



ELTON JOHN  
AIDS FOUNDATION

# THE ROCKET FUND HIGHLIGHTS

PHOTO BY: VICTOR WAHOME

The Rocket Fund is the Elton John AIDS Foundation's transformative campaign to accelerate innovative HIV solutions for marginalized communities, close critical gaps left by global funding cuts, and tackle the stigma that continues to block access to lifesaving care.

TO DATE, THE ROCKET FUND HAS REACHED

**2.2+ MILLION PEOPLE**

ACROSS

**63 COUNTRIES**

INCLUDING

**645,000+ YOUNG PEOPLE**

with HIV testing, prevention, education, and treatment services, in partnership with organizations around the world.

In September 2025, we extended and expanded this campaign's goal to **\$200 million** to ensure no one is left behind. This will accelerate our momentum and build on the impact we've generated to date by:



FIGHTING FOR RIGHTS AND INCLUSION



SUPPORTING COMMUNITY MOVEMENTS



INNOVATING FOR EQUITY IN  
HEALTH ACCESS AND CARE



LEAVING NO ONE BEHIND



MOBILIZING ADDITIONAL FUNDING



PHOTO BY: ALESSANDRO MARISCALCO

**ADVANCING EQUALITY,  
REDUCING DISCRIMINATION,  
PROTECTING LEGAL AND  
HUMAN RIGHTS**

**MORE THAN**

**150 COUNTRIES**

criminalize drug possession for personal use, as well as HIV nondisclosure, exposure, or transmission.

**AT LEAST**

**65 COUNTRIES**

and territories criminalize LGBTQ+ identities or expressions.

**Despite some progress, discriminatory laws and policies that criminalize drug use, HIV exposure, and LGBTQ+ identities continue to undermine human rights and exacerbate health inequities worldwide.**

These overlapping forms of criminalization share a devastating common thread: they intensify stigma and fear, and block access to HIV prevention, treatment, and healthcare.

We have a long history of using our voice to advance equality and rights in the communities that need it the most, to ensure everyone's human and legal rights are protected.

Together with our partners, the Foundation has cultivated positive changes in several legal and policy landscapes. Amid a global surge of anti-rights legislation, our continued advocacy remains critical for protecting the dignity of the most marginalized, and to guarantee that everyone has the healthcare they need and deserve.





PHOTO BY: VITAL STRATEGIES

## IMPACT SNAPSHOT

### INTERNATIONAL DRUG POLICY CONSORTIUM

Support. Don't Punish (SDP) is a global grassroots campaign promoting harm reduction and drug policies that prioritize health, human rights, and well-being.

Overseen by the International Drug Policy Consortium, the campaign seeks to amplify the profile of effective harm reduction approaches and sustainable responses to drug use.

A comprehensive evaluation of the campaign spanning a ten-year period (from 2013 to 2023) found that the Foundation's sustained investment has been catalytic in helping to grow SDP into a visible, credible, and increasingly influential global movement.

Key results and achievements include:

#### SCALED GLOBAL ENGAGEMENT

By 2023 SDP was active in 84 countries, vastly increased from 21 in 2013.

2013

21  
countries

2023

84  
countries

#### COMMUNITY GROWTH AND MOBILIZATION

76%

of SDP partners said their communities grew or mobilized more effectively from their participation.

#### REDUCING STIGMA

76%

of SDP partners said that their involvement reduced stigmatization in their contexts.

#### DIRECT ENGAGEMENT WITH OFFICIALS

72%

of SDP partners have engaged directly with politicians, police, or health authorities, with effective advocacy meetings cited in India, Lebanon, Moldova, Nigeria, and Uganda.

#### SHIFTING MEDIA AND PUBLIC OPINION

69%

of SDP partners reported more positive coverage for harm reduction narratives, and robust visibility for Global Drug Awareness events.

#### POLICY AND PRACTICE INFLUENCE

73%

of SDP partners reported successfully influencing drug policy or practice in at least nine countries.



PHOTO BY: CUBBY GRAHAM

## IMPACT SNAPSHOT

### CENTER FOR HIV LAW AND POLICY

The Center for HIV Law and Policy (CHLP) is a legal and policy organization focused on reforming and eliminating laws that criminalize people living with HIV and other stigmatized health conditions in the United States.

With the Foundation's support, CHLP recently helped to stop full passage of a proposed bill in the state of Louisiana that sought to criminalize exposure to all sexually transmitted infections, including HIV.

Through coordinated advocacy with the National Coalition of STD Directors, CHLP successfully stalled the bill, prompting the legislature to instead establish a task force to study STI public health outcomes.

This shift represents a critical example of successfully replacing punitive measures with constructive evidence-based dialogues.





# SUPPORTING COMMUNITY MOVEMENTS

PHOTO BY: SEAN BLACK

## BUILDING POWER AND COLLECTIVE ACTION WITH PARTNERSHIPS, NETWORKS AND COALITIONS

**Tackling today's complex and intersecting challenges requires strategic collaboration, shared visions, and meaningful partnerships.**

When led by the most affected people and communities, multi-stakeholder coordination can be a powerful force for change. Yet, to achieve impact beyond what a single group can deliver, coalitions and networks must be intentionally cultivated, adequately resourced, and strengthened through capacity-building and sustained funding.

Through the Foundation's support, partners across the U.S., Africa, and Asia are joining forces to drive progress.

They are delivering essential funding using networks, launching new coalitions, building organizational capacity, and taking unified action that leads to measurable results.

More critical than ever within a rapidly evolving global health funding and policy landscape, we remain committed to cultivating powerful, community-led collective action.

# IMPACT SNAPSHOT

## FRONTLINE AIDS

In 2023 Frontline AIDS, with support from the Foundation, launched the Response, Evidence, Advocacy, and Change Program to confront health disparities and advance human rights for LGBTQ+ communities in Africa.

Implemented in Cameroon, Ghana, Senegal, and South Africa, the program tackles barriers to health by strengthening LGBTQ+ organizations' capacity to document rights violations, respond to emerging crises, and advocate for systemic change at national, regional, and global levels.

The program demonstrated considerable progress in amplifying advocacy efforts for LGBTQ+ rights in countries where it operates, as confirmed by mid-term program evaluation.

### TRAINED PARTNERS DOCUMENTED

**239 HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS**

in less than a year, leading to increased community awareness and ongoing advocacy to influence decision makers' responses.

**\$420K IN RAPID RESPONSE FUNDING**

PROVIDED TO **36 ORGANIZATIONS**

LOCATED IN **10 COUNTRIES**

# IMPACT SNAPSHOT

## COURAGE FORWARD STRATEGIES

In the United States, pharmacies can help close critical gaps in HIV prevention access given their extended hours, trusted settings, and convenience (90% of Americans live within 5 miles of one). The Rx EACH Initiative is a national coalition effort to expand and sustain equitable access to HIV services in community pharmacies.

Since launching in 2023 with the Foundation's support, the Rx EACH Initiative has engaged more than 60 partner organizations, supported policy change in multiple states, influenced federal guidance to strengthen reimbursement for pharmacist-delivered services, and developed practical resources to inform pharmacy-based HIV prevention programs.

### PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS INCLUDE:

**CONVENING 'STATE ACTION INSTITUTES'**

in 5 states that led to changes in state policy

**INFLUENCING MEDICARE COVERAGE DETERMINATIONS FOR PrEP**

**DEVELOPING AND LAUNCHING RESOURCES**

such as a State Action Playbook, a State Model Policy Checklist, and the *Prepped to Serve* Toolkit for pharmacies



# IMPACT SNAPSHOT

## REMEDY ALLIANCE FOR THE PEOPLE

The Resiliency Equity and Access for Community Harm Reduction Initiative, led by Remedy Alliance for the People along with partners Smoke Works and Points of Distribution, has successfully piloted and scaled innovative funding mechanisms to expand harm reduction access in the U.S.

This effort has strengthened the overall infrastructure of harm reduction programs in almost every U.S. state, including at least 27 programs supported by the fiscal sponsorship platform.

Moreover, the Ethical Business Collaborative has effectively strengthened the capacity of three harm reduction supply vendors, resulting in improved customer engagement, financial systems, and bilingual outreach.

Overall, the initiative demonstrates how investments in collaboration for mission-driven actors can both expand access and embed equity, creating a more sustainable and inclusive harm reduction ecosystem in the U.S.

**THROUGH PARTNERSHIP WITH THE FOUNDATION, THE PROGRAM IS:**

**INCUBATING**

**NEW HARM REDUCTION INITIATIVES**

and a self-sustaining fund for their supplies.

**ENHANCING**

**FISCAL SPONSORSHIP INFRASTRUCTURE**

for new overdose prevention programs.

**DEVELOPING A**

**BUSINESS COLLABORATIVE**

for shared funding.

**PROVIDING**

**ESSENTIAL SUPPLIES**

including over 100,000 doses of naloxone so far.





# INNOVATING FOR EQUITY IN HEALTH ACCESS AND CARE

PHOTO BY: JORDI MATAS

## PIONEERING NEW AND MODERN WAYS TO IMPROVE THE DELIVERY, UPTAKE, AND SCALING OF ESSENTIAL HEALTH INFORMATION AND CARE

**For too long, traditional health campaigns and services have struggled to engage people – especially youth - in ways they want and need.**

In response, the Foundation champions creative, people-centered innovations - supporting new ideas, products, and technologies that increase access to information and care. We prioritize meeting people where they are, and we lean into the potential that more modern, direct-to-consumer, and digital solutions hold.

As a result, our partners have pioneered proven approaches that make essential health information, services, and products more accessible, especially for young people. In an era of shrinking health budgets, these leaner, smarter, and more responsive innovations are not just efficient – they are essential for the future of global health.



# IMPACT SNAPSHOTS

## TIKO, UGANDA

Tiko is a groundbreaking digital health platform transforming healthcare for youth. Tiko connects young people – especially young women – to free sexual, reproductive, HIV, and mental health services via their mobile phones, at no cost.

On a device that is easy and familiar to them, it lets them book confidential appointments, receive text reminders, rate local health providers, and even earn reward points to spend at local retailers.

### THE PARTNERSHIP IN 3 COUNTRIES REACHED

**320,000+ YOUNG PEOPLE**

A program evaluation of the Foundation-supported Tiko program in Uganda confirms that it created significant improvements in access to and utilization of sexual and reproductive health, HIV, and mental health services among adolescents and young people, including:

#### INCREASED CONFIDENCE

in seeking healthcare services

#### HIGHER

contraceptive prevalence rates

#### IMPROVED

HIV testing uptake

#### NOTABLE GAINS

in treatment adherence

Previously in Kenya, today we are continuing this evidence-based partnership with Tiko in Uganda and in South Africa.

By meeting youth where they are—digitally and in their communities—we are helping to reshape the future of HIV prevention and care.

## ZIPLINE, KENYA

Even in places where the HIV epidemic has reached crisis levels among young people, like Kenya, conventional approaches like expanding access to health facilities and exposure to health education have not translated into increased demand for and use of HIV services.

In 2023, the Foundation partnered with Zipline to pilot bringing HIV information, services, and products directly to adolescents and youth through community events and drone-based delivery, and to learn whether this makes HIV interventions more acceptable, equitable, appropriate, and effective for them.

### AS A RESULT, ZIPLINE REACHED

**100,000 YOUNG PEOPLE**

with education and care.

In fact, a final program evaluation confirmed that by going beyond clinics and meeting youth where they are, their health knowledge and their preventive behaviors improved, and their use of mobile health testing services vastly increased.

Building on this success, we have expanded our Zipline partnership to Nigeria, and will reach thousands more young people in ways that best meet their preferences and needs.



PHOTO BY: CUBBY GRAHAM

## IMPACT SNAPSHOT

### BUILDING HEALTHY ONLINE COMMUNITIES

A growing proportion of people in the United States at high risk of HIV - and particularly young men who have sex with men (MSM) - are finding sexual partners solely through dating websites and apps, and do not attend places where HIV testing is typically promoted or delivered.

In response, Building Healthy Online Communities (BHOC) created a platform called TakeMeHome for ordering and distributing HIV and STI self-test kits to dating app users.

With the Foundation's partnership and funding, BHOC has expanded TakeMeHome participation in the U.S. South through further relationship-building with Southern providers and health departments, with a key focus on reaching younger MSM.

This platform providing a low-stigma, easy-entry point to HIV and STI testing home testing program has so far delivered powerful results.

#### OUR IMPACT SO FAR:

**171**

health departments, clinics, and community-based organizations are now using TakeMeHome.

**14,000+**

HIV/STI tests have been ordered through the TakeMeHome program.

**1 IN 3**

participants have identified TakeMeHome as their very first HIV testing experience, demonstrating that the model increases demand for testing.





# LEAVING NO ONE BEHIND

PHOTO BY: CUBBY GRAHAM

## STEADFASTLY REACHING THE PEOPLE AND PLACES MOST IN NEED

**We are deeply committed to ensuring that no one is left behind in the fight for equal rights and access to healthcare.**

From Ukraine to the United States, the Foundation continues to stand for the people and places who need it most. We prioritize solutions that can reach those too often overlooked: individuals and communities facing discrimination, geographic isolation, conflict, violence, and chronic underinvestment from other funders. Across the globe, our partners are delivering results and proving what's possible in the most challenging contexts.

As funding for global health continues to evolve and shift, and governments and organizations have to do more with less, marginalized groups are at risk of falling further behind.

We will continue our work to ensure that everyone is empowered to claim their rights, and are treated with compassion, dignity, and respect.

# IMPACT SNAPSHOT

## VITAL STRATEGIES

Overdose is the leading cause of preventable death for Black adults in the U.S. Expanding access to naloxone—a safe, easy-to-use nasal spray that can reverse an overdose in minutes – can help change that. With Bloomberg Philanthropies, the Foundation is proud to support the ‘You Have the Power to Save Lives’, a new campaign spanning seven key U.S. cities where overdose rates have surged, led by Vital Strategies.

The campaign includes more than a dozen community groups, health organizations, and local government agencies, and works to establish new naloxone distribution points, reduce stigma around carrying it, and encourage more people to keep naloxone on hand.

In only a few short months the campaign saw powerful and rapid results.

### PEOPLE WHO SAW THE CAMPAIGN WERE:



more likely  
to carry naloxone.



more likely  
to know where  
to get it.



more likely to feel  
confident using it to  
reverse an overdose.

### AND CLOSE TO



talked about the messages  
in the campaign with  
friends, family, or other  
people around them.

This impact is already generating interest from other cities where Black overdose deaths are disproportionately high, with two more U.S. cities recently joining the campaign, while organizers welcome and encourage even more jurisdictions to get involved.

# IMPACT SNAPSHOT

## OUT LGBT

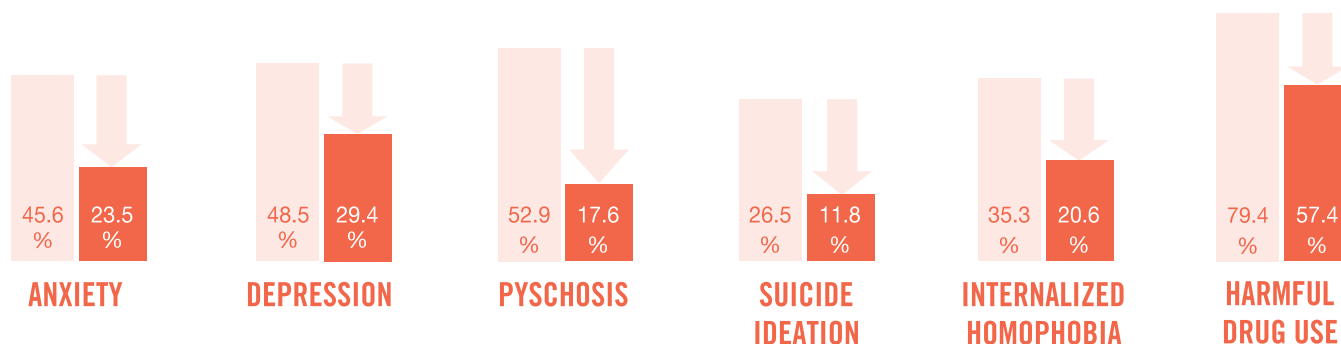
In South Africa, the Foundation has partnered with OUT LGBT to provide comprehensive services tailored for men who have sex with men (MSM) engaging in chemsex, or the use of recreational drugs in the context of sexual experiences.

The program provides individualized treatment plans that include psychosocial care, peer-led engagement, family and community involvement, and clinical care.



## OUT LGBT CONTINUED

A program evaluation demonstrated the Foundation-supported chemsex project vastly increased the retention rate in HIV care - from 42% to 83% - when compared to a previous and less comprehensive version. Moreover, the program created significant mental health benefits, with large decreases in several symptoms and harmful drug use:



## IMPACT SNAPSHOTS

### POSITIVE WOMEN, UKRAINE

Ukraine has the second largest HIV epidemic in Europe, after Russia. Before the war broke out in 2022, Ukraine was making significant strides in curbing HIV/AIDS, with consistent reductions in infection, and increases in treatment and care. Then, almost overnight, health systems were crippled and people were not only unable to access essential HIV services, but their needs were compounded within a humanitarian emergency.

With our support, across six regions of Ukraine, our partner Positive Women offered women living with HIV and who are displaced by the conflict access to safe shelter spaces.

There, they are provided with comprehensive legal, psychological, humanitarian, and social support.

A program evaluation confirms the effectiveness of this model:

- Participants reported positive changes in psychological health and mental well-being after receiving individual and group counseling services (e.g. less self-stigma about living with HIV).
- Increased HIV treatment adherence
- Improved knowledge, attitudes, and service provision from health workers



PHOTO BY: JORDI MATAS

# IMPACT SNAPSHOT

## LOCAL PARTNER IN UGANDA

In Uganda, a 2023 law criminalizing homosexuality put LGBTQ+ lives at even greater risk. Government data confirms that after the law's passing there was a rapid and sharp decline in the numbers of vulnerable populations reached with HIV services.

By contrast, through our support a local HIV partner was able to quickly respond and ensure the continuity of healthcare services and protection of LGBTQ+ individuals.

A final evaluation of this program 2023 to 2024 produced the results below.

Overall, the evaluation confirmed that they successfully adapted their approach in ways that allowed them to mitigate risks, sustain service delivery, and reinforce trust within affected communities during a time of heightened legal and social risk.

Staying resilient, steadfast, and nimble as national laws and policies affecting the most vulnerable change over time is paramount to ensuring that we end AIDS within the next generation.

### IN 2023 - 2024 THE PROGRAM:

#### REACHED

**46,000+**

people with HIV tests

#### RECIEVED

**92%**

of tests returned, exceeding the national average of 85%

#### STARTED

**10,000+**

LGBTQ+ people on HIV prevention medication

#### SERVED

**23,000+**

LGBTQ+ individuals with crucial mental health services





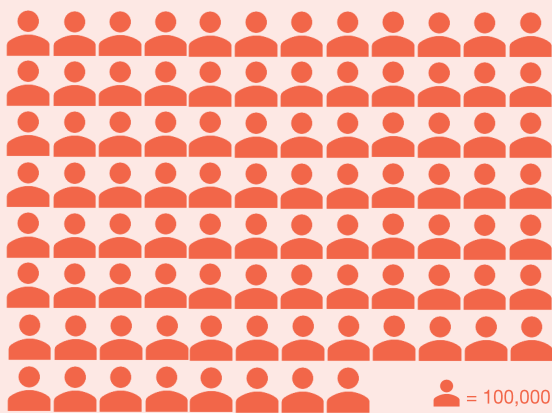


# MOBILIZING ADDITIONAL FUNDING

PHOTO BY: DAVE BENETT

## LEVERAGING NEW FINANCIAL RESOURCES TO SECURE THE FUTURE OF THE HIV RESPONSE

We passionately advocate for the funding necessary to end AIDS for everyone, everywhere.



Even before reductions in global health investments:

**9.2 MILLION PEOPLE**

living with HIV were not accessing treatment.

**EVERY MINUTE**

someone died of  
AIDS-related causes.



This reality demands renewed urgency, creativity, and bold collective action. By working closely with our partners to pioneer solutions built for scale, and by leveraging our own influential global platform and voice, the Foundation will continue successfully mobilizing new and expanded financial support from the private sector, governments, and philanthropic partners to sustain and scale innovative, life-saving approaches.



## £223M FOR OPT-OUT TESTING

We are proud that the opt-out testing in Emergency Departments in England, an approach first pioneered by the Foundation in 2018, has since generated a total of £223 million in additional commitments from both Labour and Conservative governments.

## \$500K INFLUENCES \$37.7M

An evaluation of our work with United for Global Mental Health revealed that our \$500,000 grant both directly and indirectly influenced \$37.7 million in Global Fund budget requests for integrated mental health activities.

## UK GOV MATCHES £250K

In response to the recent U.S. funding cuts, with Foundation support our partner Give Out launched an Urgent Response Fund to support impacted LGBTQ+ organizations, securing £250,000 in UK government matched funding.

## \$50K LEADS TO \$1M

Our partner, FAITH in Nepal, won a competitive \$1M grant from Pivotal Ventures and Lever for Change to expand a community-based mental health model for female sex workers successfully piloted through a \$50K Foundation grant.

## \$1.7M RAISED IN UKRAINE

When the war started in Ukraine, local HIV nonprofits' need for funding skyrocketed. Through our support, our partner Light of Hope helped these groups raise more than \$1.7 million in new funding using an innovative digital platform that enabled people to donate with traditional and crypto-currency.





## \$150M TO ZIPLINE

The Foundation was an early supporter of Zipline's groundbreaking drone-powered HIV and healthcare delivery in Kenya, followed by an expanded partnership in Nigeria. Building on that catalytic support, \$150M in funding from the U.S. State Department will enable Zipline to triple its lifesaving drone delivery network across the continent.

## \$23M FOR GLOBAL YOUTH

In 2024 we successfully partnered with other international funders, who contributed an additional \$23 million to amplify the impact of our own investments in delivering health information and services to young people.

## \$25 MILLION FOR RADIAN

Building from a successful first \$25M phase, Gilead Sciences committed another \$25M for a five-year extension of the RADIAN partnership to help meet the needs of the most vulnerable key populations in Eastern Europe and Central Asia. The effort will continue to drive progress toward turning the tide of HIV across the region, while expanding its geographic focus to provide support to communities impacted by the conflict in Ukraine.

## CITY GOVERNMENTS STEP UP

To build on the Foundation's investments, cities like Philadelphia in the U.S. and several municipalities in Eastern Europe and Central Asia – including in Kazakhstan and Bulgaria – have committed their own funding to sustain local HIV and harm reduction initiatives for high-risk populations.

