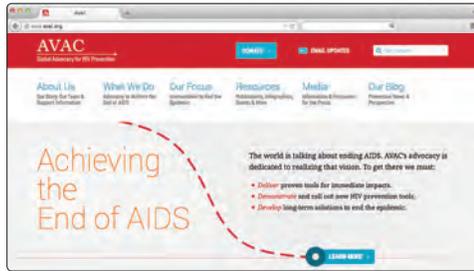


## AVAC Resources

### > WEBSITE

[www.avac.org](http://www.avac.org)

For the latest updates in HIV prevention, visit the **AVAC website**. It includes our publications as well as comprehensive coverage of the full range of biomedical HIV prevention interventions in an easy-to-use format that is searchable by intervention and by topic.



### > PUBLICATIONS

[www.avac.org/publications](http://www.avac.org/publications)

**AVAC publications** aim to translate the complex issues of biomedical HIV prevention research for a range of audiences. We have materials that explain current scientific issues in simple language and other documents that explore the issues of trial participants and affected communities.

### > DATABASES

**Biomedical HIV prevention clinical trials, products and sites**

[www.avac.org/pxrd](http://www.avac.org/pxrd)

**Research literacy resources for understanding prevention research**

[www.avac.org/researchliteracy](http://www.avac.org/researchliteracy)

### > MAILING LISTS

[www.avac.org/subscribe](http://www.avac.org/subscribe)

The **Advocates' Network** is an electronic network for anyone interested in receiving timely updates about developments in the biomedical HIV prevention field.

**P-Values** is AVAC's monthly bulletin highlighting advocacy work by our partners and stakeholders around the world.

The **Weekly NewsDigest** is a compilation of media coverage, published research, policy news and materials on HIV prevention options.

## About AVAC

Founded in 1995, AVAC is an international non-profit organization that uses education, policy analysis, advocacy and community mobilization to accelerate the ethical development and global delivery of biomedical HIV prevention options as part of a comprehensive response to the pandemic. AVAC is dedicated to:

- Translating complex scientific ideas to communities and translating community needs and perceptions to the scientific community.
- Managing expectations about the process of product research and development, testing and delivery.
- Holding agencies accountable for accelerating ethical research, development and delivery of HIV prevention options.
- Expanding international partnerships to ensure local relevance and a global movement.
- Ensuring that policy and advocacy are based on evidence.
- Convening coalitions, partnerships, working groups and think tanks for specific issues.
- Developing and widely disseminating high-quality user-friendly materials.

AVAC focuses in four priority areas:

- Develop and advocate for policy options to facilitate the implementation of available biomedical HIV prevention options as well as the expeditious and ethical development and evaluation of new ones.
- Ensure that rights and interests of trial participants, eventual users and communities are fully represented and respected in the scientific, product development, clinical trial and access processes.
- Monitor HIV prevention research and development and mobilize political, financial and community support for sustained research as part of a comprehensive response.
- Build an informed, action-oriented global coalition of civil society and community-based organizations that exchange information and experiences.

For more information on AVAC's work and how to support it, please visit [www.avac.org](http://www.avac.org).



423 West 127th Street  
4th floor  
New York, NY 10027  
USA

T +1 212 796 6423  
F +1 646 365 3452  
E [avac@avac.org](mailto:avac@avac.org)  
W [www.avac.org](http://www.avac.org)



[www.facebook.com/hivpxresearch](http://www.facebook.com/hivpxresearch)



[www.twitter.com/hivpxresearch](http://www.twitter.com/hivpxresearch)



[www.youtube.com/hivpxresearch](http://www.youtube.com/hivpxresearch)

## About the Advocacy Fellowship

The HIV Prevention Advocacy Fellowship pairs emerging leaders in advocacy and activism with existing organizations to develop and execute creative, context-specific projects focused on HIV prevention research and implementation.

Fellowship projects focus primarily on advocacy around biomedical HIV prevention research (such as clinical trials of vaccines and microbicides) or rollout of male circumcision for HIV prevention, ARV treatment as prevention strategies and pre-exposure prophylaxis.

The Fellowship is a program for emerging and mid-career advocates in developing countries interested in effecting change on issues related to biomedical HIV prevention research and implementation. It is designed to strengthen the capacity of individuals and organisations interested in working in this area. The program provides financial and technical support for selected Advocacy Fellows.

The 2014 Fellows are currently implementing their advocacy projects. To track their progress, please visit [www.avac.org/fellows](http://www.avac.org/fellows). •

### CALL FOR APPLICATIONS FOR

## 2015 AVAC ADVOCACY FELLOWSHIPS

Have you been working in the HIV/AIDS or related field for a few years and looking for an opportunity to build your advocacy skills in the exciting world of HIV prevention research and implementation?

Is your organisation looking to get more involved in HIV prevention research and implementation advocacy? Is your organisation considering hosting an AVAC Advocacy Fellow in 2015?

### LEARN MORE ABOUT THE 2015 ADVOCACY FELLOWSHIP

- Read more about the program
- Download application materials
- Find a 2015 Fellowship information session near you  
[www.avac.org/2015fellowsapps](http://www.avac.org/2015fellowsapps)



*2013 & 2014 Fellows, their Host Supervisors and AVAC staff during the 2013 close-out and 2014 orientation workshop in Harare, February 2014*

**DEADLINE TO APPLY – AUGUST 4, 2014**

Questions? Write to [fellows@avac.org](mailto:fellows@avac.org)