

## Community health workers' HIV Hub - Boost



Focus group with community health workers in Zimbabwe

Avert's community health workers' HIV Hub, Boost, launched at the end of January 2020. It is a digital information hub which provides accessible and engaging HIV and sexual health content for community healthworkers and their clients across Southern Africa.

In population-based surveys conducted across East and Southern Africa between 2011 and 2016, just 33% of young people had comprehensive and correct knowledge about HIV.<sup>1</sup> Community health workers have the potential to support millions of people living with, or at risk of HIV in Southern Africa. They are often people's first point of contact with the health system, and both the [African Union](#) and [UNAIDS](#) have endorsed a plan to support the training and deployment of 2 million community health workers across Africa.

However, to play an effective role, community health workers need clear, accessible, and accurate information on HIV and AIDS so they can keep their knowledge up-to-date and provide high quality care and support to their clients and communities.

### What does Boost provide?

Boost provides engaging content, delivered in creative formats, through an accessible interface – targeted at community healthworkers in Southern Africa, but accessible globally.



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

- Loveness, community health worker in Zambia



The project has both adapted and tailored existing content from Avert.org, and co-created new content with community health workers from across the region.

The project aims to fill a recognised gap in informal m-health/e-health resources that can support ongoing information needs that may be additive or outside of community health workers' existing training curricula.

It draws on and responds to the rapidly growing access to smartphones and the internet in the region, while recognising the limitation of intermittent access and data costs. It provides a resource that can be downloaded when there is access to data, and used offline afterwards. The project also seeks to provide alternative delivery channels through working with NGOs in the region to make content available to the widest possible group of community health workers.

The Boost project began in February 2019, with the first round of scoping and consultations held in Malawi, Zimbabwe and Zambia between February and April 2019.

Boost launched at the end of January 2020 and is being promoted in relevant priority countries in Southern Africa. An external evaluation is an integral part of this pilot project, with an evaluation report due to be published by September 2020.

## Want to find out more?

If you are interested in supporting Boost, please [get in touch with us](#).

If you'd like your organisation to use Boost or want to know more about how your organisation can benefit from its resources, [see our Boost page](#).

If you want to get updates on the project, [sign up to our Boost email list](#).

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## 1. UNAIDS (2017)

Last full review:

16 April 2019

Next full review:

16 April 2020