RESULTS BULLETIN

Tracking Progress, Maximizing Impact!



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About the Results Bulletin

The Results Bulletin is a Monitoring, Evaluation, Results, and Learning (MERL) newsletter that provides updates, news, and insights on results from CASPR activities, practices, trends, and tools on a quarterly basis.

The purpose of the newsletter is to inform and engage CASPR partners and other stakeholders about the progress, achievements, challenges, and lessons learned from CASPR initiatives. The newsletter also serves as a platform for sharing best practices, success stories, case studies, and resources related to MERL.

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Boost CASPR Coalition's Visibility and Influence: 8 Conference Strategies for Maximum Impact!

Imagine a packed conference buzzing with professionals. How do CASPR messages stand out? Boosting visibility is key to spreading the coalition's messages in HIV prevention research. With several conferences set for 2024, discover 8 powerful strategies to elevate and strengthen CASPR's presence and impact.

Pre-Conference Strategies:

1. Targeted Promotion:
Use Twitter and LinkedIn to promote your participation and topics. Tag event accounts and speakers for more visibility. Share teasers and countdown posts to generate excitement. Post updates on internal platforms for Coalition members. Share sneak peeks of speakers, session highlights, and event prep behind the scenes.

Conference Day Strategies:

2. Engaging Booth:
Design a visually appealing and informative booth that grabs attention. Use clear signage, display brochures and informative materials, and have staff prepared to answer questions about the CASPR Coalition.

3. Interactive Activities:
Incorporate interactive elements into your booth like quizzes, and polls, to engage attendees and make the CASPR Coalition memorable. By inviting feedback and input from attendees, CASPR can not only showcase its expertise but also learn from the unique perspectives and experiences of others.

4. Free giveaways
Everyone loves freebies, especially when they are unique, useful, and branded with your logo. These giveaways not only serve as a tangible reminder of your brand but also serve as conversation starters beyond the conference walls. Remember, the key is to offer items that are not only appealing but also reflect your brand identity and values.

5. Strategic Networking:
Identify key individuals to connect with at the conference, such as policymakers, potential partners, or media representatives. Prepare talking points and elevator pitches to effectively introduce the CASPR Coalition.





Discussions happen at the CASPR Booth during the 2023 ICASA Conference (top). A poster for a pre-youth Conference (right).

Post-Conference Strategies:

6. Follow-Up Communication:
Reach out to individuals you met at the conference with personalized emails thanking them for their time and interest. Include additional information or resources about the CASPR Coalition.

7. Social Media Recap:
Share conference highlights and key takeaways on social media platforms. Use relevant conference hashtags to increase reach and spark conversation.

8. Conference Report:
Develop a concise report summarizing the CASPR coalition's conference participation, including key contacts made and any media coverage received. Reach out to the MERL Team for support in identifying and documenting the conference outcomes. This report can be shared with stakeholders and funders to demonstrate the value of conference participation.

By implementing these strategies, the CASPR Coalition can leverage conference participation to significantly boost its visibility and gain valuable connections within the relevant community. Let's boost CASPR Coalition's visibility to new heights together!

The Spotlight Zone - Wits RHI

GPP's Vital Role in Strengthening HIV Prevention Initiatives

During the 2023 Good Participatory Practice (GPP) Leadership Course (LC) GPP Implementers strengthened their ability to develop comprehensive strategies that address the multifaceted nature of HIV prevention. Implementers gained deeper insight into the significance of GPP principles for effective HIV prevention efforts, and were empowered to tackle the challenges of stakeholder engagement in HIV prevention with renewed vigor and focus.

The 2023 GPP LC was hosted by Wits RHI in partnership with AVAC at Wits RHI, Johannesburg from the 06th to the 10th of November 2023. Out of 105 applications received, 20 emerging GPP leaders and implementers from Kenya, Tanzania, Malawi, Zambia, and South Africa, were selected to participate.

The course is aimed at developing and cultivating a senior cadre of GPP ambassadors, and leaders who are primed to champion GPP in the communities and countries where they work, who will in turn help to identify, train, and nurture the next generation of stakeholder engagement practitioners. To ensure relevance to participants needs, the modules provided are a response to identified gaps in the field, such as the need for knowledge and understanding of how to monitor and evaluate their GPP activities effectively, and this session was included in the training.

Feedback from the 2023 GPP participants reflect significant learning and attitude change. Kenne from Malawi remarked, *"As a leader sometimes, you feel like you know everything, but this course took me out of my comfort zone"*. Idah expressed her anticipation of improving community feedback tools in her country, Zambia, when she returns; and Makhosazane from South Africa remarked that "*The knowledge gained from this course helped me see the gaps in how I do my work"*. These comments are clear indicators of a successful learning experience.



Participants proudly showcase their GPP Leadership Course completion certificates.

The GPP Leadership Course (LC) builds upon existing GPP training and resources, offering a structured program for individuals already engaged in GPP or experienced with its principles. This initiative aims to enhance leadership skills specifically related to GPP training and implementation. The GPP LC aligns with the CASPR outcome which seeks to ensure that GPP is utilized as a foundational practice among research institutions and industry. Through its comprehensive approach, the GPP LC is important in advancing GPP principles and fostering a network of skilled and motivated leaders in the field.



Online GPP Trainings and Tools for Implementation

The Engage Platform provides access to AVAC's primary online training courses for various audiences. It also provides supplementary tools to support researchers and other stakeholders to conduct in-person GPP trainings, implement the guidelines, and join a community of practice of GPP implementers around the world.

Mentoring for Success: APHA Transitions Two Ground Forces Alumni to Full-Time Staff

APHA has successfully mentored and onboarded two young Ground Forces alumni as full-time staff within the organization, demonstrating a commitment to mentorship and strengthening the effectiveness of their advocacy.

This transition represents a notable change in the professional development and career trajectories of these individuals, who served for two and three years respectively as Ground Force members, before accepting influential roles at APHA. The mentorship and support provided by APHA have facilitated their growth, enabling them to contribute to the organization's objectives and goals effectively. This outcome is significant because it directly aligns with CASPR's objectives of nurturing and developing young advocates to take on leadership positions in various sectors of society thereby demonstrating the effectiveness of mentorship in the advocacy field.



Pic 1: Saidy, the "APHA -hun" during her time as a member of the Ground Forces

By providing mentorship, guidance, and opportunities for professional growth, APHA, with CASPR`s support, has empowered these young individuals to become agents of change and influence within their respective domains.

"Becoming a part of the APHA team has changed my life.. it has grown my impact as an advocate. I get to engage with the programs led by the organization, and not only does this keep me involved in advocacy...this is more than an appointment to me, it is mentorship progressing...and I will never grow tired of sharing my story of how I got introduced to APHA, the ground force programme and ending up where I am - a happy, APHA-Hun.", claimed Saidy the recruit.

Lerato exclaimed, *"When I joined the APHA team, I joined in as a Ground Force and later I became a champion and joined the team as the ground forces coordinator. What it means for me is that I get the opportunity to share information and also learn from the ground forces, champions, and the team.... I am fulfilling my potential as a Youth Development Advocate, I am able to influence and leave my mark in the lives I touch through my kind regard emails, face-to-face meetings, and calls. I am basically at my best in the employment era as an APHA-Hun."*

By creating an enabling environment and providing the necessary support, CASPR has played a crucial role in enabling this successful outcome. The Ground Forces program served as a platform for identifying and engaging with these young individuals, recognizing their potential and enthusiasm for making a difference. CASPR provided the necessary resources, mentorship, and support structures to facilitate their professional development within APHA. This includes active participation in CASPR activities with young people such as information awareness sessions, undertaking capacity strengthening initiatives like the MERL roadshows, and the prioritization of funding to accommodate their transition and integration as full-time employees.

The CASPR project also allows access to a broader network, encouraging engagements with external organizations, resulting in the continuous knowledge and skills strengthening of APHA staff through ongoing mentorship and capacity-building opportunities. This achievement demonstrates CASPR's commitment to fostering an inclusive and diverse advocacy network, recognizing the invaluable contributions that young individuals can make to drive positive change.

Choice Matters: Broadening Prevention Options for Women's Health

One percent of the Dapivirine Vaginal Ring (DVR) supplies will be allocated for female sex workers in Zambia, broadening access to choice in HIV prevention for all women. TALC, in collaboration with civil society organisations (CSOs), including local journalists, led in advocating for the inclusion of DVR at 1% for female sex workers in the Zambia Consolidated Treatment and Prevention Guidelines and during the quantification of the HIV program commodities.

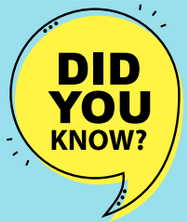
Every year, the Ministry of Health (MOH) and other partners, including CSOs, convene to quantify HIV commodities for the country's treatment and prevention guidelines. Leading up to and during the meeting, TALC's advocacy highlighted data that supported the need to expand prevention options to include the ring in this population. TALC and other CSOs worked with journalists on opinion pieces, social media posts, policy dialogue meetings, letters to the MOH, round table discussions, and finally, lobbying during MOH quantification meetings to justify the importance of DVR quantification. Ongoing advocacy includes consultations and collaborative efforts between CSOs and the MOH to foster close engagement and accelerate the procurement and development of the implementation plan for the ring with support from MOSAIC.

This outcome is significant as it aligns with the Choice principles of ensuring that all women have access to different options for preventing HIV. Ensuring that steps towards the introduction, utilization, and funding for the ring are adopted, showcasing the visibility and influence of CASPR partners as trusted sources for evidence-based input into policy decision by governments.



Figure 1: A Panel discussion with UNAIDS Country Representative Dr. Barihuta, Director General National AIDS Council Prof. Lloyd Mulenga, and representation from Civil Society Organizations during the HIV Prevention Dialogue meeting that contributed towards the data used during the quantification meetings.

Including DVR in the guidelines reflects a progressive approach to HIV prevention that recognizes the diverse needs and preferences of women. This strategic decision sets a precedent for inclusive and gender-responsive health interventions that prioritize effectiveness and user autonomy.



CAB-PrEP launched in Zambia

Zambia is actively working to improve access to various HIV prevention options for women. CAB-PrEP launched in Zambia on 9th February, and the first person to use the injectable PrEP is a young woman associated with TALC. She expressed feeling empowered to choose her preferred prevention method, saying, "Finally I have a choice to choose between oral PrEP and the injectable PrEP, I am in charge of my health now". Having options like CAB-PrEP in the hands of the users has been encouraging for advocacy efforts.

CASPR at CROI 2024

Several CASPR partners attended CROI as community advocates and highlighted the importance of including community voices in the sciences of HIV prevention. Here are some immediate wins resulting from CASPR's advocacy at CROI:

Expanded conversations around Choice: Partners amplified advocacy messages around CHOICE, and met with NIH director, Dr. Jeanne Marazzo who's statements and actions now reflect a push for CHOICE and community engagement.

Increased engagement in Community Breakfast Club series: The CBCs are a growing platform for community input and engagement during CROI, this year saw 429 unique registrants (107 more from last year).

CASPR is building a network of strong advocates: 13 CASPR partners and mentees were selected to receive educator scholarships and lead as members of CLS.



A tweet after a successful session, mentioning AVACer and CASPR partner, Grace Kumwenda for her outstanding leadership in moderating the discusiion.

About CROI

CROI
Conference on Retroviruses and Opportunistic Infections

The Conference on Retroviruses and Opportunistic Infections (CROI) was established in 1993 to provide a forum for basic scientists and clinical investigators to present, discuss, and critique their investigations into the epidemiology and biology of human retroviruses and associated diseases.

CROI has facilitated the presentation of important discoveries in the field, thereby accelerating progress in HIV and AIDS research. The best and most consequential original research defines the science at CROI, including research in HIV, hepatitis viruses, SARS-CoV-2, mpox, and other viral infections and their related conditions.

Source: https://www.croiconference.org/

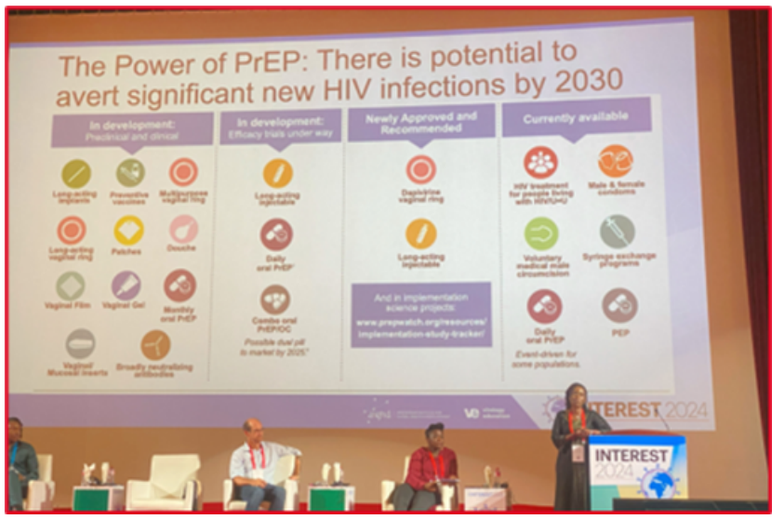
INTEREST 2024 Highlights

MERL presented a poster titled "Evaluate and Elevate: Leveraging the CASPR Outcomes Assessment Tool (COAT) to Enhance Advocacy Impact", which highlighted the importance of collectively assessing the quality of advocacy results and making adjustments to ensure activities achieve intended results.



Princess Mharire sharing insights with another attendee during the Poster Viewing Session at the INTEREST Conference.

Promoting Conversations Around Choice



- Ensures better health outcomes for women.
- HIV Prevention train (options are expanding to provide a choice of products that can be used preferentially by different populations) must remain a focus.
- The importance of long-acting methods of HIV Prevention. BNAbs alternatives to antiretroviral in HIV Prevention.
- ViiV affirmed its commitment to Choice referencing the HIV Prevention Roadmap at ICASA 2023.

Guidance for a successful HIV Response

- Person-centered approaches.
- Reaching the unreached.
- Gender equality and a Human Rights Approach.
- Addressing the politics of costs and access to CAB-LA.
- Learning from previous studies.
- Addressing the policy and regulatory environment.

The Role of Advocates in HIV Response

- Client-centered care - let us reduce harm as healthcare workers.
- Effective north-south/ south-south collaborations in research.
- Meaningful, deliberate stakeholder engagement.
- Research findings must be translated to access.
- Social media as a source of feedback from end-users.
- Innovations for domestic financing.
- Strengthening R&D.
- Forward-thinking plans towards an HIV Cure.
- Considering all pillars necessary for a product to be introduced from planning, budgeting, and target setting.

About INTEREST

INTEREST 2024
INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON HIV TREATMENT, PATHOGENESIS, AND PREVENTION RESEARCH IN RESOURCE-LIMITED SETTINGS

The annual INTEREST Conference is the premier scientific conference for HIV in Africa and brings together scientists involved in HIV treatment, pathogenesis, and prevention research from around the world. The conference will showcase cutting-edge knowledge in the diagnosis and treatment of HIV and the prevention of the HIV-1 infection. Additionally, it will continue to foster building a community of African physicians and scientists to facilitate the implementation of local solutions for the management of patients living with HIV-1 infection and for the prevention of HIV transmission.

INTEREST 2024 took place in Cotonou, Benin and attracted over 700 delegates. The programme consisted of invited lectures, oral abstract presentations, a debate, skill-building sessions, panel discussions, and sponsored symposia.

Source: ***http://interestworkshop.org/***

Thank You!

It is only through the ongoing support of CASPR partners that we are able to continue and fulfill the MERL purpose.