



A. CORNELIUS BAKER AND MARIO S. COOPER MEMORIAL COLLOQUIUM:

Youth Leadership in the HIV Response: Shaping the Future

***“Centering Youth Power, Innovation, and Advocacy in
Ending the Epidemic”***

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Key COMPASS youth-led advocacy wins

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Advocacy by COMPASS youth partners in Tanzania and Zimbabwe contributed to the following wins:

1. **Reduction of age of access** to HIV and SRH services from 18 to 15 years.
2. Convening of **first-ever PEPFAR Youth Congress** in Tanzania in 2024.
3. Realization of a **dedicated youth seat on the Zimbabwe Global Fund Country Coordinating Mechanism (CCM)**. A COMPASS youth member from My Age Zimbabwe was elected to the seat.
4. **Inclusion of CAB-LA into draft National HIV guidelines** and secured government commitments for integrating other new PrEP options (like DVR, Lenacapavir) into national policies.
5. Launch of first **National TWG for persons with disabilities** and integration into of disability indicators into DREAMS.

CASPR's Investment in Youth Leadership

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Through mentorship and targeted support, CASPR has nurtured a growing network of youth advocates who are leading and shaping the HIV response.



CASPR supported over five mentorship programs, including the AVAC Advocacy Fellowship, which supported youth advocates in **leading national-level advocacy engagements and representing community priorities.**



The Young Women's HIV Prevention Council under CASPR, supported AGYW engagements with researchers, product developers, and regulators, and taking leadership in amplifying AGYW priorities in high visibility spaces.



Youth leadership within the CASPR network extended beyond mentorship, with advocates **establishing their own advocacy organizations, serving on national and regional regulatory bodies, and leading impactful advocacy initiatives.**

Young Women's HIV Prevention Council (YWHPC)

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Empowering young women's leadership as advocates for HIV prevention and choice in clinical research



AGYW led advisory council to increase representation, visibility, and engagement in Px research-ensuring inclusion of AGYW priorities from research to roll-out.



From left to right: Chilufya Hampongo, Shakira Namwanje, Ivy Zwane, Siviwe Gaika, and Oyama Eland represent the YWHPC at ICASA.

The YWHPC amplifies their messaging and visibility through engagement at conferences and high-level meetings and engaging with other regional AGYW on literacy around Px research and resources.

Get to know a few of the members:



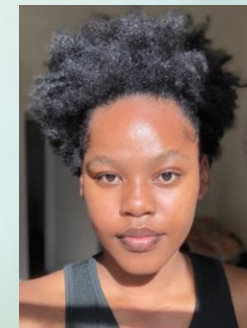
"HIV prevention isn't only about meetings and conferences; it is found in the embrace of communities, the power of education, and the compassionate heart of every advocate. It is in the lived moments, the shared stories, and the lasting impact of genuine connections that real change against HIV begins".

- Chanda Chabala, Zambia
Copper Rose Zambia, Council Member



"My dedication to this cause is fueled by a firm belief in the importance of ensuring young individuals have the necessary knowledge and agency to shape their futures. I founded the She4Health initiative to train young people, especially girls on reproductive health and rights."

- Victoria Quaynor, Ghana,
Council Member



"2030 needs us to act now. It needs us to be fearless leaders who are willing to go into the communities and work on the ground. It needs us to be able to translate the biomedical and technical terms to language that our communities best understand. It needs us to try ensure that important documents like the Choice Manifesto are accessible to all."

- Siviwe Gaika, South Africa, APHA
Ground Forces, Council Member

AGYW Leadership in Shaping Research and Trial Design

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Young women advocates across CASPR's network served critical roles on accountability boards, influencing stakeholder prioritization of AGYW priorities in research.



In Gilead's Purpose 1 trials for Lenacapavir, advocates from the YWHPC consulted on trial design, and played an important role in disseminating trial results, ensuring youth audiences had timely and accurate access to information.



Young women participated in consultations with product developer MERCK on its monthly pill program, offering insights into how the trial could reflect the reality of implementation in specific community contexts. This input directly informed the study's protocol development.



Dual Prevention Pill

Young advocates are actively engaged in the DPP Consortium, a coalition of partners accelerating the development and introduction of Viatrix' DPP product. They have been instrumental in informing product design and key access considerations.



Through the MATRIX program, which supports early stage R&D for 9 HIV prevention products, young women leaders provide representation for AGYW. Their leadership helps embed AGYW priorities from research to roll-out of prevention products.

Hearing from Youth Advocates

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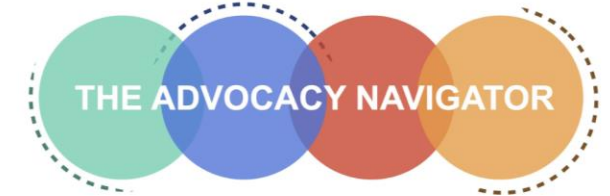
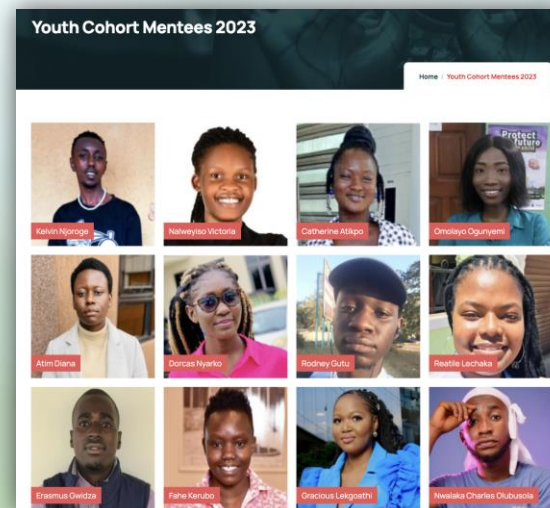


Why CASPR mentorship programs matter to new advocates and the field



*The mentorship program has had a huge impact on how I can participate in community work and advocacy. I hope that I can be a mentor one day as well and guide young people just as I have been guided because it is the only way we can raise a competent and result-oriented generation of young leaders and change makers, especially in HIV programing. – **TALC Youth Ascend Mentee***

*“This invaluable opportunity allowed me to learn from seasoned HIV advocates and forge connections with like-minded young individuals who shared my unwavering passion. Their guidance and support had a profound impact on my life, fostering personal growth and empowering me with the necessary tools and resources to make a tangible difference in the fight against HIV.” – **AfNHi Youth Cohort member***



*“The director was clearly able to notice that this program had really made an impact in my advocacy skills... Every time I had meetings with my mentor, I never went back the same... these meetings acted as a great platform to unleash the advocate in my inner self and this is all due to the dedication and zeal that my mentor has towards mentoring me.” – **Navigator***