



Success stories and future directions in African HIV vaccine research

IAS 2025 pre-conference organized by the Global HIV Vaccine Enterprise of IAS – the International AIDS Society

Programme:

Sessions	
09:00 – 10:00 (CAT)	Session 1: Clinical research successes and lessons learnt
Welcome remarks	Programme overview
09:00 – 09:04	<i>Julien Nyombayire, Center for Family Health Research (CFHR), Rwanda</i> The objective of this first session is to highlight African-led clinical trials and their impact on global HIV vaccine strategies.
Presentation 1	HVTN 097 leading to HVTN 702 Trial
09:05 – 09:17	<i>Glenda Gray, Wits Infectious Disease and Oncology Research Institute (IDORI), South Africa</i> This session will focus on the successful execution of large African-led clinical trials. While the trials were not supportive of a successful HIV vaccine, they provided valuable data for future HIV vaccine research, especially regarding immune response variability and the importance of tailoring vaccines to regional contexts.
Presentation 2	The AMP trial
09:18 – 09:30	<i>Nyaradzo Mgodzi, University of Zimbabwe, Zimbabwe</i> The presentation will focus on the results of the AMP trial, which demonstrated a signal of efficacy in preventing acquisition of HIV strains sensitive to the administered antibody, proving the concept of antibody-mediated prevention.
Presentation 3	The importance of discovery trials to accelerate HIV vaccine research – IAVI G003
09:31 – 09:43	<i>Julien Nyombayire, CFHR, Rwanda</i> The presentation will elaborate on how results of the G003 trial could provide crucial information on the viability of the germline-targeting approach in African populations where an HIV vaccine would have the greatest impact.
Panel discussion & interactive Q&A	HIV vaccine trials in Africa: Challenges, lessons and next steps
09:43 – 09:58	Moderator: <i>Marianne Mureithi, University of Nairobi, Kenya</i> Panellists: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Glenda Gray, Wits IDORI, South Africa</i>• <i>Julien Nyombayire, CFHR, Rwanda</i>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lorraine Mwanza Chisanga, CFHRZ/MESICA and IAS EARN Fellow, Zambia Nyaradzo Mgodzi, University of Zimbabwe, Zimbabwe <p>The discussion will reflect on lessons learnt from the presented trials and their broader implications for HIV vaccine development, followed by an interactive Q&A with the audience.</p>
Closing remarks	
09:59 – 10:00	<p>Co-chair: <i>Marianne Mureithi, University of Nairobi, Kenya</i></p> <p>The co-chair will provide a brief summary and conclude the session.</p>
10:15 – 11:15 (CAT)	Session 2: Innovations in basic and translational research
Welcome remarks	Session overview
10:15 – 10:19	<p><i>Marianne Mureithi, University of Nairobi, Kenya</i></p> <p>This session will explore Africa's contributions to foundational HIV vaccine science and its role in shaping vaccine design.</p>
Presentation 4	Oral abstract session: HIV-1 broadly neutralizing antibodies in treatment-naïve and long-term virologic failure populations from Tanzania where multiple subtypes co-circulate
10:20 – 10:32	<p><i>Isaac Ngare Akuma, Kumamoto University, Japan and IAS EARN Fellow, Kenya</i></p> <p>This presentation will share key insights from a study examining broadly neutralizing antibody responses in both treatment-naïve and long-term virologic failure populations in Tanzania, a region with multiple co-circulating HIV-1 subtypes. The findings aim to deepen understanding of immune responses in diverse viral contexts, informing tailored HIV vaccine design strategies for the region.</p>
Presentation 5	Characterizing currently circulating HIV in rural forest areas of Cameroon, where ancestors of HIV-1 have been identified
10:33 – 10:45	<p><i>Marcel Tongo, Center for Research on Emerging and Re-Emerging Diseases (CREMER), Cameroon</i></p> <p>The presentation will explore the biological characterization of unique Cameroonian HIV strains and how results would be informative for developing intervention strategies to curtail HIV-1 virulence or transmission.</p>
Presentation 6	Characterization of the B cell repertoire in African populations to inform HIV vaccine design
10:46 – 10:58	<p><i>Eunice Nduati, KEMRI Wellcome Trust Research Programme, Kenya</i></p> <p>The presentation will explore characteristics of the African antibody repertoire, assess factors that may alter the repertoire and discuss the relevance of findings for HIV vaccine design.</p>
Panel discussion & interactive Q&A	Building the foundation: Innovations in HIV vaccine research
10:59 – 11:13	<p>Moderator: <i>Vincent Muturi-Kioi, International AIDS Vaccine Initiative (IAVI), Kenya</i></p> <p>Panellists:</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eunice Nduati, KEMRI Wellcome Trust Research Programme, Kenya • Fanyana Ngubane, Prevention CAB Wits RHI and IAS EARN Fellow, South Africa • Isaac Ngare Akuma, Kumamoto University, Japan and IAS EARN Fellow, Kenya • Marcel Tongo, CREMER, Cameroon <p>The discussion will highlight insights from foundational research and explore their implications for advancing HIV vaccine development, followed by an interactive Q&A with the audience.</p>
Closing remarks 11:14 – 11:15	<p>Co-chair: <i>Vincent Muturi-Kioi, IAVI, Kenya</i></p> <p>The co-chair will provide a brief summary and conclude the session.</p>
11:45 – 12:45 (CAT)	Session 3: Building infrastructure, capacity and collaborations
Welcome remarks 11:45 – 11:47	<p>Session overview</p> <p><i>Vincent Muturi-Kioi, IAVI, Kenya</i></p> <p>This session will address the importance of Africa's leadership in creating sustainable research environments and fostering global partnerships.</p>
Presentation 7 11:48 – 11:55	<p>The Africa Clinical Research Network</p> <p><i>Tariro Makadzange, African Clinical Research Network, Zimbabwe</i></p> <p>This presentation will showcase ACRN's mission to position Africa competitively in global clinical research by connecting researchers to opportunities, enhancing local capabilities, increasing access to resources and running high-quality trials.</p>
Presentation 8 11:56 – 12:03	<p>Infrastructure and capacity-building initiatives</p> <p><i>Omu Anzala, University of Nairobi, Kenya</i></p> <p>This presentation will highlight Kenya's pivotal role in strengthening Africa's research ecosystem for HIV vaccine development. It will showcase national efforts in building sustainable infrastructure, training scientific talent and fostering institutional capacity.</p>
Presentation 9 12:04 – 12:09	<p>Bridging continents, building capacity</p> <p><i>Allan Baguma, Baylor College of Medicine Children's Foundation-Uganda and IAS EARN Fellow, Uganda</i></p> <p>The presentation will showcase Africa's ability to develop world-class research facilities and train local scientists, ensuring sustainable contributions to HIV vaccine development.</p>
Presentation 10 12:10 – 12:25	<p>Innovations in community engagement</p> <p><i>Flash talk 1: Samuel Mwaniki, University of Nairobi and IAS EARN Fellow, Kenya</i></p> <p>This talk will present a community engagement model with trans and gender-diverse communities in Kenya, highlighting co-designed research efforts and lessons for inclusive HIV prevention and vaccine readiness.</p> <p><i>Flash talk 2: Festus McKeen, Minority Voices Liberia and IAS EARN Fellow, Liberia</i></p>



	<p>This presentation will explore community-led strategies, such as storytelling and peer navigation, to engage underserved populations and build trust in HIV services, with implications for vaccine delivery in restrictive settings.</p> <p><i>Flash talk 3: Chrissy Chabwera Banda, Blantyre District Health Office and IAS EARN Fellow, Malawi</i></p> <p>This talk will share insights from a COVID-19 vaccination campaign in Malawi that mobilized traditional leaders as local health champions, offering a replicable model for HIV vaccine engagement.</p>
Panel discussion and interactive Q&A	Strengthening research ecosystems through capacity and collaboration
12:26 – 12:42	<p>Moderator: <i>Julien Nyombayire, CFHR, Rwanda</i></p> <p>Panellists:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Allan Baguma, Baylor College of Medicine Children's Foundation-Uganda and IAS EARN Fellow, Uganda</i> • <i>Chrissy Chabwera Banda, Blantyre District Health Office and IAS EARN Fellow, Malawi</i> • <i>Omu Anzala, University of Nairobi, Kenya</i> <p>The discussion will explore strategies for building sustainable research infrastructure and inclusive partnerships across Africa and will open the floor for interactive Q&A.</p>
Closing remarks 12:43 – 12:45	<p>Co-chair: <i>Julien Nyombayire, CFHR, Rwanda</i></p> <p>The co-chair will offer closing reflections and key takeaways from the half-day pre-conference and formally conclude the session.</p>

<https://www.iasociety.org/ias-programme/global-hiv-vaccine-enterprise>