Since the beginning of the HIV/AIDS epidemic, FHI 360 has pioneered efforts to understand the disease and engage affected communities, especially populations most at risk. Currently, FHI 360 leads dozens of projects across the United States that address the social, medical, scientific and cultural aspects of the disease. We have partnered with funders such as the Ford Foundation, the Pfizer Foundation, the National Institutes of Health (NIH), the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), and the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) to strengthen our resources. Together, we provide thousands of U.S. residents with access to prevention strategies, diagnosis, care, and both medical and social treatment.

Research and Scientific Studies

Preventing new infections: In collaboration with the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID), FHI 360 staff established Be the Generation, an initiative that galvanized new research on vaccines, especially in communities most affected by HIV/AIDS. FHI 360 delivers tailored approaches to affected communities — especially African American, Hispanic/Latino and gay/bisexual/transgender populations — with sensitivity to their history of mistrust and misperceptions regarding clinical research.

Hosting a comprehensive HIV prevention trials network: FHI 360 is the Operations Center of the HIV Prevention Trials Network (HPTN), a partnership between scientists and communities around the world to develop, evaluate and implement cutting-edge biomedical, behavioral and structural interventions to reduce the transmission of HIV. The HPTN has more than 80 research sites in 15 countries, including the United States, and more than 50 clinical trials ongoing or completed. FHI 360 was a key partner in the design and implementation of two HPTN studies that estimated the overall HIV incidence rate for men and women at risk for HIV acquisition in select areas of the United States. HPTN 064, also known as ISIS (Women’s HIV SeroIncidence Study), found an HIV incidence rate among black women that was significantly higher than the national estimate. HPTN 061 was a large multisite study of HIV among black MSM conducted in six U.S. cities, and the first to determine the rate of new HIV infection among such a large prospective cohort of U.S. black MSM.

Planning for the future: FHI 360 manages HPTN 065 (TLC-Plus), a study designed to evaluate the feasibility of a community-focused HIV prevention strategy that aims to expand HIV testing, diagnose HIV infection early, link HIV-positive individuals to care, and ensure that patients adhere to HIV treatment regimens. The study is under way in the Bronx, NY, and in Washington, DC, both of which are hard-hit by HIV/AIDS. The results will provide essential information for the design of future research and for implementation across the United States. Baseline data were presented at the AIDS 2012 conference and have been accepted for publication in the Journal of AIDS.
OUTREACH: On-the-Ground Interventions

Developing a continuum of prevention to care: Through ConnectHIV, FHI 360 staff provided technical assistance to community-based organizations in ten states funded to integrate HIV prevention, care and treatment. A subsequent evaluation showed statistically significant gains in knowledge of HIV/AIDS and sexually transmitted disease, as well as behavior change and improved health outcomes among participants.

Increasing access to antiretroviral treatment: Funded by the CDC, FHI 360 staff pioneered an intervention linking individuals diagnosed with HIV to medical care. The intervention, Anti-Retroviral Treatment and Access to Services (ARTAS), was then replicated at ten urban and rural sites as testing grounds for national rollout.

Promoting testing in vulnerable communities: The recently launched program called Testing Makes Us Stronger targets black MSM to “stay strong and informed” through regular testing. FHI 360 contributed to the development of this campaign by establishing a workgroup of experts with experience serving at-risk communities who will collect data on the effectiveness of the intervention, the social and sexual networks of black MSM, and their risk factors.

SUPPORT: Lending Resources for a Stronger Community

Leading the charge for effective change: FHI 360 staff led the CDC’s Diffusion of Effective Behavioral Interventions (DEBI) project which disseminated evidence-based HIV prevention interventions through training sessions to community-based service providers and state and local health departments. FHI 360 staff managed the delivery of over 1,100 facilitator training sessions, engaging nearly 18,700 participants from over 5,000 organizations throughout the country.

Supporting anti-stigma initiatives: FHI 360 staff created and supported a national anti-stigma framework built at the community level, including campaigns among rural Georgians, young Chinese Americans, Latino Americans, MSM of color, HIV-positive MSM, transgender women and injection drug users. With the help of FHI 360 staff, each grantee designed a culture-specific program to address community needs. Findings were shared online and published in peer-reviewed journals.

Building capacity nationwide: Funded by the CDC, FHI 360 staff founded Community Building Assistance (CBA), a program that strengthened infrastructure, sustainability and HIV prevention programs for individuals, community-based organizations, communities and health departments. FHI 360 also served as the CBA Resource Center and developed MyCBA.org to improve communication and collaboration among key stakeholders.

Looking Ahead

FHI 360 will continue to address the HIV/AIDS epidemic in the U.S. through its outreach initiatives, groundbreaking biomedical research, and technical support of both governmental and nongovernmental agencies addressing the crisis. Working together, we can achieve the vision of an HIV-free generation.

About FHI 360: FHI 360 is a nonprofit human development organization dedicated to improving lives in lasting ways by advancing integrated, locally driven solutions. Our staff includes experts in health, education, nutrition, environment, economic development, civil society, gender, youth, research and technology — creating a unique mix of capabilities to address today’s interrelated development challenges. FHI 360 serves more than 60 countries, all 50 U.S. states and all U.S. territories.