

Avert > HIV >

Empowering people
through knowledge >

ANNUAL REPORT 2021-22

Health literacy matters

Supporting informed choices
on HIV and sexual health



As the global HIV response continues to evolve, it has never been clearer that health literacy matters. Only by equipping more individuals and health workers with better HIV and sexual health knowledge, skills and confidence do we have a chance of ending AIDS by 2030. To do that requires urgent innovation – finding different ways of engaging people with action-oriented digital resources that enable them to make informed choices on HIV and sexual health. That is why we have focused our efforts this year on scaling up our reach by working with new partners, growing our social media presence, and developing a fresh digital brand. Health information is a right for all and Avert is committed to narrowing the HIV knowledge gap.

2021–22 highlights



Boost – our digital job
aide for community health
workers accessed by

1,172

**COMMUNITY HEALTH
WORKERS**
in Zimbabwe alone



12.3

**MILLION FACEBOOK &
INSTAGRAM USERS**

learned more about sexual
health through Avert's
content



Over

85%

**OF VISITORS TO
AVERT.ORG**

learned something new
about HIV and sexual health



COVID-related content
viewed over

889

THOUSAND TIMES



24.9
MILLION PEOPLE
empowered through
knowledge



Projects and campaigns to reach **targeted** populations undertaken in

8

COUNTRIES

across sub-Saharan Africa: Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Nigeria, South Africa, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe



Nearly
439
THOUSAND PEOPLE
reached through 2021
World AIDS Day campaign
on Facebook and Instagram



7.8
MILLION PEOPLE
in sub-Saharan Africa
empowered through
knowledge (web & social)



12.5
MILLION PEOPLE
in South Asia empowered
through knowledge
(web & social)



Information resources for
primary HIV and sexual
health practitioners viewed
2.8
MILLION TIMES

Message from the Chair and CEO

The latest UNAIDS data¹ on the global HIV response makes for grim reading. The number of new infections is climbing again in the Asia Pacific region, and in East and Southern Africa the fragile headway made in recent years is in serious danger of being lost. Resources to combat the epidemic have either dwindled or been reallocated to tackle COVID-19. Millions of lives are at stake as a result.

Progress towards increasing the number of people on life-saving treatment has also stalled, whilst 'treatment fatigue' and lack of adherence, particularly among young people, are of concern. Meanwhile, the criminalization of marginalised groups in many countries continues to fuel stigma towards people with HIV, discouraging them from seeking advice and using services.

The tools that we have at our disposal to prevent, treat and manage HIV are only effective if the people who need them understand and trust them, and know how to access them. That is why we are determined to use our expertise to build health literacy among millions of individuals, community health workers, peer educators, and health practitioners.

The ongoing revolution in digital technology – along with rapidly increasing mobile phone ownership and decreasing data costs – presents a huge opportunity to deliver critical health information to more people who need it. With years of experience in the field of global health communications, Avert is poised to exploit these changes to the full.

We have got off to a flying start in year one of our 2021-24 global strategy. Feedback from our audiences, partners and funders indicates that their confidence in us as a trusted provider of accurate, stimulating and context-appropriate content and resources is running high. The time and commitment invested this year in establishing our new digital brand, *Be in the KNOW*, is already paying off and we now have a platform in place that can maximise our impact.

1. <https://www.unaids.org/en/resources/documents/2022/in-danger-global-aids-update>



Guiding people on their own digital learning journeys is an important way to promote self-care and reach many who might otherwise avoid traditional HIV prevention, care and treatment services for fear of discrimination. By working with our users, and through new partnerships with GNP+, VSO and others, we have opened up options for individuals to be able to access healthcare on their own, in privacy, using their phones or low-cost tablets.

For example, we added to our project portfolio this year with the co-creation of an innovative and tailored communication tool, *Yaya* – a digital life skills app aimed at girls and young women in Mozambique. We also supported the ongoing development of *Voice+*, an app designed to support linkages between networks of people living with HIV.

In line with our mission to deepen the HIV and sexual health knowledge of our key audiences, we expanded *Boost*, our on-the-job information resource for community health workers. We are also particularly excited about the development of *Young Africa Live* throughout the year, a brand new interactive approach to help young people in South Africa make informed choices about their sexual and mental health.

Knowledge is power and now is the time for the HIV response to fully embrace the potential of digital technology to increase health literacy. We are committed to growing our work in this field and sharing the learning and impact we achieve. We wish to acknowledge the contributions of our talented staff team and technical specialists, our committed Trustees, and our valued funders, donors and partners. We sincerely thank them all for their investment in our vision.



Sarah Hand
Chief Executive

Professor Simon Forrest
Chair of the Board of Trustees

Vision, mission and values

WHO WE ARE

Avert uses digital communications to build health literacy on HIV and sexual health. With over 30 years' experience, we are a trusted provider of accessible, accurate and actionable content and resources that support informed choices. Our work supports global efforts to end AIDS and achieve the Sustainable Development Goal for health. Every year, we engage with millions of individuals, community health workers and primary health practitioners living in areas of greatest need. We use our understanding of HIV and sexual health, our expertise in digital marketing, communications and behaviour change, and our network of partnerships to increase their knowledge, skills and confidence, and their ability to act.

OUR VISION

A world with no new HIV infections, where people make empowered sexual health choices, and where those living with HIV do so with dignity, good health and equality.

OUR MISSION

To increase health literacy on HIV and sexual health, among those most affected in areas of greatest need, in order to reduce new infections and improve health and well-being.

OUR VALUES

We believe in every person's right to health and to the information that enables them to make informed choices around sexual health. The following values inform our work:



- **EVIDENCE-BASED.** We are committed to providing reliable, accurate, and high-quality information on HIV and sexual health. We use the latest evidence to inform our content and programmatic priorities.
- **RESPONSIVE.** We adapt our approach to respond to changing trends in the HIV epidemic and in how our target audiences access and consume information.
- **TRUSTWORTHY.** We have more than 30 years' experience of working in the HIV response. We are recognised and accredited as a provider of accurate and reliable information.
- **CREATIVE.** We understand the power of new approaches to bring about change. We focus on solutions and think creatively to continually improve our work and bring new insights to the sector.
- **PEOPLE-ORIENTED.** We put people at the centre of what we do and how we do it – supporting, valuing, engaging and involving them. We aim to be accessible, inclusive and friendly in everything we do.
- **COLLABORATIVE.** We believe that by working in partnership we can pool skills and resources, share learning, and have greater impact.
- **SEX-POSITIVE.** We believe in a sex-positive approach to sexual health and rights that recognises and celebrates sexual pleasure and sexual diversity, prioritises personal agency, and is free of judgment.

“

You're doing a great work spreading awareness and normalising a topic that everyone stigmatise but it's an essential and not-to-be ashamed thing.

Be in the KNOW Instagram follower

Best non-profit organization.
Love what you guys are doing



Facebook fan



Our strategy

From knowledge to action

THE WAY WE WORK

We develop and promote HIV and sexual health content and resources that are accurate, accessible, useful, and actionable. In doing this:

- We use learning and evidence from health literacy, behaviour change and digital marketing research and practice to inform our content and approach.
- We work through partnerships, as the best way to create high quality, sustainable programmes.
- We use our understanding of technology to prioritise inclusive digital approaches, and our knowledge of the context to create realistic solutions.
- We prioritise user-centred design principles, working with users to develop products that effectively meet their needs.



I learned more about taking care of myself.

Avert.org user, South Africa

STRATEGIC RESPONSE 1

Increase the HIV and sexual health-related knowledge, skills and confidence of those most at risk of HIV and poor sexual health, and those living with HIV.

We will:

- develop and share targeted digital HIV and sexual health communications.

STRATEGIC RESPONSE 2

Expand and deepen the knowledge, skills and confidence of educators and advocates working on local responses to HIV and sexual health.

We will:

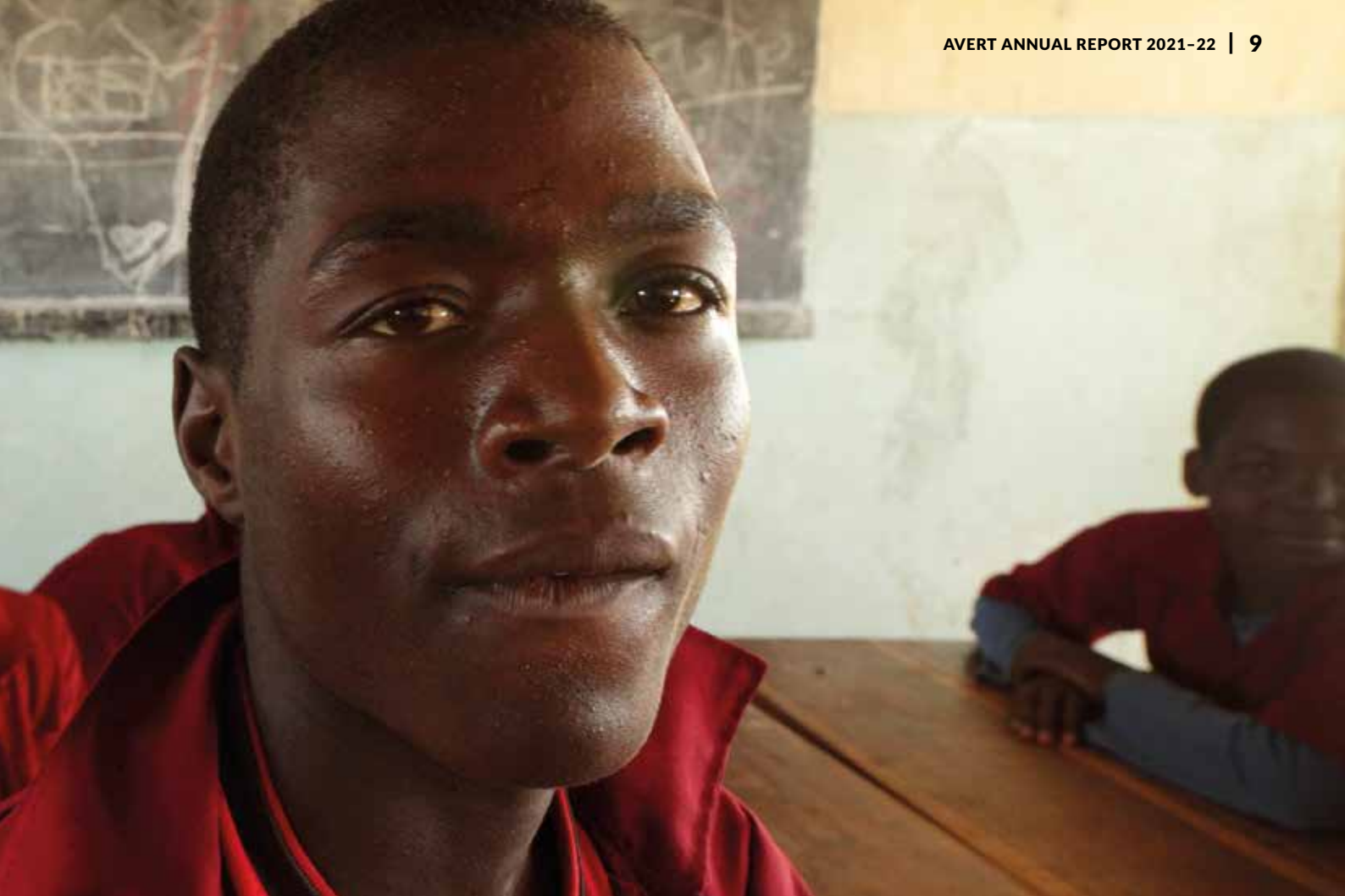
- develop and share accessible digital knowledge and information resources for educators and advocates.

STRATEGIC RESPONSE 3

Support evidence-based practice among primary HIV and sexual health practitioners.

We will:

- develop and share evidence-based good practice information and resources for practitioners.



OUTCOME 1

The people we reach have gained up-to-date knowledge, skills and confidence to make informed choices to support their own and others' sexual health.

RESULT 1

The people we reach take informed action to support their own and others' sexual health, reducing HIV and other sexual health infections, and improving physical and mental health among those living with HIV.

OUTCOME 2

Targeted educators and advocates have gained up-to-date knowledge, skills and confidence to support quality engagement with their clients or target groups.

RESULT 2

Educators and advocates are effective at their roles, improving the sexual health of the local population.

OUTCOME 3

Targeted practitioners have gained up-to-date knowledge of evidence-based approaches to support local HIV and sexual health responses.

RESULT 3

Practitioners adopt evidence-based approaches, improving the relevance of primary HIV and sexual health responses.

The first year of delivering against our 2021-24 global strategy has been one of creating momentum. At the heart of our work was the development and execution of our dynamic new *Be in the KNOW* website and social media brand which launched at the end of March 2022.

Our work in action

This brand now forms a central part of our wider toolbox of brands, products and projects that provide individuals affected by HIV, educators, and primary health practitioners with up-to-date knowledge, skills and confidence. Through everything we do, the tools we are providing these three key audiences are enabling informed sexual health choices and encouraging evidence-based approaches among advocates and practitioners, leading to better sexual health outcomes.



The fact that is user friendly and it helps in sex education. In a very friendly manner and not hostile.

Be in the KNOW website user, Kenya

Loving the new look. 👍 100 🥳

Facebook fan

This was the year we launched our influential new online brand, *Be in the KNOW*. Faced with a shifting digital landscape and changing information needs around sexual health and HIV, we identified an urgent need to reach young people – particularly in East and Southern Africa – with fresh, fun, sex-positive content in ways that they can relate to.

In line with the second and third pillars of our 2021–2024 global strategy, the brand also provides evidence-based news and information for community and primary health workers and others on the frontline of HIV and sexual health services for young people.

We needed to find new ways to communicate about HIV and sexual health and *Be in the KNOW* reflects a maturation in our approach to increasing health literacy in areas of greatest need. Going forward, the brand will evolve to meet the specific needs of users and we will maintain focus on growing the online *Be in the KNOW* community to boost health literacy where it is most needed.

To keep the people who access our resources front of mind, we have used 'personas' to shape content. These fictional characters include Lagos factory worker Emmanuel, 24, who has a new girlfriend living with HIV and wonders how this could affect him and their future together. In South Africa, volunteer peer educator Lisa wants to help other young women to aim high and achieve their goals and needs easily accessible, reliable and fun resources to use when talking to them. In Andhra Pradesh, health practitioner Shamik must stay abreast of changes in HIV prevention approaches for men who have sex with men. Deploying personas in this way has meant that all our resources have been made fit for purpose for our core audiences: individuals affected by HIV, educators and primary health practitioners.



IN SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA

2,356,258
USERS

5,481,248
PEOPLE REACHED ON FACEBOOK
AND INSTAGRAM

732,398
POST ENGAGEMENTS ON
FACEBOOK AND INSTAGRAM



AVERT.ORG

Avert.org continued as a leading online provider of HIV and sexual health information right up until the transition to the new *Be in the KNOW* brand. Over 85.5% of surveyed users said they had learned something new through their visit. Our content on COVID-19 also proved invaluable to young audiences hungry for reliable information and was viewed by hundreds of thousands of people over the course of the year.

Based on the results of a review and test process, the news service was remodelled during the year to better reflect the information requirements of frontline HIV and sexual health practitioners. Their subsequent feedback led to further tweaks which have gone on to frame *Be in the KNOW* news and blog content.

Our 2021 World AIDS Day campaign, featuring some of Avert.org's *Talking HIV* videos of real-life conversations between people who have been affected by HIV, was seen by more than 430,000 people across our social media platforms.

As successful as Avert.org was, we knew it was vital for us to evolve and adapt so we could remain relevant to our key audiences and our goal. The digital landscape, users' expectations, and online behaviours have all changed beyond recognition from when Avert.org was first launched.

Be in the KNOW is already galvanising new partnerships and investments and, most importantly, reaching those it is designed to serve. We are extremely proud of all Avert.org achieved and look forward to achieving even more with *Be in the KNOW*.



I really enjoyed reading some stories and I learn't more things about how to protect myself from HIV and STIs.

Avert.org user, Zambia



This is a true fact... I love this platform and I would love to recommend it to every youth out there.

Facebook fan

12,549,275
USERS OF AVERT.ORG
70%
OF USERS MORE LIKELY
TO TAKE ACTION

IN SOUTH ASIA

4,206,313
USERS

8,341,498
PEOPLE REACHED ON FACEBOOK
AND INSTAGRAM

343,907
POST ENGAGEMENTS ON
FACEBOOK AND INSTAGRAM



SOCIAL MEDIA

To support people along every step of their health literacy journey, we have continued to prioritise our social media presence. As well as acting as core information channels, social media is used by Avert to encourage HIV and sexual health conversations and to co-create projects with the direct input of target audiences.

In sub-Saharan Africa alone in 2021/22, we reached more than five million people through our Facebook and Instagram channels. In this region of the world most affected by HIV, we are achieving serious cut-through with those most at risk – adolescents and young people – especially across East and Southern Africa, reaching them on their platforms of choice.

These audiences are responding well to the thematic approach that we have adopted on key issues such as sexual relationships, HIV treatment and mental health. By highlighting engaging and factual content in ways that chime with them, our channels have become safe spaces for peers to share their experiences and voice their worries.



Chipo must be honest about what she thinks.
If he truly loves her he will understand but if not
then that must be a red flag to Chipo.

Instagram comment

Our popular *Young Voices* project – an interactive package of animated videos and supporting materials on sex and relationships created by and for young people in Southern Africa – went from strength to strength when new resources were added in Swahili. Over 72,000 people watched the Swahili videos² and engagement levels on social media were high, with more than 340,000 interactions relating to posts about *Young Voices Swahili*.

The impressive growth of our social media presence this year is a direct result of harnessing our expertise and learning over past years and has enabled us to reach audiences with sharable content that hits home.

Google grant

Using our proficiency in search engine optimisation as a springboard, we took full advantage of Avert's Google charity grant this year achieving a strong click-through rate on our Google Ads. The in-kind grant of \$612,925 resulted in more than 530,000 new users being channelled to Avert.org's information pages.

2. People who watched at least 50% of the videos.



YOUNG AFRICA LIVE

This year saw the start of an ambitious and potentially ground-breaking initiative that will play a big part in delivering on the first of our three 2021-24 strategy responses. *Young Africa Live* aims to reach 100,000 young people in South Africa with a new approach to helping them make informed choices about their sexual and mental health.

Building on young people's existing media consumption patterns, it will combine the privacy and anonymity of a WhatsApp chatbot with the peer discussions that occur naturally on powerful social media platforms like Facebook and Instagram. Engaging users with judgement-free content and tailored advice on sexual health and relationships will inform a whole new generation of young people and direct them towards related HIV and STI services.

Through investment from the Elton John AIDS Foundation, Avert is working as content provider hand-in-hand with the project lead, South African technology organisation Praekelt, to get *Young Africa Live* up and running in 2022. Regional in ambition, the South African trailblazer is integrating into B-Wise, an existing brand tackling similar issues among young people in South Africa and with whom we have been partnering closely.

The collective learning from the different stages of this innovative venture will put Avert in a strong position when it comes to inputting to and helping scale up future national-level projects across the region.

BOOST AND YOUTH BOOST

Upskilling community health workers and peer educators to be able to offer high quality care and information to their clients continues to be a strategic priority. This year has seen us grow our investment in *Boost*, a mobile phone app and online resource doing exactly that in East and Southern Africa. Providing timely and accurate content on HIV, sexual health and COVID-19, *Boost* has been used by thousands of grassroots health workers in the region. The highly relevant nature of the COVID-19 content was welcomed by many during the pandemic and the resulting rollout of community vaccine programmes.

In Zimbabwe, thanks to co-funding from the Vitol Foundation, Avert has expanded our partnership with national HIV organisation OPHID. We further developed *Boost* functionality and content over the course of the year. Rollout to 1,700 community outreach agents is taking place from late 2022. Community outreach agents will provide young clients aged 10-24 with information and advice and use new screening tools to support referrals and service uptake.

By providing *Boost* content in Shona and Ndebele, and generating new content on mental health and female genital schistosomiasis, we will increase community outreach agents' knowledge, confidence and skills, and support uptake of HIV, sexual health and family planning services.



Introducing the Boostbot

WhatsApp is ubiquitous across Southern Africa so we created a WhatsApp chatbot version of *Boost* as a way to expand reach and access to more community health workers. The free service has been piloted in Zimbabwe during the year, with plans to iterate and improve in the coming year.

You can access the Boostbot on WhatsApp by sending a 'hi' message to +1 989 747 1929.

We also expanded the number of *Boost* users through partnering with KaiOS (the premier operating system for feature phones) and launched a version of the app adapted for use on these cheaper phones, focusing on inclusiveness and affordability. In its first year of operation, the *Boost* KaiOS app was installed by nearly 6,000 users, with huge potential for future expansion.

YAYA

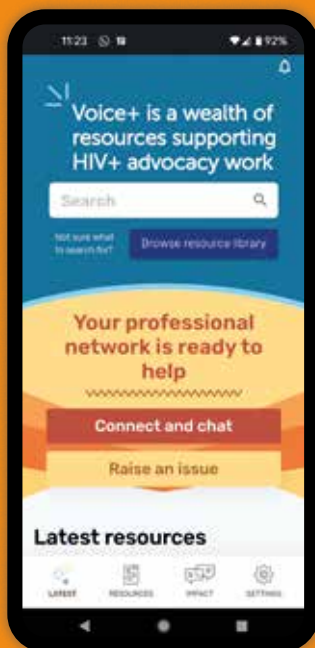
Our new partnership with VSO saw the development of a digital life skills app that will help inform the life, sex and relationship choices of thousands of adolescent girls and young women in two provinces in Mozambique.

The *Yaya* (Big Sister) app has been co-created with young women in Sofala and Manica provinces to suit low-literacy communities and is a cost-effective home-based learning solution that is relevant across resource- and connectivity-challenged contexts. The collaborative design process provided an important learning opportunity around how to reach marginalised groups with digital approaches in order to support lasting change (*see spotlight*).



What I love most about *Boost* is that it is simple but very educating and it will help me so much in my field.

Loveness, community health worker in Zambia



“

I shared it with my boyfriend. I told him that there is this App to go through maybe because there are certain things that I am not comfortable telling him. So after reading on his own definitely he had the idea, was also learning here and there and we talk about protection now.

24-year-old, female, *Be in the KNOW Zambia* user

VOICE+

Being able to disseminate appropriate, accessible and up-to-date information on COVID-19 to networks of people living with HIV meant that the *Voice+* app really came into its own this year. As a knowledge and strategy partner for the initiative, Avert has worked with GNP+ – with funding from UNAIDS and others – to provide trusted content on HIV and COVID-19 alongside digital strategy expertise.

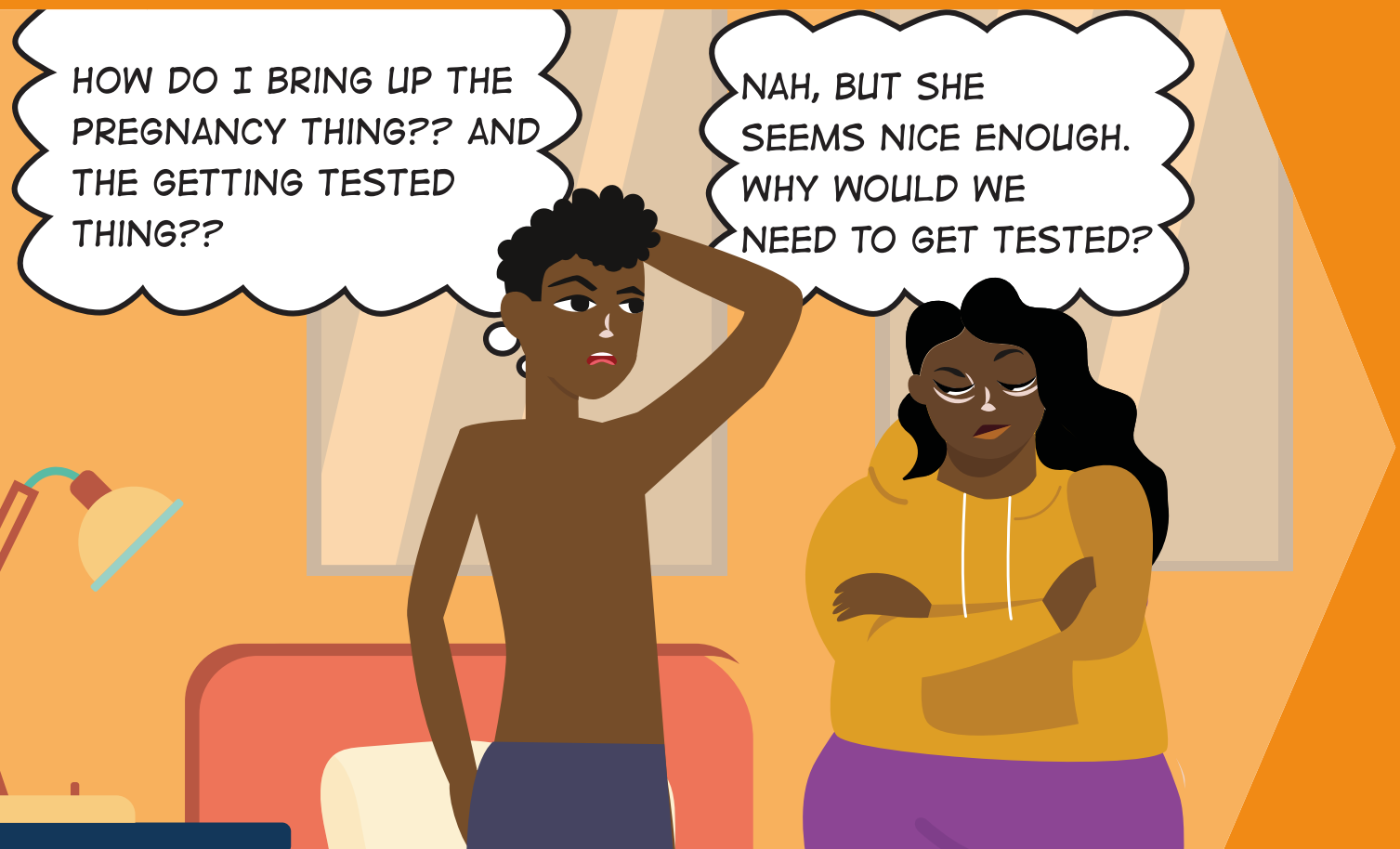
In addition to improving communication between network members, *Voice+* supports GNP+’s advocacy work by gathering on-the-ground updates from communities and registering their areas of concern.

FEMALE GENITAL SCHISTOSOMIASIS (FGS)

Affecting around 56 million women and girls in sub-Saharan Africa and the Middle East, FGS is an overlooked condition that can increase the risk of HIV and can lead to serious reproductive health issues.

As a core member of the FGS Integration Group, we are committed to using our resources and competence in health literacy to address the devastating impact of this neglected tropical disease. New user-centred content on FGS is being developed for *Be in the KNOW* and *Boost* together with screening tools to support community health workers working with young people in Zimbabwe, to roll out in late 2022.





WEBINAR How do we maximise the positive potential of digital communications in HIV and sexual health responses?

22 July 2021, 2pm to 3.30pm GMT+1, live on Zoom

Avert)HIV)
Empowering people through knowledge

Find out more and register at www.avert.org/webinar

Spotlight on webinar

In July, we held an interactive webinar – *Maximising the positive potential of digital communications in HIV and sexual health responses* – that attracted over 80 attendees from more than 20 countries. An inspiring panel of experts shared their experience and thoughts on how we deliver digital communication programmes to support progress in the HIV response. The webinar highlighted the challenges involved in monitoring and evaluating health communications projects as well as the importance of digital inclusion and privacy. We plan to stage a similar event in the coming financial year focused on profiling *Boost* with organisations working with community health workers in East and Southern Africa.

BE IN THE KNOW ZAMBIA

After formative research, participant recruitment, and co-design of a digital communications intervention for young people in 2020, *Be in the KNOW Zambia* bore fruit this year when we were able to evaluate the results of this action research project involving more than 3,000 participants. Together with in-depth interviews with young people in Zambia about their sexual health needs and concerns, the data provided valuable evidence on the impact of digital content on young people's knowledge and behaviour.

Results showed that users of the app went on to adopt more positive sexual health choices. These findings were presented at the International Workshop on HIV and Adolescence.³ An article in the *Journal of Medical Internet Research*⁴ also profiled some of the key conclusions from the research, which included an increased level of knowledge related to condom use, a greater intention among users to test for HIV and STIs, and more open communication with partners and peers.

- Held 29 September to 7 October 2021.
<https://academicmedicaleducation.com/hiv-adolescence-2021>
- Sharma, A., Mwamba, C., N'gandu, M., Kamanga, V., Zoonadi Mendamenda, M., Azgad, Y., Jabbie, Z., Chipungu, J., & Pry, J. M. (2022). Pilot implementation of a user-driven, web-based application designed to improve sexual health knowledge and communication among young Zambians: a mixed method study (Preprint). *Journal of Medical Internet Research*, 24. <https://doi.org/10.2196/37600>

Project spotlights

Across all our projects, we use people-centred design principles, evidence and learning, and partnerships to ensure all our work is relevant, engaging and effective – helping people make informed decisions about their health and enabling health workers to support them better. Combined with our understanding of how technology can deliver digital approaches that fit the context, and behaviour change communications, we have created high quality sustainable programmes that are making significant progress to increasing health literacy.

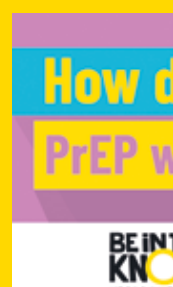
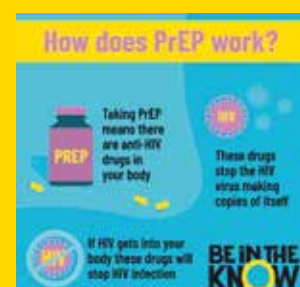
PREP CAMPAIGN

In Southern Africa, young women aged 18–24 are twice as likely to get HIV as men of the same age. Pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) is a prevention tool that they can use on their own terms and offers a big opportunity to prevent HIV infections among this at-risk group.

Supported by Mercury Phoenix Trust, Avert worked with young people in the region to co-produce a social media campaign encouraging young women to access and use PrEP and influencing young men to be allies in the process.

Following interviews with stakeholder organisations in Lesotho, Malawi, South Africa, Zambia and Zimbabwe, 15 young people were recruited to co-design and test the campaign. Campaign components included targeted ads with key messages on Facebook and Instagram, eye-catching graphics, discussion fora and a Q&A web page.

The relevance and appeal of the content to the target audience, together with our expertise in digital HIV communications and social media marketing, meant that the two-week campaign reached over 1.8 million people, 62% of whom were women. High engagement levels saw young people asking lots of questions, curious to know more about PrEP. For many, it was the first time they had heard about it. The Facebook posts in particular provoked lively conversations among users, providing a safe environment to talk about issues that are avoided by many in their communities.





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Misconceptions about PrEP may make many youths to stop using prep or not wanting to use PrEP. On top of that lack of full information about PrEP.

Co-creation group participant

The project evaluation and insights gleaned will stand us in good stead for future PrEP awareness campaigns that are already in the pipeline. All graphics from the initiative can be downloaded from *Be in the KNOW* and they have also been shared with stakeholder organisations working on HIV and public health in Southern Africa to use with their own audiences.

CO-CREATING YAYA

With nearly one in two girls in Mozambique marrying before 18, and many then dropping out of school, literacy skills and knowledge of sexual and reproductive health tend to be poor. The result is that adolescent girls are more likely to experience unplanned pregnancy, physical and sexual violence, and are at greater risk of HIV. We know that informed decision-making in these key areas leads to better health outcomes and a greater chance of economic independence and becoming active, empowered citizens.

VSO's Eagle project, funded by Global Affairs Canada, was set up to empower adolescent girls to learn and earn but the advent of COVID-19 halted the original programme design and led to an innovative digital element being introduced. Drawing on existing partnerships, VSO brought in Avert to co-create and develop a life skills app to support the sexual and reproductive health of out-of-school, low literacy teenage girls in Sofala and Manica provinces. The resulting app, called Yaya (Big sister), addresses knowledge gaps by offering audio and visual content in the local Ndau language (with Sena and Chiutè versions to follow), via low-cost tablets that are being distributed to 3,000 girls to use at home.

Bringing the intended audience – the girls themselves – into the app's development process to take part in testing and validating branding, content and user interface design, proved critical. Their involvement ensured not only that content is relevant, culturally sensitive and engaging but also, crucially, that Yaya is easy to navigate for those who are not digitally literate.

This user-centred approach demonstrated that even those with low literacy and no experience of using technology can nevertheless benefit considerably from digital health initiatives. As the project rolls out, we will be working with VSO to capture the learning about how to address longer-term sustainability issues in programming for marginalised groups.



The year ahead

Building on this year's successes, we are confident that we can maintain our reputation as a leading provider of quality HIV and sexual health information that informs, inspires, and supports people's choices and actions. We are starting the new year in a strong financial position with the backing of a number of trusted funders and partners with whom we will be looking to strengthen and broaden our relationships. Several of this year's projects will continue in the year ahead – including *Young Africa Live*, *Youth Boost* and *Yaya* – and our focus will be on progressing them on schedule and within budget, in line with our responsibilities to donors.

Another key priority is to ensure that the recently launched *Be in the KNOW* brand responds to and meets the needs of its intended audiences. By keeping track of and evaluating its performance, we will be able to iterate and improve as we continue to add and update content. This will take new funding and joining forces with experts in the field of digital health monitoring and evaluation.

We will continue to scale up *Boost* as part of our pledge to support community health workers and peer educators working on the frontline of the HIV and sexual health response. The findings from the project evaluation, together with the knowledge we have acquired through developing the *Youth Boost* platform, will inform this process. We will also be hosting a webinar to raise the profile of *Boost* with relevant organisations working across East and Southern Africa.

We will continue to follow and respond to the ongoing outbreak of Monkeypox. This viral disease appeared in small but concerning clusters of people in May 2022. Those initially affected all identified as gay or men who have sex with men in the UK; they had not travelled to countries with endemic levels of Monkeypox, such as Nigeria. Since then the number of cases has continued to rise, particularly among gay men and other men who have sex with men in other regions of the world. We are ensuring that we are providing regular evidence-based updates to our audiences across *Be in the KNOW* channels and will continue to ensure our other platforms such as *Boost* have content to support prevention, early treatment and vaccination for populations at risk.

Better understanding the impact and change brought about by our programmes remains critical, both to ensure that we are able to adapt and learn and to support our fundraising efforts. We look forward to increasing our investment and commitment in this area in the coming year and collaborating with new partners to help us achieve our goals.



Maintaining an effective organisation

With over 30 years of experience behind us, Avert continues to be flexible, creative and responsive in our strategic approach and communications. This is reflected in the fruitful first year of delivering our 2021-24 Strategic Framework which has positioned us well to carry on widening our reach and impact.

We continue to benefit from a committed and talented staff team of 9. Increased grant commitments have allowed us to now grow the team. With a deliberate strategy to have a diverse team recruited on merit and skilled at engaging with and understanding our audiences and approach, we started the process to add two new members to our project team from South Africa. Both new staff are now hosted with our partner organisation PATA, a South African-registered NGO based in Cape Town.

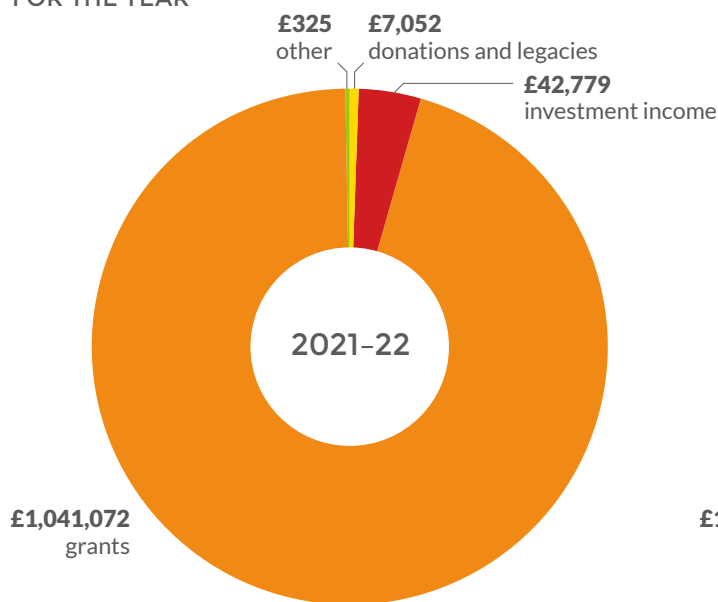
A further new staff member joined the Fundraising and Partnerships team to support consolidating donor and other stakeholder relationships. Professional development is a core organisational value. So we offered a range of staff training and learning opportunities during the year, including thematic technical sessions on health literacy and mental health, delivered by leaders in their fields such as published academics and United for Global Mental Health.

Maintaining strong external relationships as well as an objective critical lens on the wider changes taking place across the HIV and global health sector is vital for us – especially given our size and specialist focus. Avert is an active member of a wide range of sector networking forums including the UK international development network Bond, the Self-Care Trailblazer Group, the youth-led GenEndIt campaign, StopAIDS, and Funders Concerned About AIDS.

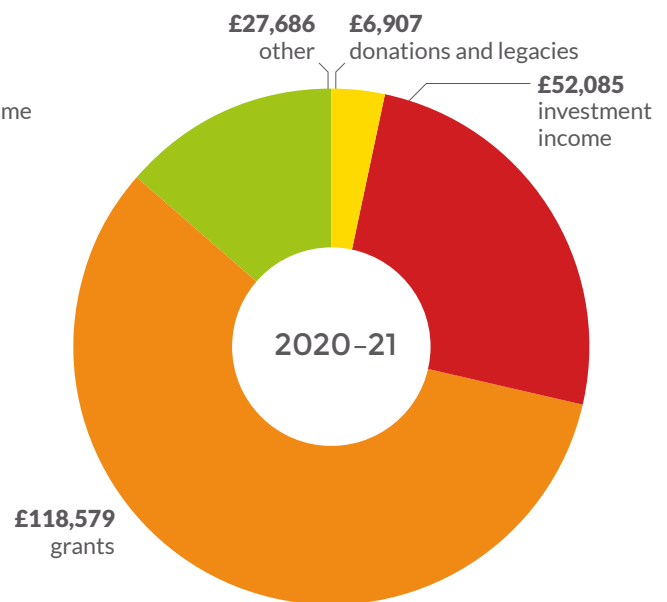
The COVID-19 pandemic has once again influenced and affected the wider global health and HIV sectors as rates of infection, treatment and vaccines remain uneven and the wider syndemic with HIV is still not clear. We have kept steadfast with a proportional and measured response ensuring that we can stay focused on our core mission and objectives.

Financial summary

TOTAL INCOME FOR THE YEAR



TOTAL INCOME: £1,091,228



TOTAL INCOME: £205,257

Avert would like to acknowledge and thank all the individual donors who continue to support our work as well as thanking the Vitol Foundation, Mercury Phoenix Trust, Gilead Sciences, ViiV Healthcare Positive Action Fund, VSO, The Elton John AIDS Foundation and the Global Network of People Living with HIV for their grant support and partnership.

AVERT (LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)

ORGANISATIONAL INFORMATION

TRUSTEES

Professor Simon Forrest (*Chair*)
 Anna Becker
 Emily Hughes
 Carole Leach-Lemens
 Beryl Mutoonono-Watkiss
 Lynne Slowey (*resigned 21 October 2021*)
 Sam Price (*resigned 29 July 2021*)
 Andrew Walker
 Max Cuvellier (*appointed 31 January 2022*)
 Sam Avrett (*appointed 31 January 2022*)
 Carol Sherman (*appointed 31 January 2022*)

PRINCIPAL AND REGISTERED OFFICE

Platf9rm, Tower Point,
 44 North Road
 Brighton BN1 1YR

Registered charity number 1074849

Registered company number 03716796

COMPANY SECRETARY

Professor Simon Forrest

BOARD SECRETARY

Kerry Pike

KEY MANAGEMENT PERSONNEL

Sarah Hand, *Chief Executive Officer (CEO)*
 Simon Moore, *Director of Communications & Digital Health Strategy*
 Kate Harrison, *Director of Partnerships and Fundraising*
 Jon Edgell, *Director of Finance and Operations*

BANKERS

CAF Bank Ltd
 25 Kings Hill Avenue, Kings Hill
 West Malling, Kent ME19 4JQ

Barclays Bank Plc
 Leicester LE87 2BB

INVESTMENT MANAGERS

J M Finn & Co
 25 Cophall Ave, London EC2R 7AH

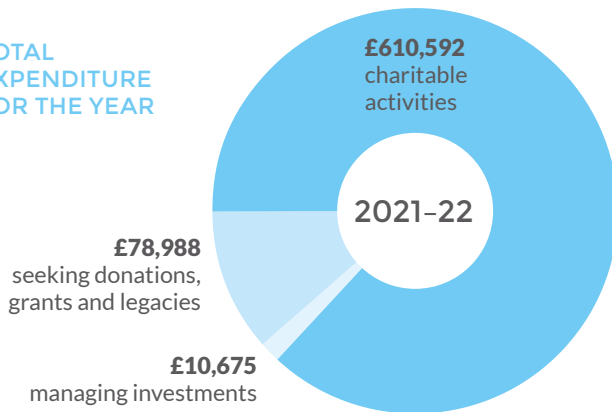
SOLICITORS

Irwin Mitchell
 Belmont House, Station Way
 Crawley, West Sussex RH10 1JA

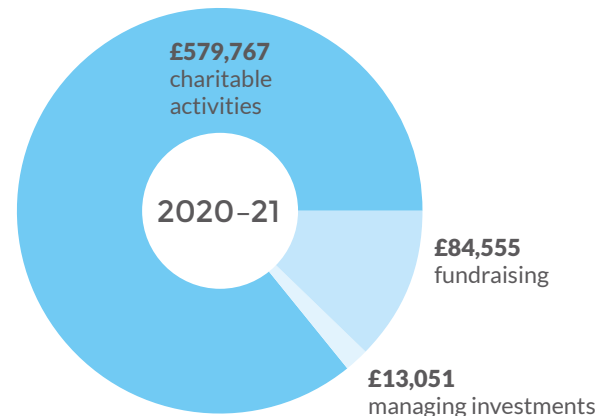
AUDITORS

Blue Spire Limited, Chartered Accountants
 Cawley Priory, South Pallant
 Chichester PO19 1SY

TOTAL EXPENDITURE FOR THE YEAR

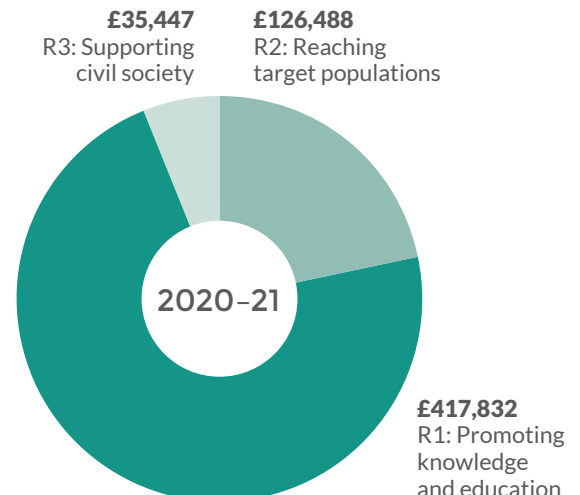
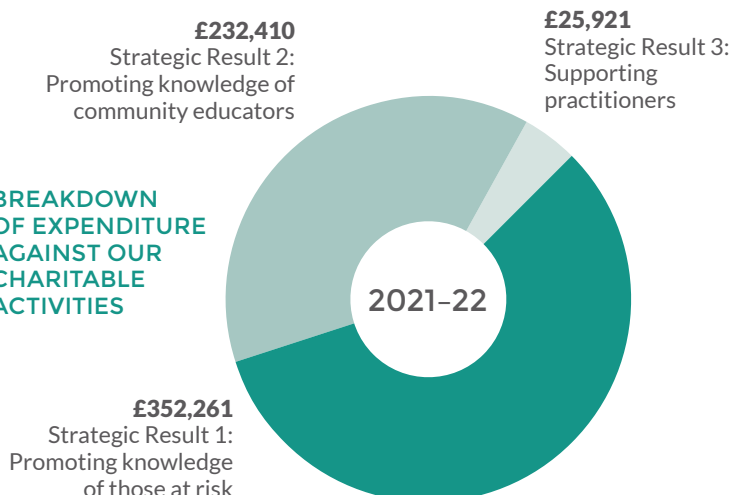


TOTAL EXPENDITURE: £700,255

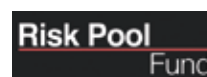


TOTAL EXPENDITURE: £677,373

BREAKDOWN OF EXPENDITURE AGAINST OUR CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES



Working in partnership with...



Avert > HIV >

Empowering people
through knowledge >

Avert
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Brighton BN1 1YR
General email: info@avert.org

www.avert.org

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