

ADVOCATE, TRANSLATE, CATALYZE

FOR HIV PREVENTION AND HEALTH EQUITY



DECEMBER 2021

STRATEGIC PLAN

2022
2026

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This strategy was developed through a consultative process with AVAC's staff, Board, partners and donors, with the support and guidance of Global Health Visions. We would like to recognize and thank the AVAC team, Board of Directors and partners for generously contributing their time, expertise and insights in support of the development of this strategy.

INTRODUCTION

Founded 25 years ago to spur the development of preventive HIV vaccines, AVAC has grown to become a leading and widely respected voice in the global response to HIV/AIDS. The organization has established trusted, influential, and durable relationships with a wide spectrum of stakeholders—from policy makers to civil society advocates, industry to academics, product developers to program implementers, and beyond. AVAC has expanded its approach to include accelerating the development and introduction of a wide arrange of HIV prevention options as well as related research areas including TB and COVID-19, underscoring the need for a comprehensive, integrated, and sustained agenda to refine the pathway from product development to user and, ultimately, to help end the epidemic.

AVAC is increasingly viewed as an indispensable and credible source for information and plays an invaluable role in translating complex science so that it is accessible to advocates, communities, the media, and decision makers. In parallel, AVAC plays an instrumental role in elevating and amplifying community perspectives among scientists, industry leaders, policy makers and the media to ensure that innovative, user-centered prevention options are developed ethically and delivered expeditiously and equitably.

Recognizing and building on the organization's strengths, AVAC is poised to deepen engagement at the global level and simultaneously work in service of country needs while strengthening the capacity of advocates and institutions. As such, AVAC will advance ethical development of and equitable access to innovative HIV prevention and related pandemic response options, while leveraging these practices to contribute more broadly to global health equity.

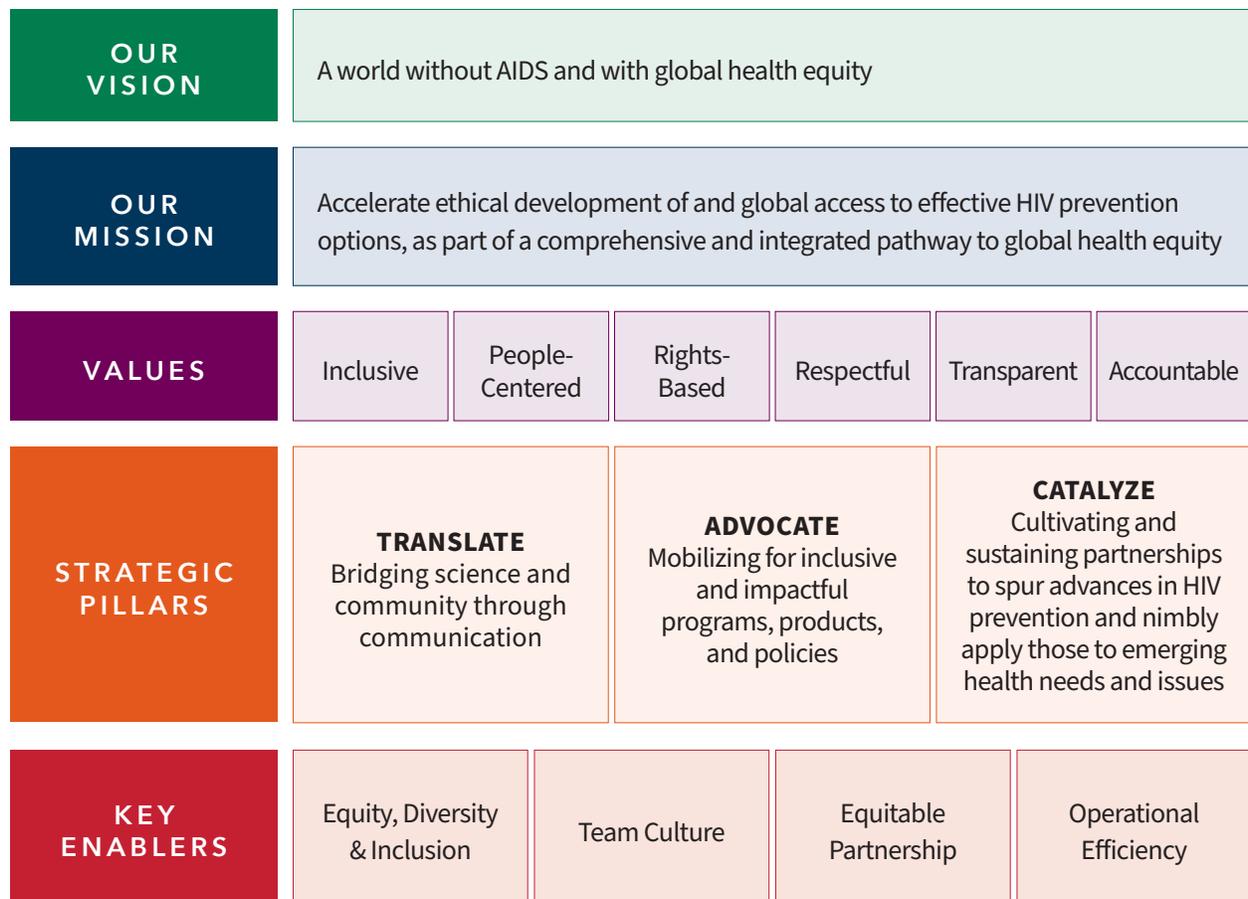
AVAC's greatest strengths and assets lie in:

- Being a trusted and credible convener with a unique ability to translate the perspectives and evidence of a diverse range of partners, including scientists, civil society, industry, communities, academics, and policy makers alike.
- Accelerating the development, global delivery, equitable access, and uptake of innovative products for HIV prevention among the populations and communities that need them most.
- Leveraging 25 years of expertise in HIV advocacy, research engagement, and evidence translation to advance integrated solutions to other related issues focused on advancing global health equity, including sexual and reproductive health rights, tuberculosis, and pandemic preparedness and response.
- Flexibly and swiftly responding to evolving developments in HIV prevention and the broader global health landscape to promote global health equity and security.



STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK

AVAC’s strategic framework is grounded in a multi-layered approach that carefully considers all of the components needed to achieve the organization’s vision, capitalize on its key strengths, and ensure that AVAC is poised to make an impact on the issues it cares most about over the next five years, and beyond. The vision describes the world we are striving for. The mission describes what AVAC does in service to achieving this vision. The strategic pillars outline the objectives and approaches that AVAC will take over the next five years to achieve its mission and vision. The strategic pillars are supported by AVAC’s core values—the principles by which we work—as well as a set of key enablers.



OUR VISION

A world without AIDS and with global health equity

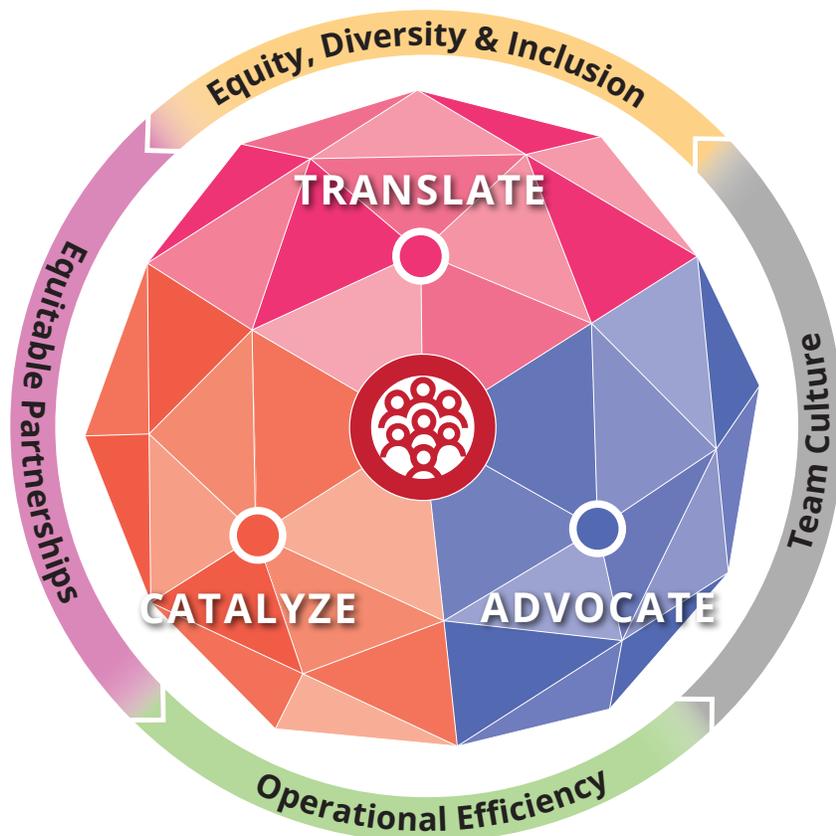
OUR MISSION

Accelerate ethical development of and global access to effective HIV prevention options, as part of a comprehensive and integrated pathway to global health equity.

VALUE STATEMENTS

We employ these values across all of the work that we do, as described in the following in the following:

- We promote **equity, solidarity, and inclusion** by working directly with affected communities and breaking down complex concepts and barriers to information and services.
- We **put people and communities at the center** of the work we do, integrating sexual and reproductive health and rights, harm reduction, and HIV prevention.
- We ensure that products and programs are ethically designed and delivered to advance **rights-based** and **equitable** access to comprehensive, user-centered quality care.
- We cultivate balanced partnerships grounded in **respect** and **transparency** through bi-directional learning, capacity-building, and priority setting.
- We are **accountable** to the individuals and organizations influencing how research and roll-out are conducted and to the communities that most need access to products, services, and programs.



KEY ENABLERS

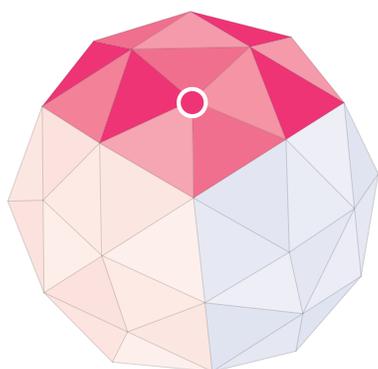
The key enablers are the internal and external structures and priorities that set AVAC up for success in the work we do.

- **Equity, diversity, and inclusion:** We are committed to coming together to interrogate our own privilege and power and to listening, responding, and learning to be the best possible ally and partner. And we commit to redoubling our work of advocating for equity, diversity, and social justice as we continue to seek solutions to HIV and global health equity more broadly.
- **Equitable partnerships:** Partnerships are the cornerstone of AVAC’s work, and supporting a strong ecosystem of partners is critical to amplify our collective impact. We believe that equitable partnerships are based on solidarity, respect, transparent communication, and power sharing. We strive to transition away from traditional power structures and towards a model in which those with lived experience and field expertise have influence and an equal voice in the design of plans and priorities.
- **Team culture:** Fostering a team culture based on respect, inclusion, collaboration, transparency, and a commitment to continual learning and investing in development and advancement opportunities for staff is critical to maintaining a committed team and a nurturing environment to deliver results. AVAC’s core values must be embodied internally in order for them to be upheld in our partnerships and broader work.
- **Operational efficiency:** How we work is as critical to our success as what we do. To accomplish the ambitious goals of this five-year strategy, AVAC will continue to responsibly utilize resources and will update our systems, structures, policies, and processes to streamline efficiencies and support our staff, Board, and partners to do their best work. We will do this by evolving how we work and how we work together, how we make and act on our decisions, how we measure progress, how we utilize Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) data and feedback for decision-making, iteration, and to hold ourselves accountable, and how we build for equity, diversity, inclusion, and sustainability.

STRATEGIC PILLARS

AVAC focuses both on high-burden countries and communities where the bulk of HIV prevention research is carried out, and on contributing to the global ecosystem by mobilizing resources, fostering accountability, exchanging knowledge, and building impactful partnerships with people living with and at high risk for HIV. In support of effectively delivering on our mission, three pillars will shape our strategic priorities from 2022 through 2026. Together, the pillars will help to effectively bridge and strengthen the global ecosystem, foster impactful global health coalitions and bi-directional partnerships, and drive impact at key levels of change.

As the core of AVAC’s 2022-2026 Strategic Plan, the strategic pillars aim to be forward looking, while also being grounded in AVAC’s current strengths and existing programs. The strategic pillars highlight the priority areas of our work, including key objectives that outline what we aim to achieve within each pillar. Examples of current AVAC programs are also highlighted within each strategic pillar below to showcase how each pillar builds on our current work. A robust MEL strategy underpins AVAC’s work across the pillars, ensuring we use data to monitor progress, make timely course corrections, and capture impact.



TRANSLATE

Bridging science and community through communication

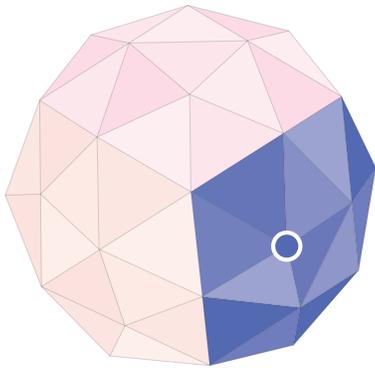
In the world of HIV and global health equity writ large, there is often a gap between science and product development, and community perspectives and voices. Bridging “language” and communication among diverse stakeholder groups is essential to ensure that research, product development, and delivery systems are informed by user needs, and that research findings and emerging evidence are clearly and meaningfully shared with communities, advocates, and implementers, so that they can be effectively used and meaningfully shared with and by communities, advocates and implementers. AVAC will build on its 25 years of experience in bridging these communities in the HIV field to continue advancing user-centered research, product development and delivery systems. AVAC will also respond opportunistically and strategically within other health issue areas where our model and expertise in translating complex science and connecting it with community perspectives can advance greater global health equity.

Key Objectives

- Translate complex science, synthesize and disseminate information and highlight community and user perspectives in the design of research, development and delivery.
- Amplify the voices and visibility of affected communities among scientists, policy makers, media and industry leaders.
- Promote user-centered research and roll-out strategies to ensure that innovative solutions are ethically developed and equitably delivered.

Illustrative AVAC Programs and Initiatives

- We provide comprehensive information on HIV prevention research, product development and introduction around the world to track, keep pace with and widely share information on emerging developments in the field of HIV prevention research via the [Prevention Trial Database \(PxRD\)](#) and [through the Engage online training platform and PrEP Watch](#).
- We promote informed decision making, evidence-based advocacy and awareness raising around timely issues in HIV prevention research and product development, as well as integration with other related areas of health equity via [Advocates' Network emails](#), the [Weekly NewsDigest](#), [webinars](#), [resource database](#), and [infographics database](#).
- We translate clinical research and complex science to ensure that communities, advocates, and decision makers have clear, accurate, equitable, and timely access to information in order to strengthen evidence-based advocacy, policies, and programs through AVAC's [reports](#), [publications](#) and [webinars](#).



ADVOCATE

Mobilizing for inclusive and impactful programs, products, and policies

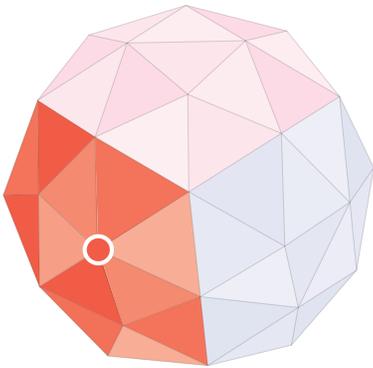
We advocate for a policy environment that supports and adequately finances equitable access to HIV prevention research, services, interventions, and products with communities at the center. AVAC supports and fortifies a robust network of bold and informed advocates and coalitions to advance inclusive,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

Key Objectives

- Foster an enabling environment for adequately financed, inclusive and people-centered research, programs, products, and policies for HIV prevention and related areas that accelerate global health equity.
- Support a robust ecosystem of skilled, informed advocates to elevate the needs and priorities of the communities that most need swift and equitable access to products, services, and programs.
- Leverage advocacy, communications, and accountability tools to enhance transparency and hold decision makers and donors to account.

Illustrative AVAC Programs and Initiatives

- We amplify voices, support country identified and driven priorities, and invest in individuals and institutions to strengthen impact-driven and informed HIV prevention advocacy through the Advocacy Fellows and Px ROAR programs.
- We cultivate an environment of transparency and accountability, ensuring that policies and product access are inclusive and donors and decision makers are accountable through tracking HIV R&D investment and data-driven advocacy.
- We foster skills and power sharing, North-South solidarity, and impact-oriented advocacy through the Coalition to build Momentum, Power, Activism, Strategy & Solidarity (COMPASS) Africa and the Coalition to Accelerate and Support Prevention Research (CASPR).
- We drive resource efficiency, accountability, and equitable, inclusive access to products, interventions, and information through PrEP Watch, COMPASS, the Advocacy Fellows Program, and COVID-19 resources for advocates.



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.

Key Objectives

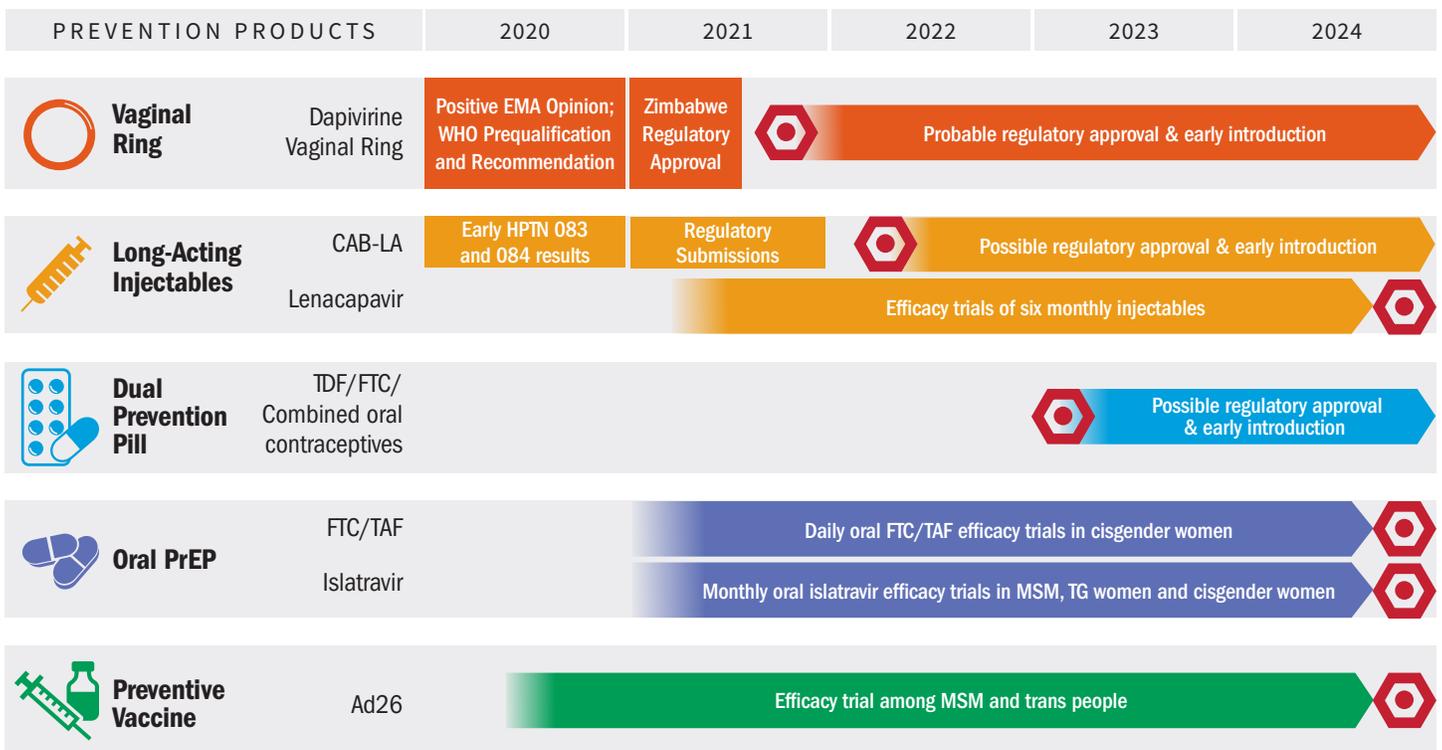
- Improve ethical, inclusive, and effective trial design and research conduct to prioritize the needs, engagement, and input of civil society.
- Convene and leverage coalitions of product developers, communities, implementers, and policy makers to advance product development and introduction through collaboration.
- Facilitate cross-partner learning and collaborative action to identify innovative solutions that enhance research and development (R&D), implementation, and advocacy efforts.

Illustrative AVAC Programs and Initiatives

- We enhance inclusivity and improve community-centered research design and conduct through the [Good Participatory Practice \(GPP\) Guidelines](#), the [Trial Design Academy](#) and the [COVID Advocates Advisory Board \(CAAB\)](#).
- We amplify voices, support partners and build connections with stakeholders across disease areas and disciplines to engage in R&D and product introduction through [Advocacy Partner’s Forum](#), the CAAB, the [Coalition to Accelerate & Support Prevention Research \(CASPR\)](#), and the [Engage](#) online training platform.
- We advance user-centered, participatory product development and delivery as standard practice, through [Biomedical Prevention Implementation Collaborative \(BioPIC\)](#), the [Dual Prevention Pill Consortium](#), and the [Prevention Market Manager](#).
- We lead new and bold approaches to spur product development and introduction that links product developers, civil society, implementers, and policy makers through BioPIC, CASPR, the [Dual Prevention Pill Consortium \(DPP\)](#), and the [OPTIONS, PROMISE and MOSAIC Consortia](#).

YEARS AHEAD IN HIV PREVENTION RESEARCH

— TIME TO MARKET —



Earliest time to market 

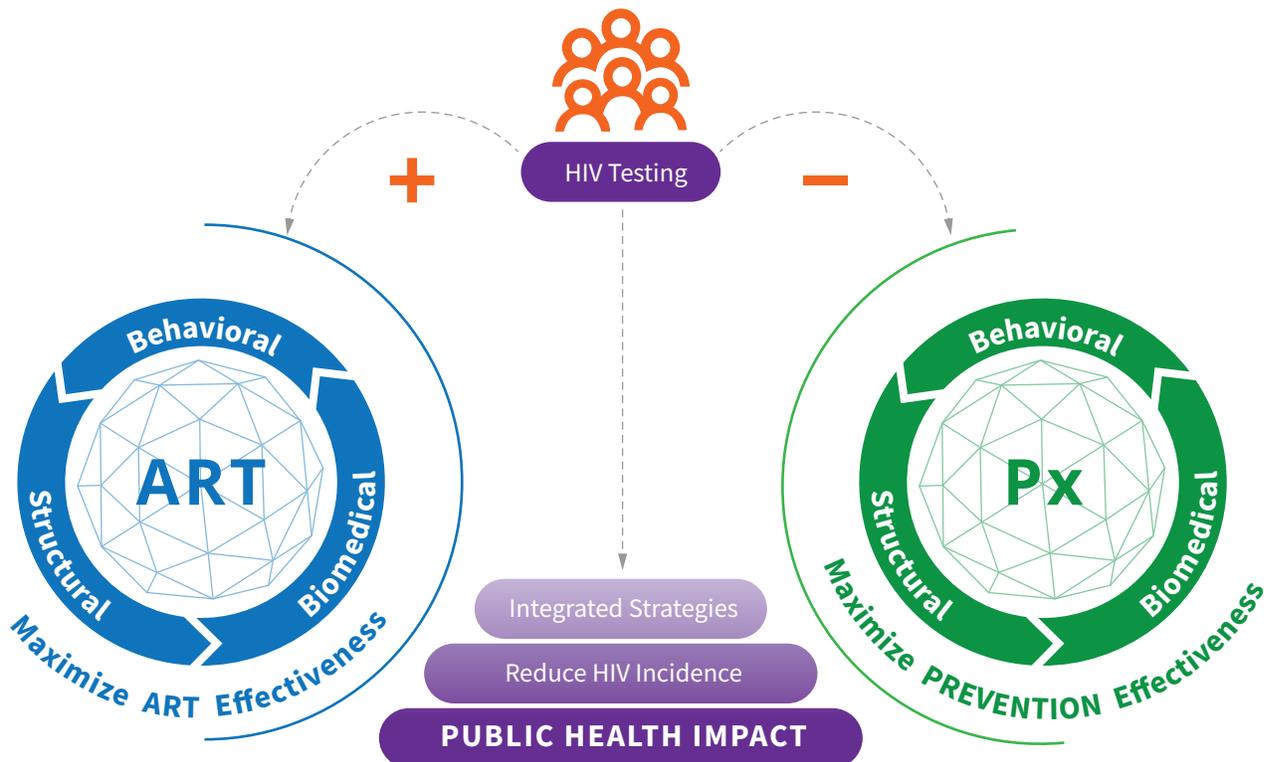


COMMITMENT TO A COMPREHENSIVE AND INTEGRATED RESPONSE

Achieving our vision of a world without AIDS, delivering a successful and effective HIV response, and attaining a robust global health advocacy environment depends on integrating strategies and approaches that include biomedical, structural, and social and behavioral considerations. Biomedical options are a critical entry point towards reducing HIV incidence. But they are insufficient without a fundamental recognition and commitment to building a comprehensive, integrated, and sustained response. This entails designing programs that meet people based on who they are and where they are, rather than based on serostatus. Biomedical treatment and prevention options do not treat or prevent infections alone; rather, comprehensive programs that support equitable access to, and the effective use of, these options do.

AVAC remains committed to and focused on product development, tracking the prevention pipeline as it has always done. The graphic on the previous page outlines the prevention options that are currently in efficacy trials.

But effective use of products is only possible when research and development are people-centered and reflect the needs of affected communities; efficacious products are delivered by quality programs; supported by providers, peers, and communities; and used correctly and consistently by people who need and want them. As outlined below, successful programs delivering treatment and prevention options must be people-centered and offer comprehensive, integrated, biomedical, behavioral, and structural support.



**Adapted from Wafaa El-Sadr*

EQUITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

An important Key Enabler for AVAC's Strategic Plan is our commitment to equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI). AVAC has made it a top priority over the next five years to strengthen EDI internally and externally, building on welcome shifts within the global health and development landscape to prioritize EDI, as well as AVAC's existing EDI principles and efforts. As such, a dedicated section for EDI has been included within this Strategic Plan. AVAC's EDI Leadership Council is driving the development of AVAC's EDI roadmap, as well as its implementation in alignment with this five-year strategy.

AVAC's commitment to EDI is available at <https://www.avac.org/commitment-diversity>.

HIV has always disproportionately affected people who are disempowered, stigmatized, criminalized and/or targeted by systemic racism and discrimination. The links between structural and social factors and people's health have been further revealed—and, indeed, exacerbated—by the COVID-19 pandemic. AVAC's vision of a world without AIDS and with global health equity means taking a stand against systemic injustices and ensuring that we continue to grow and evolve as allies and partners in the movement.

AVAC commits to redoubling its work of advocating for equity, diversity and social justice as we continue to seek solutions to HIV, related public health crises and current and future pandemics. Furthermore, a commitment to equity, diversity and inclusion (EDI) within the organization allows AVAC to attract and retain the diverse, creative and committed team of staff and partners needed to fulfil our mandate. AVAC's 2022-2026 Strategic Plan highlights EDI and Equitable Partnerships among the critical enablers of success.

To accomplish the goals of AVAC's five-year strategy, we must continue to invest in the internal and external structures and priorities that set AVAC up for success in the work we do. Our commitments, as outlined by Global Health Vision's Key Findings analysis and informed by AVAC's EDI audit and dedicated EDI efforts, include the following objectives:

- Create and internalize a shared definition of EDI that fully integrates EDI commitments into the organization and sustain staff and Board of Director (BOD) roles and resources for advancing EDI.
- Establish EDI goals and utilize metrics and feedback mechanisms at both the BOD and organizational levels, embedding EDI in annual planning and staff and BOD engagements, and measuring and rewarding goal achievement as part of annual review processes for individuals and the organization.
- Disrupt hierarchy based on race and other intersections of identity that undermine a culture where everyone feels safe, seen, heard, inspired, and fulfilled. Update and develop the policies to underpin our commitment to dismantling supremacy culture.
- Increase diversity at the top by identifying current obstacles to retention and upward mobility of diverse talent, strengthening pathways for diverse candidates, and increasing diversity at the BOD level.