

Let communities lead, for real: the SCOPE model for HIV combination prevention

Authors:

Chiara Longhi¹, Hmayak Avetisyan^{1,2}, Amanita Paulie Calderón-Cifuentes^{3,3}, Apostolos Kalogiannis¹, Harriet Langanke^{1,4}, Vera Rodriguez^{1,5}, Marco Stizioli^{1,6}

- 1. European AIDS Treatment Group, Brussels, Belgium
- 2. National Trans Coalition Human Rights NGO (NTC), Yerevan, Armenia
- 3. Trans Europe and Central Asia (TGEU), Berlin, Germany,
- 4. GSSG - Gemeinnützige Stiftung Sexualität und Gesundheit, Cologne, Germany
- 5. European Sex Workers' Rights Alliance (ESWA), Amsterdam, the Netherlands
- 6. Brescia Checkpoint ETS, Brescia, Italy



Amplifying Community Voices for Prevention

Strategic Community HIV Prevention Empowerment

CEG
ORGANISATIONS
PARTNERS

BSCHECKPOINT

european
sex workers
rights
alliance



tgeu.
TRANS EUROPE
AND CENTRAL ASIA

Introduction and purpose

Despite significant advances in HIV prevention, key and priority populations continue to face structural, social, and legal barriers that limit access to prevention tools and services. As a result, substantial inequalities persist in the availability, accessibility, and affordability of combination HIV prevention interventions across Europe and Central Asia.

Developed by the European AIDS Treatment Group (EATG), the SCOPE project – Amplifying Community Voices for Prevention – aims to strengthen community engagement at local and regional levels while integrating the experiences and expertise of key and priority populations into evidence-informed prevention efforts. Implemented in close collaboration with community representatives, SCOPE seeks to identify and address barriers to HIV combination prevention, amplify community perspectives, and support more equitable, accessible, and people-centred prevention responses for populations most affected by HIV yet often underserved by health systems and underrepresented in policy, research, and public debate.

Description

In 2025, the SCOPE project strengthened community engagement in combination HIV prevention by creating capacity-building, networking, and advocacy opportunities through cross-sectoral collaboration at the WHO European regional level. To align the project with community needs, a selected Community Expert Group (CEG), composed of representatives from key and priority populations, was established to co-create, support, and organise all core activities.

In doing so, the SCOPE project ensured that all interventions reflected community priorities.

SCOPE therefore creates a blueprint for community engagement that leverages from the knowledge and lived experiences of key and priority populations. The expertise of community activists and advocates shapes and influences activities aimed at producing meaningful knowledge to support health systems, prevention strategies, and policy.

These activities included:

- Awareness-raising video campaigns featuring CEG members;
- Workshops and webinars on the biomedical prevention pipeline and community-led integrated services;
- Grants for study trips, conference participation, translation, and the production of community-informed HIV prevention materials.

ACTIONS	KEY RESULTS	LESSONS LEARNED
Digital campaign Transform the Response: Advancing HIV Prevention through Community Leadership	Across social media: Views: over 90,000 Comments: over 210 Reposts: over 400 Private message shares (on platforms where this data is available): over 530	Authenticity drives engagement
Workshops Community in Scope: An in-person workshop on HIV Combination Prevention	Number of applications: 73 Number of participants: 30 Geographic coverage: 11 WHO European countries ■ Key populations represented: ■ Queer people ■ Migrant and mobile populations (with past or recent migration or displacement experience) ■ People living with HIV ■ People who use drugs ■ Gay, bisexual, and other men who have sex with men (GBMSM) ■ Trans and non-binary people ■ Sex workers	True inclusivity through diversity
Grants Funding for community-informed resource materials	Number of applications: 37 Number of participants: 4 available grants Impact of grants – Produced and adapted materials have been handed out at various testing sites and clinics, and to communities locally: 1. AIDS Solidarity Movement (Cyprus): Development of multilingual guidance strengthened community engagement and increased uptake of HIV prevention services. 2. Right Side Human Rights Defender NGO (Armenia): Locally translated materials improved understanding of prevention tools, reduced stigma, and empowered marginalised populations to access HIV services. 3. EuroNPUD (France, Poland, Portugal): Adaptation of harm reduction resources into French, Portuguese, and Polish, led by people who use drugs, improved local relevance and strengthened community-led dissemination. 4. OurCARE (Switzerland/Turkey): Turkish translation and adaptation of an HIV treatment resource, developed with community input, improved understanding and access to care for people newly diagnosed with HIV. Number of grants awarded: 4	Empowerment through local ownership

Voices in the Circle: A Fishbowl Dialogue on Community Realities in HIV Prevention

Visually represented as a fishbowl, this interactive discussion took place during the **Community in Scope workshop**, giving advocates direct control of the agenda to share lived experiences and debate topics such as mental health and trans-inclusive care.

This graphic represents the intersectional backgrounds of workshop participants, central to the project's achievements. Intersectional lived realities mean that different people fall under different categories, so the visual reflects the range of identities represented, rather than a simple headcount of participants.



Scan the QR code to watch our Community in Scope video

Participants join the fishbowl discussion during the Community in Scope workshop, seated in a circular formation, taking turns sharing lived experiences and insights on barriers and innovations in HIV combination prevention.



We are the most real people you will ever meet because we have paid with blood, sweat and tears and sperm. The price for the privilege of owning ourselves.

Amanita Calderón-Cifuentes
TGEU



The problem is not HIV but discrimination because HIV is just a virus. The virus doesn't decide who to attack. The problems are that the politicians, the government, the institution don't give us the tools to protect ourselves.

Marco Stizioli
Brescia Checkpoint ETS



Decriminalisation of sex work could decrease HIV levels globally and could be one of the most effective measures to reduce it.

Vera Rodriguez
ESWA



If you give the tools for policy changes, then real changes happen because when we are together, we are unstoppable.

Hmayak Avetisyan
National Trans Coalition
Human Rights NGO (NTC)

Conclusions

The success of the SCOPE lies in ensuring that key population perspectives and community voices—especially those often excluded by the health system and are underrepresented in policy and public debate—are meaningfully and timely integrated into project outputs.

By linking the project to grassroots experiences, bringing evidence and narratives from the field, as well as feminist and intersectional positionality to inform discussions and decision-making, the project reaffirms that sustainable progress in HIV prevention requires communities not only to be consulted, but to lead: placing human rights, dignity, and lived experience at the centre of policy and practice.

Acknowledgments

Thank you to everyone who helped make the SCOPE project and all its activities a reality: EATG Members, our partners, participants and community advocates whose voices and dedication shaped this work.

Learn more about the SCOPE project

Scan the QR code to keep up to date with the project and join us

