



# HANC Collaborator Survey: 2015

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## Introduction

Since 2009, the Office of HIV/AIDS Network Coordination (HANC) has conducted an online collaborator survey. In 2009 and 2010, we had over 200 respondents from about 600 collaborators. In 2011 and 2012, we had over 300 respondents from about 1,100 collaborators. After the 2012 survey it was decided to conduct this evaluation biannually and following the most recent recompetition and funding of the networks it was decided to delay the survey a year. The 2015 survey was distributed to over 1,100 HANC collaborators in October 2015. We received responses from 196 collaborators (~18%). This survey is an important part of an evaluation process at HANC to assess the efficacy of our efforts to facilitate cross-network and trans-institute coordination and communication, in order to achieve a more efficient research enterprise. The following is an executive summary of the 2015 survey and the detailed results. Using data from this survey, we are able to trend HANC performance over the six years in a couple of key domains. As detailed below, increased awareness of HANC and its mission and objectives is in part due to an increased presence at network meetings, and increased dissemination of information to HANC collaborators about HANC, on a regular basis through a variety of media. We continue to assess the value of specific HANC projects and products, as

well as the performance of the HANC staff in managing these projects and all the HANC-facilitated work groups.

## Executive Summary

HANC collaborators are members of HANC-facilitated work groups and other people who have access to the HANC portal. HANC collaborators include individuals within the network leadership, core/operations centers, community representatives, laboratories, and statistical and data management centers. Additionally, some site investigators and other staff are members of HANC work groups. Members of DAIDS and other institutes that sponsor some of the network research activities are also HANC collaborators, including OAR, NICHD, NIMH, NIDA, NIAAA and NCI.

Almost a fifth of HANC collaborators responded to the 2015 survey, which was designed to gather data concerning HANC's cross-network coordination and collaboration activities, and the performance of the HANC staff and utility of the HANC web site and portal to facilitate those activities. Also, we conduct longitudinal comparisons of HANC performance using responses from several domains for which we have collected data for multiple years. A broad spectrum of members from HANC work groups and other collaborators responded to the survey. Respondents identified their primary network affiliation as ACTG 29%, IMPAACT 17%, HVTN 16%, HPTN 15%, MTN 13% and ATN 3% (Figure 1). A wide range of network-related activities were identified by the respondents (Figure 2), and likewise a large range of primary organizational affiliations were noted among the respondents (Figure 3): 59% of respondents were members of a HANC-facilitated working group or committee (Figure 4). Some members of all HANC-facilitated coordination areas responded to the survey (Figure 5). This survey for the first time asked respondents to identify their primary site of work: 57% work in North America, 25% Africa, 9% Asia, 7% South America and 1% each the Caribbean and Australia/New Zealand (Figure 6).

The HANC survey collected information concerning social networking/connections and communications. The purpose of these questions was to learn more about HANC's role in facilitating cross-network communication and how people would like to obtain information from HANC. People indicated that they preferred to learn about HANC activities from a wide variety of sources (Figure 7). People also indicated a preference for email communication as well in their comments. However, 48% of respondents indicated they would like to know more about HANC activities (Figure 8). A couple people also wanted more information on how HANC prioritizes its work and activities. As in past years, a significant number of people (35%) indicated they could accomplish their work group objectives more effectively if they had the opportunity for face-to-face meetings (Figure 9) and quite a few comments reflected this sentiment as well listed on page 18.

Of people who have visited the HANC public website, 73% found it a useful resource (Figure 10). Frequency of visits to the HANC public website varied from rarely or never (43%), to quarterly (29%) and weekly or daily (9%) (Figure 11). The HANC password-protected portal was found to be a useful collaborative tool by 46% of respondents (Figure 12). While 62.5% of respondents rarely or never access the HANC portal, 27% access it quarterly and 21% weekly or daily (Figure 13). The open text field comments on pages 18-19 also reflect strong ongoing interest in

increased laboratory resources, training information, community engagement and cultural competency resources on the HANC web site and portal. HANC staff will consider these suggests in the coming months.

Beginning in 2011, new questions were included to gauge the value added of HANC projects. We asked people to rate the degree to which specific projects/resources have added value in supporting the science and/or operations of the HIV/AIDS research enterprise. On an added value scale of 1 (very low) to 5 (very high), almost all projects were rated between 3 (medium) and 4 (high) on average (Figure 14). Satisfaction with the outcomes of work group projects was high at 70%, and only 3% responded negatively (Figure 15). Only 12% of respondents thought that HANC could better manage projects to completion (Figure 16). The open text field comments for these questions are listed on page 20. HANC staff will consider these comments and share them with the relevant HANC work groups.

The HANC survey also gauged the performance of HANC staff in facilitating the core mission of HANC and the work of the HANC work groups. The following are the average rating selected by the respondents by area of performance of HANC, not including those who did not respond to the question or responded not applicable, on a scale of 1(strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). The data is also shown in Figure 17.

	Rating Average
HANC has facilitated cross-network communication and sharing of information/materials	4.29
HANC has facilitated cross-network collaboration and/or harmonization of policies and procedures	4.13
HANC has facilitated network communication with DAIDS representatives	4.00
HANC has facilitated trans-NIH institutes/centers communication	3.86

The highest performance ratings were for HANC’s efforts to facilitate cross-network communication and sharing of information and materials. HANC will continue to explore ways to improve trans-NIH institute/centers communication as this remains the domain that has the lowest ratings. People submitted some very helpful comments in this section, listed on page 21. Again HANC staff will consider these comments and suggestions and share with the relevant work groups. Some of them, such as standardizing tools, procedures and policies for protocol start-up across the core/operations centers are already being discussed by the Site Coordinators Work Group.

As in past surveys, most people (70%) indicated they would like to learn more about HANC at network meetings or during cross-network activities (Figure 18). A couple of comments recommended increased awareness and communication about the impact of laboratory policies at the site level. Other comments focused on the need for more standardization across networks for SOPs, policies and procedures at the site level (page 21).

We asked members of HANC-facilitated work groups to rate HANC's performance related to conference call logistics and facilitation (Figure 19). All five domains queried received ratings almost entirely of 4 (good) or 5 (very good).

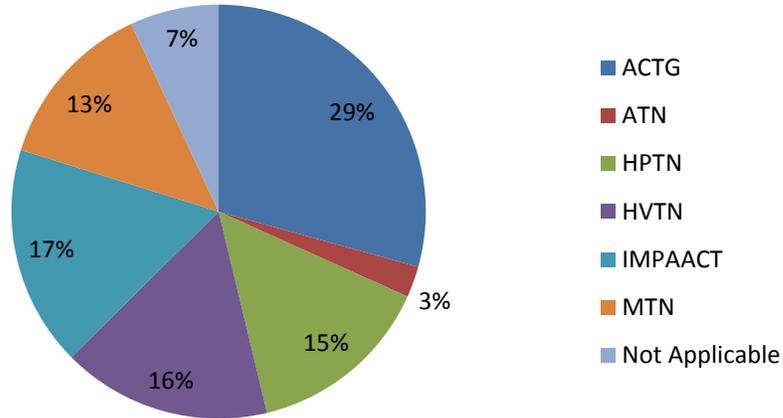
Beginning in 2011, we solicited feedback from people attending HANC-facilitated meetings. About 28% of the respondents indicated that they have attended a HANC-coordinated meeting in the past two years (Figure 20). The meetings attended are noted in Figure 21. The overall quality ratings for meeting reports, follow-up, content, speakers, and agenda development were rated high: as good to mostly very good (Figure 22).

HANC has followed trends over time for both the HANC call facilitation and HANC performance relative to its core mission (Figures 23 and 24, respectively).

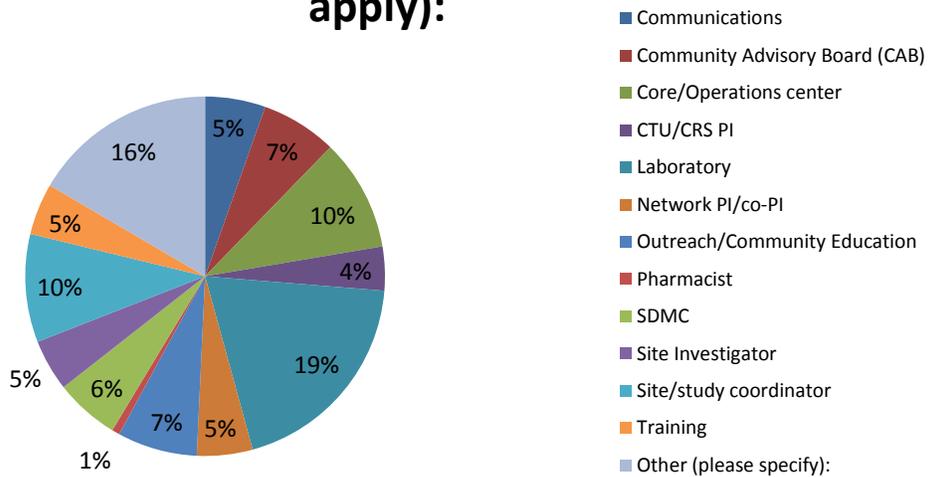
In summary, about a third of HANC's collaborators responded to this detailed survey, providing HANC with informative feedback. Respondents represented the diverse collaborators that work with HANC. Collaborators again indicated that they would like to learn more about HANC's coordination efforts in areas outside of the work group that they participate in, and they preferred a variety of communications methods to learn about HANC's other activities. Assessment of HANC's performance in meeting its core mission areas was similar to the previous survey in 2011 year, and improved from 2009 and 2010. However, we will continue to emphasize improvement in facilitation of trans-NIH institute/center communication as that still ranks the lowest. HANC collaborators stated that they could better achieve their work group objectives if there were more opportunities for face-to-face meetings. HANC will continue to secure support for face-to-face meetings where appropriate. Overall, HANC staff received very good ratings for their performance in their facilitation of work group calls and face-to-face meetings, as well as good ratings in the added value of HANC work group projects. People appreciated the resources on the HANC public website, and reported the HANC portal to be a useful collaborative tool.

## Respondents to the HANC Collaborators Survey

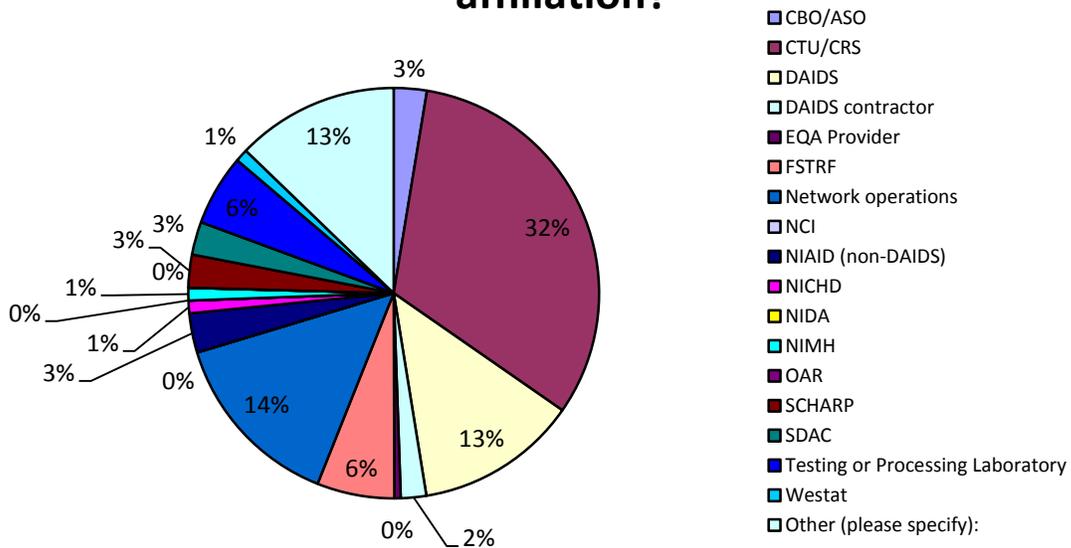
**Figure 1: What is/are your primary network affiliation(s)? (Select all that apply):**



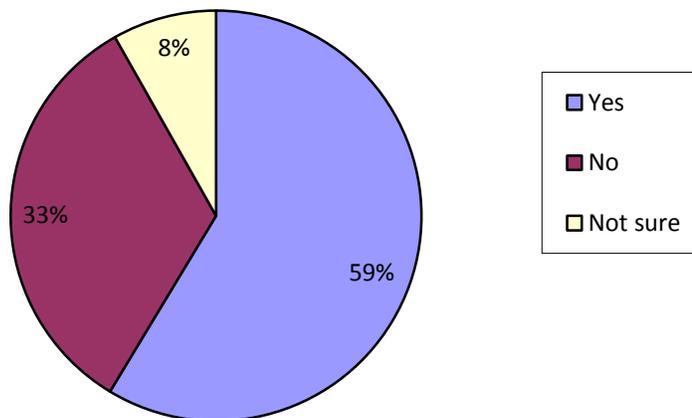
**Figure 2: What are your main areas of network related activities? (Select all that apply):**



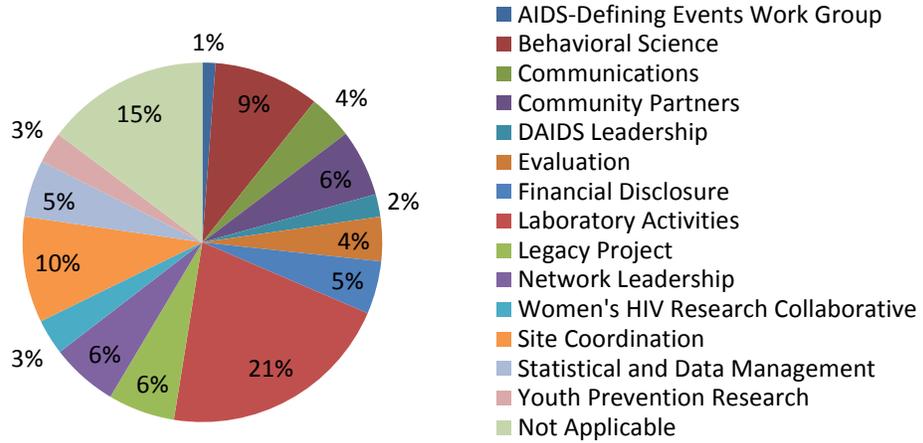
**Figure 3: What is your primary organizational affiliation?**



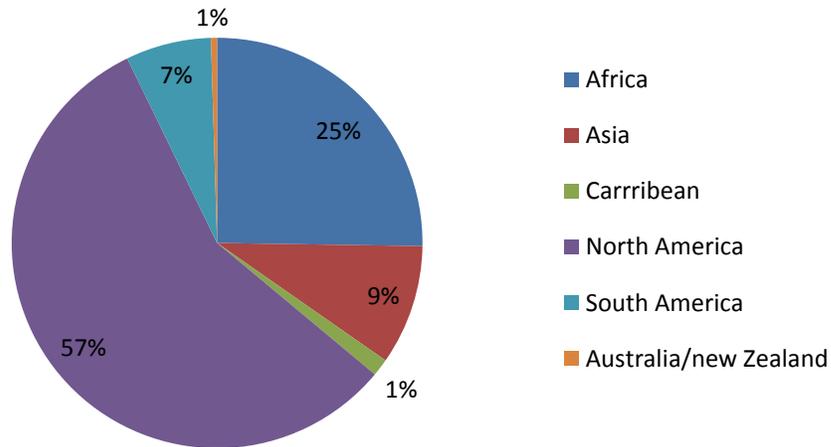
**Figure 4: Are you a member of a group coordinated by HANC staff?**



**Figure 5: In which area(s) of HANC-facilitated coordination are you involved? (Select all that apply):**

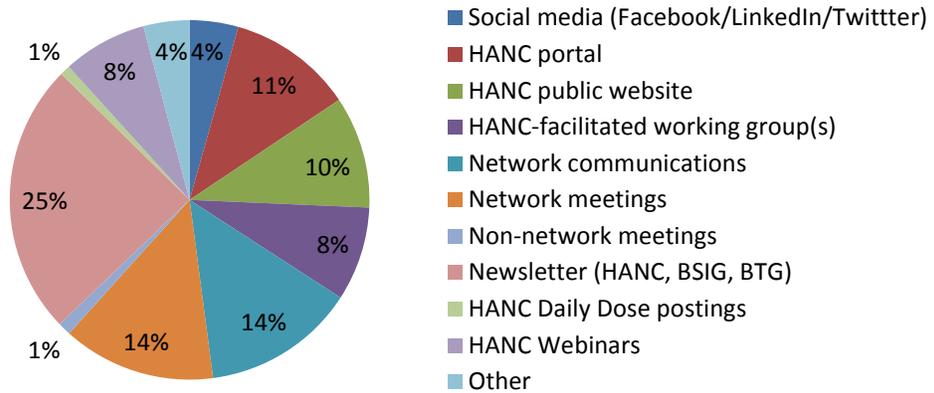


**Figure 6: Where is your primary site of work? (You make more than one selection.)**

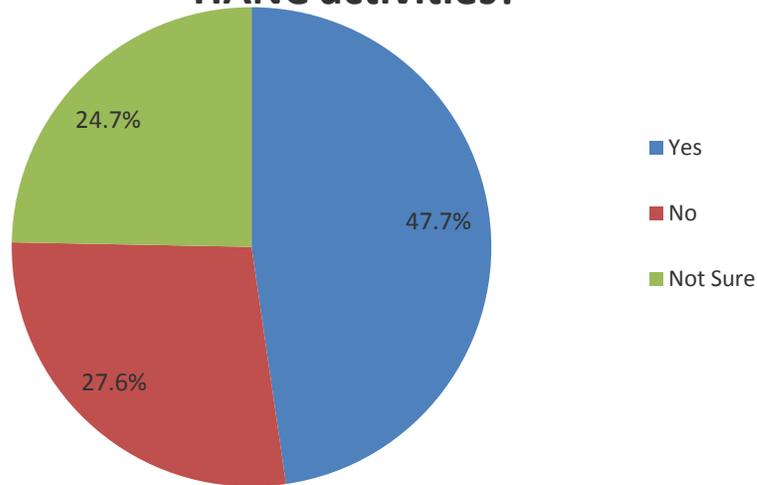


## HANC Activity Awareness

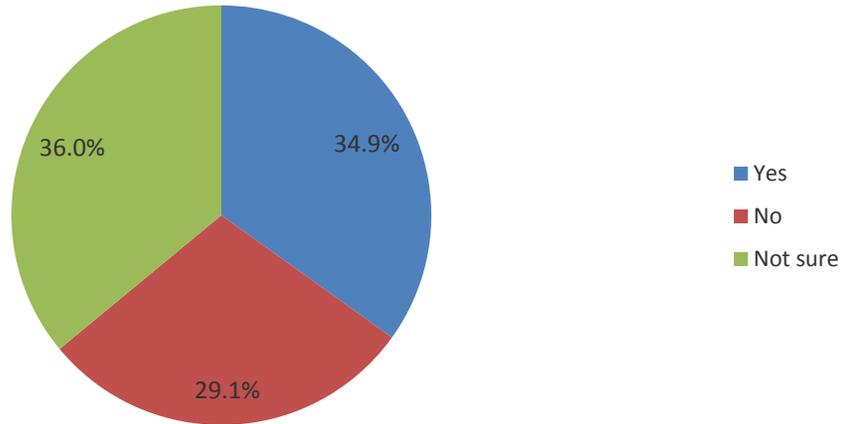
**Figure 7: How do you prefer to receive information about HANC activities? (Select all that apply):**



**Figure 8: Would you like to know more about HANC activities?**

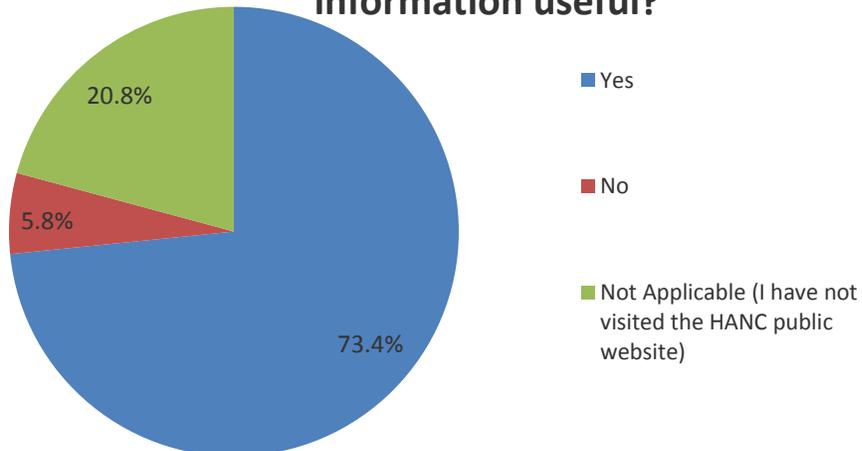


**Figure 9: Would you be able to achieve your working group objectives more effectively if you had the opportunity for face-to-face meetings?**

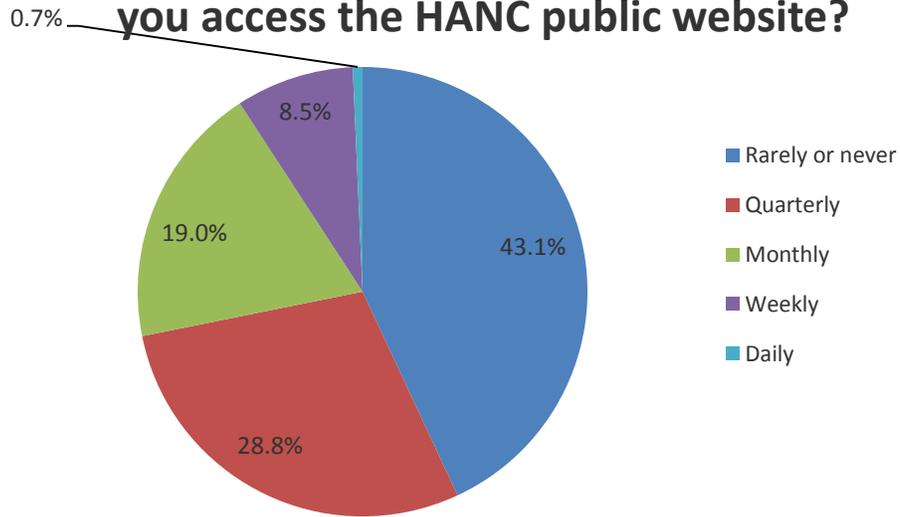


## HANC Website and Collaborator Portal

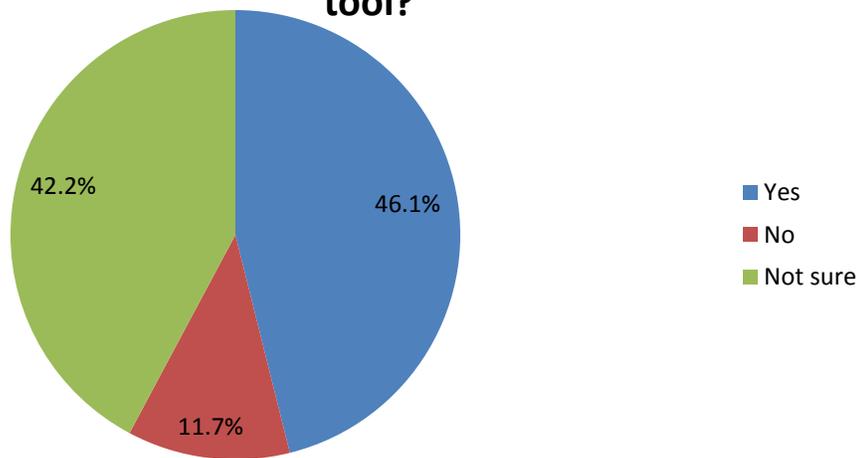
**Figure 10: If you have visited the HANC public website, did you find the resources and information useful?**



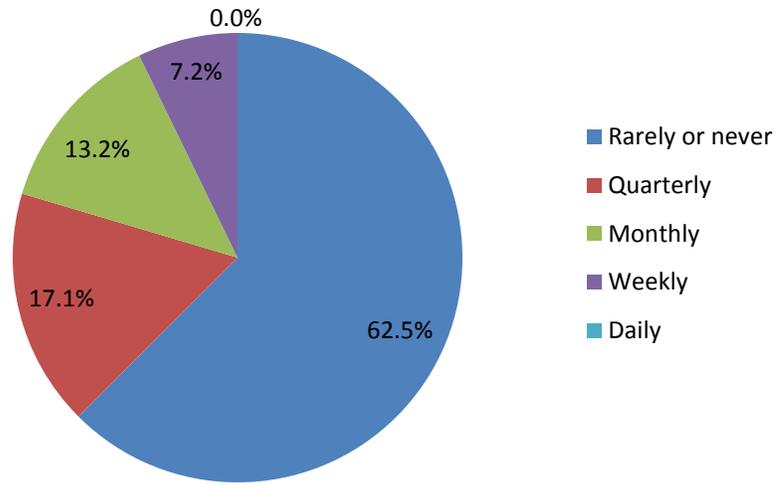
**Figure 11: On average, how frequently do you access the HANC public website?**



**Figure 12: In general, do you think the HANC password-protected portal is a useful collaborative tool?**

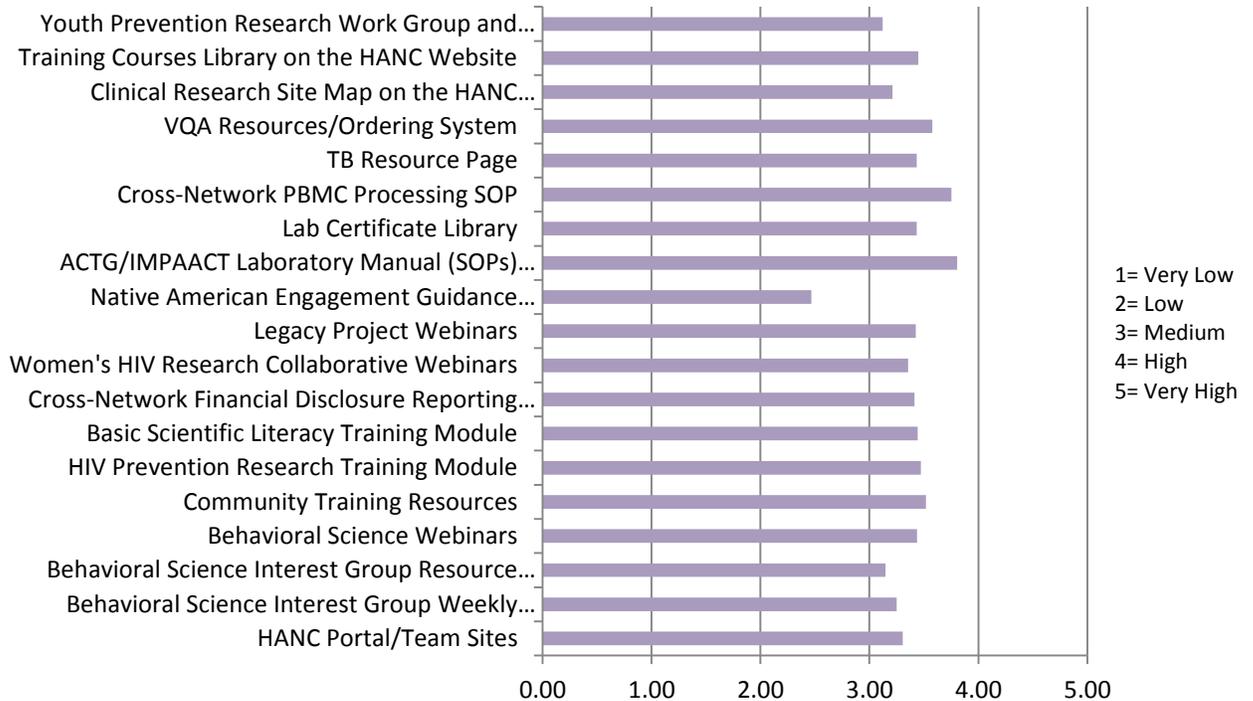


**Figure 13: On average, how frequently do you access the HANC password-protected portal?**

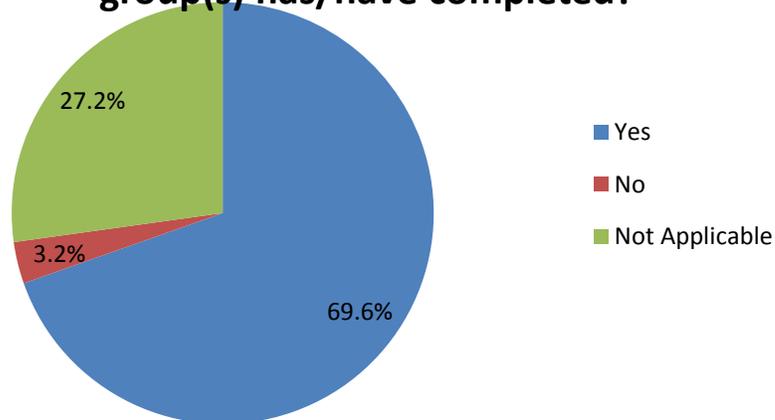


## Added Value of HANC Work Group Projects

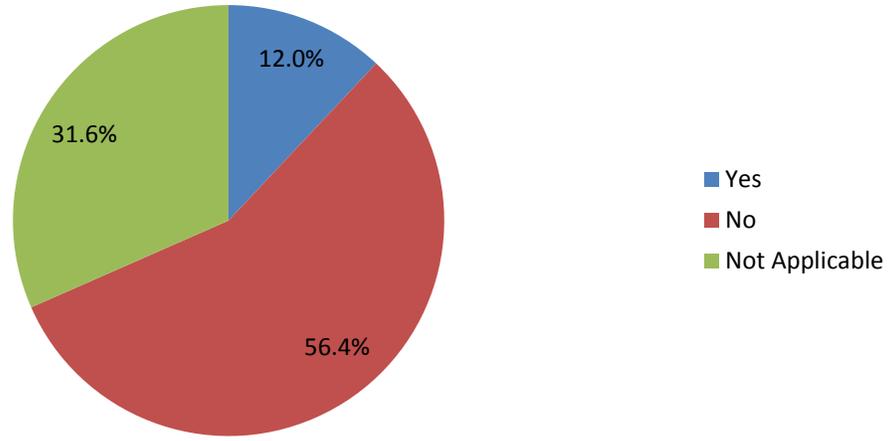
**Figure 14: Projects and Resources:** Please rate the degree to which each of the following projects/resources has added value in supporting the science and/or operations of the HIV/AIDS research enterprise.



**Figure 15: Are you satisfied with the outcomes of the projects that your HANC-facilitated working group(s) has/have completed?**

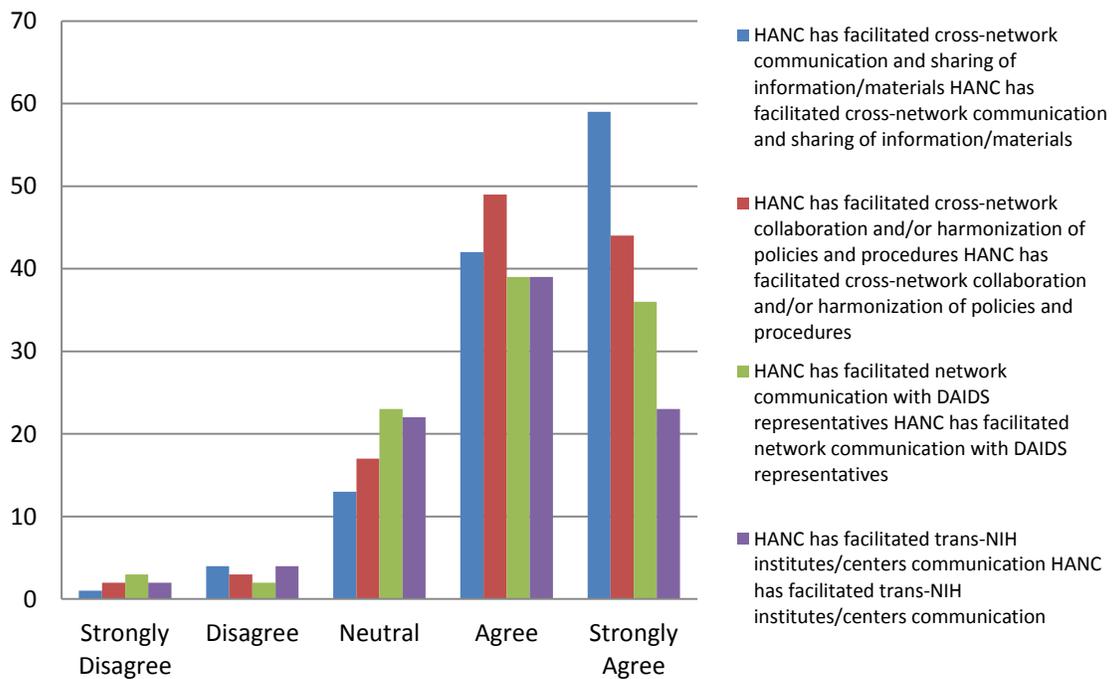


**Figure 16: Is there anything HANC staff could do to better manage these projects to completion?**

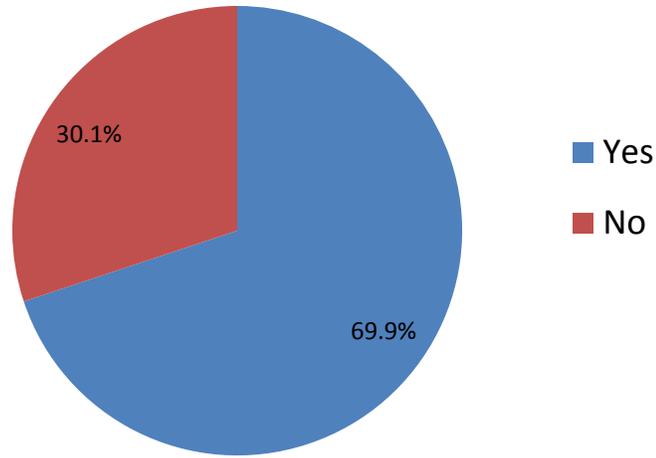


## HANC Staff Performance and Call Facilitation

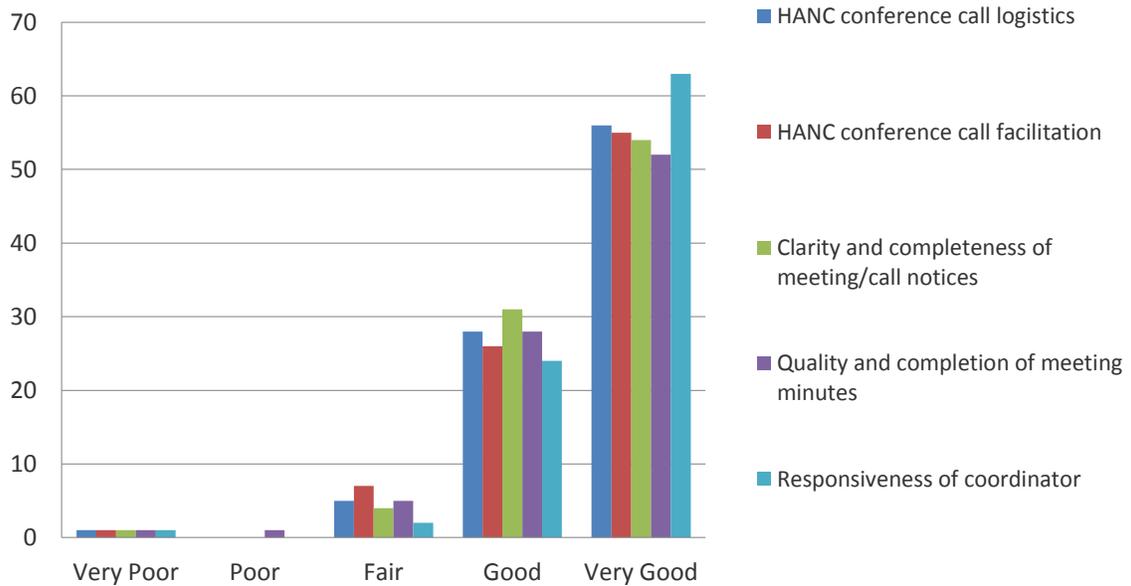
**Figure 17: Overall Performance of HANC**



**Figure 18: Would you like to learn more about HANC at network meetings and/or during cross-network activities?**

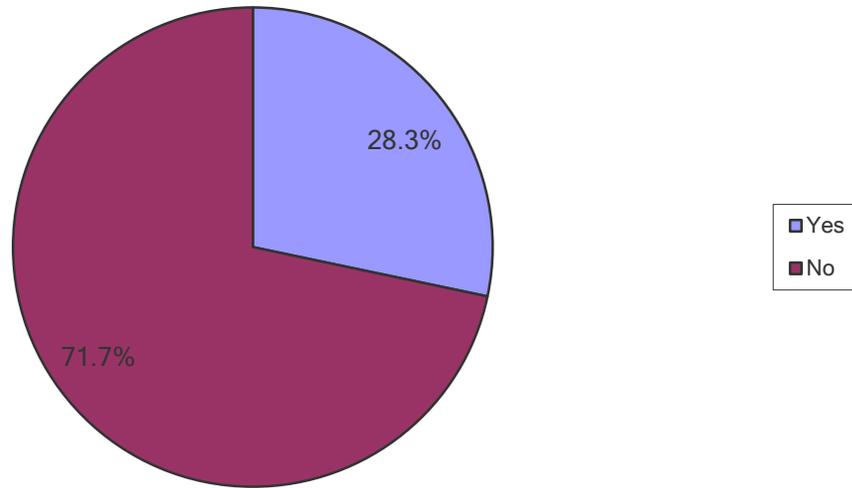


**Figure 19: HANC Conference Call Logistics and Facilitation**

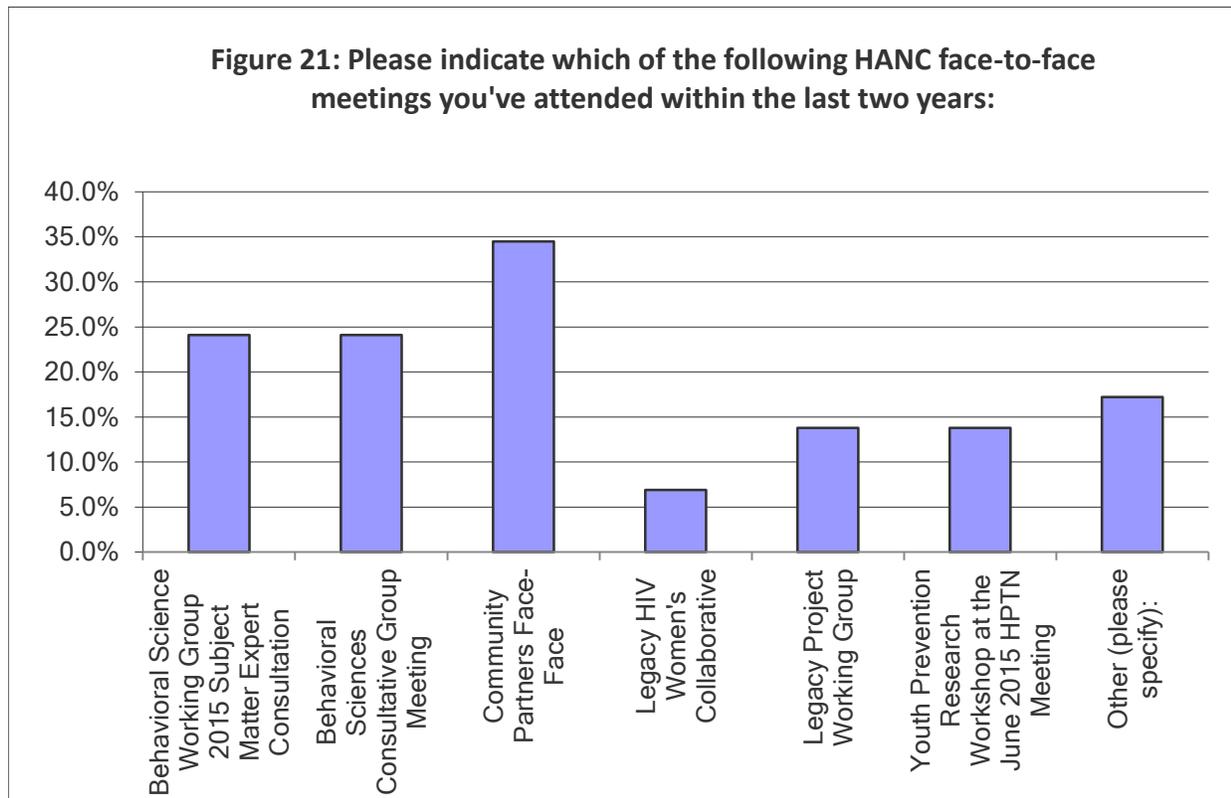


## HANC-Facilitated Meeting Performance

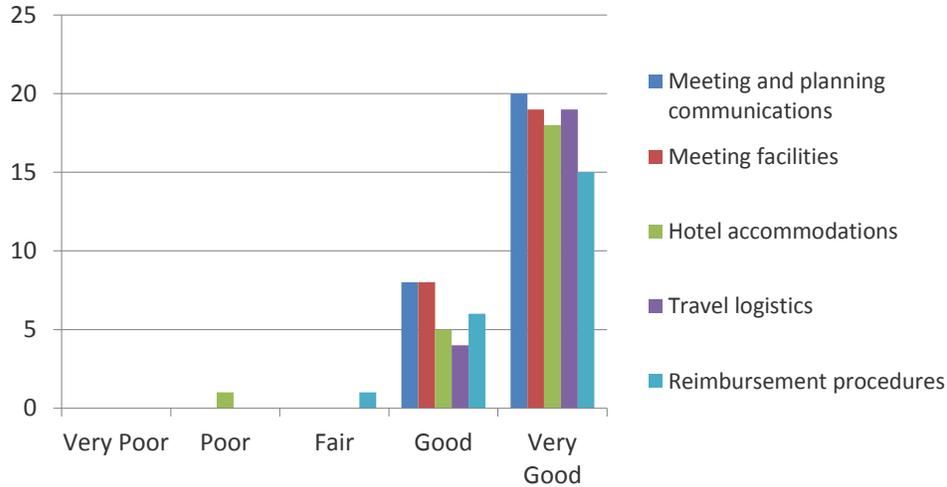
**Figure 20: Have you attended a HANC meeting within the last two years?**



**Figure 21: Please indicate which of the following HANC face-to-face meetings you've attended within the last two years:**

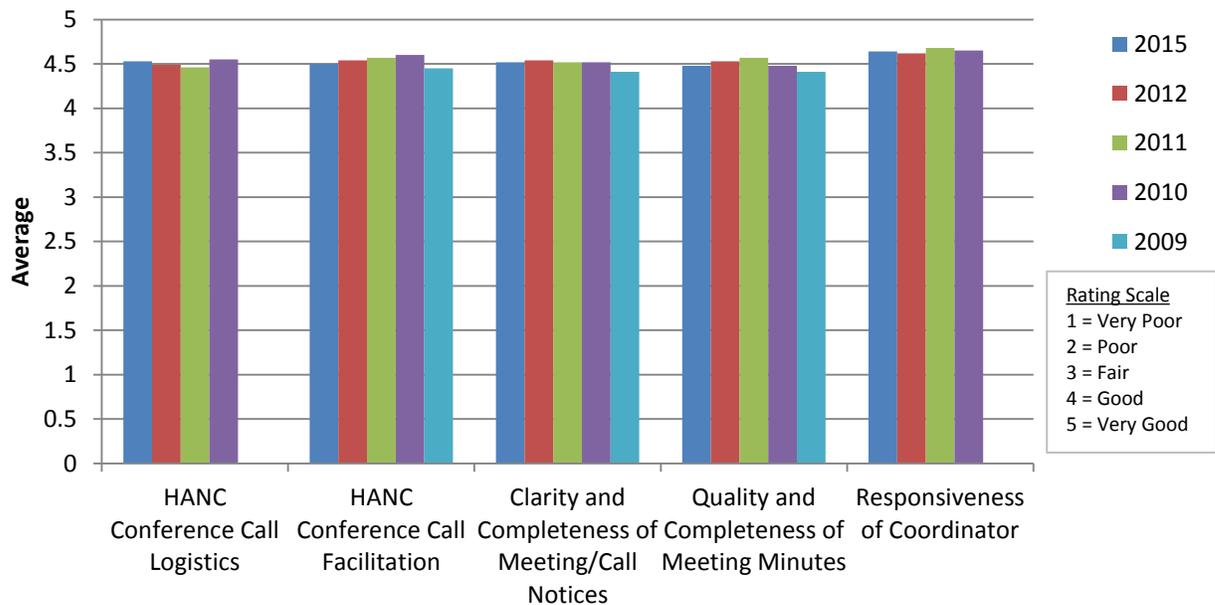


**Figure 22: Satisfaction with HANC meetings**



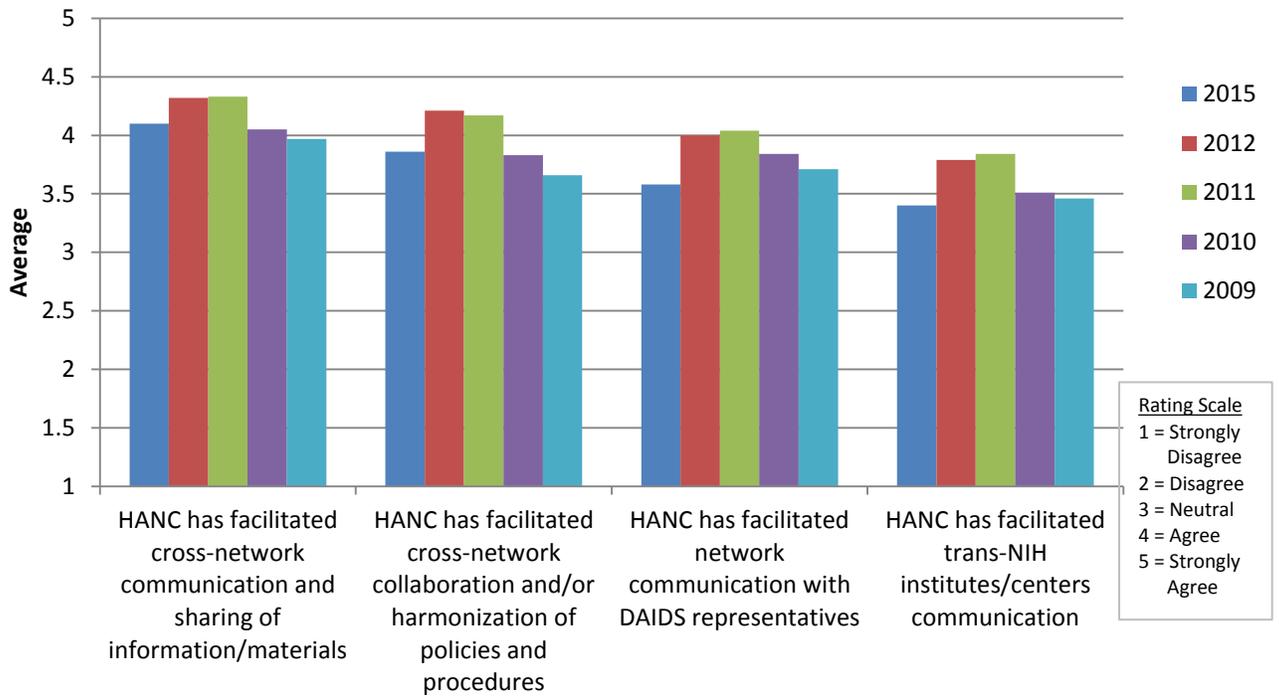
**Trends Over Time**

**Figure 23: HANC Performance Ratings on Calls 2009-2015**



\*Data not collected on HANC conference call logistics and responsiveness of coordinator in 2009.

**Figure 24: HANC Performance Ratings 2009-2015**



## Open Text Field Comments:

### How do you prefer to receive information about HANC activities?

Email (15 respondents)  
Monthly conference calls  
Google group email

### Would you like to know more about HANC activities?

How HANC decides to undertake cross network activities.

### Would you be able to achieve your working group objectives more effectively if you had the opportunity for face-to-face meetings?

We have had these in the past and they have been helpful. It might be time to have another one - at least one per grant cycle.

Yes, yes, yes, yes, yes..... calls do not engage working groups to participate at a productive level for many reasons. e.g. the distraction of the workplace/lack of focus, lack of facial and body language to help translate the tone of voice, some individuals in groups "take-over" and this discourages others from communicating (hard to get their voice into the call)

The webinars are EXTREMELY useful!

Sometimes face to face can be very productive especially if an agenda is set and it is at a time and place where multiple persons are present such as annual network conferences

We had an engaging call a few years ago.

We have bi-weekly calls for the most part and have been productive. Not sure how much a face-to-face meeting will improve our through put.

I think face-to-face meetings provide a forum for focus and engagement. Since funding needs to be considered, face-to-face meetings could be convened in small groups geographically arranged on a working committee basis focused on a specific project of the larger working group

### What kind of information or resources would you like to see on the HANC public website that aren't currently available?

Laboratory team names, backgrounds on these people, how decisions are made, resources available that link back to the networks via HANC

Cultural competence training relayed to engagement of young black MSM

HANC public website has complete information for me

More information on SOPs for non-blood compartment sampling (and whether they are "validated" or cross-lab implemented (reproducible/standardized)

Trial summary and research summary

Training

Compliance Information - source data, etc.

I like the BSIG listing of new, relevant publications. That is quite helpful and I receive it by email.

SOPs

Choosing right anticoagulants for different blood tests

Fact sheets and training material

Mostly laboratory related information is available on the website.

Things to know when starting to work with the networks

It is excellent

Library of network tools, like SOPs and Informed Consents and Questionnaires

Rely on the newsletter to get basic info - then use site for details

Lab processing information

HANC has a wonderful repository of tools and information. I use them regularly as models of excellence in my other affiliations.

The presentations that were made during face to face meetings and international conferences.

Summaries of projects of other working groups

Educational slide sets for presentations geared toward both investigators and the lay public

More visual highlights of features - both current and resources that are already there.

Read the newsletter primarily

Summary of new publications from NIH Networks, and other very important contribution from outside NIH networks.

Community engagement

SOPs

CAB activities across the sites

**What kind of information or resources would you like to see on the HANC password-protected portal that aren't currently available?**

Laboratory team names, backgrounds on these people, how decisions are made, resources available that link back to the networks via HANC

Frequently asked questions and enrollment accrual

Laboratory related

Minutes of meetings

Online GCLP training

My experience with HANC is that the participants are happy to communicate with outdated and old technologies. I assume that this is partly due to the need to accommodate the technical resources of all members. However, it would be advantageous to foster new partners and younger participation by updating forms of communication where possible. The primary source of off-line communication is over old-school send and reply emails to a list of participant email addresses. This is not as efficient and limits the availability of participants to catch up on news/projects/on-going work.

More on laboratory resources, DAIDS documentary information

Names of participants at Face to Face meetings and international conferences

Summaries of other working groups

More graphically compelling content

DSMB outcomes of on-going NIAID sponsored clinical trials.

It's not the type of info but the way it appears. For example the soc/behavior science digest is done in a way that it highlights something innovative or reflective of current topics for the group. The daily dose has great info but again new info looks like old info with no pics or graphics.

Protocol documents, site directories

ACTG related documents

**Projects and Resources: Please rate the degree to which each of the following projects/resources has added value in supporting the science and/or operations of the HIV/AIDS research enterprise.**

The inclusion of MTN and HVTN and HPTN lab manuals and resources, links to other lab affiliated sites

The basic scientific literacy module still needs to be toned down to community level of understanding, Webinars have proved very informative but for most people who want to take

part we are somewhat restricted and this needs to be addressed, training in this regard is needed as some don't know how to go about this, some people cannot comment during the webinar due to technical glitches and valuable comments are lost and often not pursued. The resources I use I find really helpful. I don't use everything that is available. 2nd Women's HIV Res. Collab. webinar is the one I searched for unsuccessfully.

**Is there anything HANC staff could do to better manage these projects to completion?**

Inclusion of site based staff on the committee to share their laboratory cross networks as this is where the practice is put into play

More funds for face-to-face meetings (of groups or at sites)

I think the working groups are great and provides an opportunity to work together across networks to achieve common goals

We need better integration with the network leadership to be effective.

F2F Meeting

We were disappointed with the outcome of the community indicator survey project last year. However, we have moved past that project at this time.

Continue the good work and perhaps keep thorough follow up on a regular basis as you are doing now via this survey

Continuing to support us in the collaborative process is awesome!

We spend too much time reviewing work plans and not doing the work on the WG calls

There is always room for improvement

Constantly sharing/circulating the progress reports of all the projects.

Mission is more diffuse now...

I think it would be great if HANC staff could take lead on ALL call coordination activities for the projects they manage. This would include providing the dial-in services, putting together the agendas, taking attendance, and writing minutes. These activities are often done by individual committee members and is a huge burden in my opinion - everyone is just way too busy.

There's always room for improvement

**HANC Conference Call Logistics and Facilitation**

Melissa Austin is fabulous!

Coordinator is always available on email during calls to ensure that participants who have problems with lines can communicate via email

Russell is AMAZING. Never let him leave.

**Please rate your level of satisfaction with HANC meeting logistics, communications, and accommodations:**

The lack of funding to continue these meetings is disheartening given the importance placed on cross network collaborations

Reimbursement procedures needs to be improved and training in that area is the way to start

The hotel staff at this year's face-to-face were rude. I had two separate incidents with staff that were largely unresolved at the end of my stay.

**Please rate the overall quality of the following aspects of the HANC meeting(s) you've attended:**

The CP F2F was absolutely worth my time and effort

CP face to face meeting of 2015 was excellent!!!!!!

**Do you have any suggestions for additional cross-network/trans-institute coordination and/or collaboration?**

Inclusion of CTU based staff on laboratory group to add value to ideas been implemented at ground level

Survey on how laboratory HANC group practices impacted CTU

I strongly support the activities of HANC. I have really seen a difference in network harmonization and communication since they came into play.

It would be helpful if HANC could distribute DAIDS-standard tool templates that are DAIDS-approved for use across all studies/networks, so that each study/network/site does not need to or try to reinvent (at risk of some issue with a monitor later)... such as the Delegation of Authority Log (responsibility roster), informed consent cover pages, etc.

Open up for non-network outreach to relevant community members from non-traditional sources

More funding for face-to-face implementation and training

Coordination across networks of titles and or positions at sites and how they integrate with DAIDS titles or positions

Get more information about opportunities to participate.

Need additional people to discuss other infectious diseases like was done well with TB.

More conference call across network and updates of studies

It is a great resource. I am heavily involved in the lab stuff and find it useful. They do cross network SOP and policy stuff well.

Get all data processes on the same page for easier transition in pluri-potent sites

I think we need to keep working toward a standardized program evaluation system and develop interactive data reporting platform to integrate and share information cross-network and trans-institute.

Orientation at network meeting

If we can have the opportunity to have Network Leaders to attend Community Partners meeting.

I was very disappointed that the annual BSWG meetings can no longer happen, as they were valuable spaces for sharing behavioral findings.

**Other Comments:**

Announce opportunities for community advocates to participate on network committees

HANC doing a great job!

HANC is a great resource to the GCLP audit management team and appreciate the lab-related information and resources.

Would be useful to understand what issues are in HANC's purview and how that is decided.

Melissa Austin is very dedicated and great to work with.

## **Acknowledgments**

Thank you to all of the HANC collaborators who took the time to respond to this survey and to the HANC staff who facilitate this work. HANC is funded with Federal funds from the Division of AIDS, National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, National Institutes of Health, Department of Health and Human Services, grant number UM1 AI068614, entitled Leadership Group for a Global HIV Vaccine Clinical Trials (Office of HIV/AIDS Network Coordination) with additional support from the National Institute of Mental Health.