DPV Ring Consultation Dissemination Meeting
24 May 2022, 9am ET

Report readout by WHO

400+ participants in the meeting

Civil society, government representatives, implementers and young women gave their reactions and responses to the report and PEPFAR’s decision to only procure ring for implementation studies

TOP DISCUSSION POINTS RAISED

- Importance of choice for women in HIV prevention options
- Ethics of participation from African women in ring trials without post-trial access
- Erosion of trust in US-funded trials
- PEPFAR policy of only procuring FDA-approved ARVs
- Calls for PEPFAR to support the ring for women to choose
- Gender inequality affects access to HIV prevention options
- Learnings from the contraceptive space can be applied
- Pregnant and breastfeeding populations need an HIV prevention option
Importance of choice for women in HIV prevention options

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The 2030 targets will be a tall order if women’s choices are not respected. The new infection numbers will keep on increasing, we need a tool that we can use without begging from our counterpart.
Ulanda Mtamba

“
We don’t have to know how women choose, we already know that human beings need choice and option... the ECHO trial told us so.
Lillian Mworeko

“
The needs of women in all seasons of their lives are not met with condoms and oral PrEP now & will not be met with injectable PrEP in the future.
Dr Lilian Benjamin Mwakyosi

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My life is too busy as a working young mom... Adherence to PrEP is difficult... Fund the ring... Allow me to have longevity, to raise my children.
Aphelele Gumede

“
We empower young women to make choices about their health and the Ring is one of their choices. ACCESS TO THE RING NOW.
CS representative

Dr Lilian Benjamin Mwakyosi
Ethics of participation from African women in ring trials without post-trial access

“Thousands of women invested in R&D for Dapivirine Ring with their bodies and their time as trial participants. This investment must be respected!”
—T Joyce Nganga

“How do you use us to research the ring, then you withhold it... Fund the ring... This is unethical!”
—Aphelele Gumede

“Where are the products? African Women give their bodies and are often stigmatized for participating in studies.
—Yvette Raphael

“Women cannot participate in the successful study, then be denied the ring-facilitate access to the ring! support end AIDS, STIs!”
—Lucia

“They are not being respected if they are not able to access the same ring they were trial participants for! NO RING, NO TRIALS IN AFRICA.
—Siviwe Gaika

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Erosion of trust in US-funded trials

“Why then do a research and then the end product isn’t available for use in the research participants who took part and the larger community of women? This is abuse of our body and dignity.”

Joyce Odenyo

“This is abuse of our body and dignity.”

Ruth Akulu

“What would the point of participating in future trials when women know they can’t access the final products.”

Maureen Luba

“I have been preparing AGYW for years on the ring.... What do I tell them now... They have been waiting for the ring!”

Aphelele Gumede

“NO RING, NO TRIALS IN AFRICA.”

Siviwe Gaika

“We are done participating in any studies if we can’t have the product. #FundTheRing”
PEPFAR policy of only procuring FDA-approved ARVs

**PEPFAR POLICY VS. WOMENS LIVES AT STAKE.**

*Ulanda Mtamba*

"FDA US not affecting Ministries to introduce the ring in country is one thing, but FDA US is unfortunately affected the decision of PEPFAR and other funders to fund the RING for women."

*Bridget N Jjuuko*

"Why bring a choice in Africa not to fund?"

*Sarah Mkhabela*

"PEPFAR needs to relook at that policy. Put people's needs first."

*Patriciah Jeckonia*

"Why are we trying to lose the gains we've made in HIV prevention? Facilitate choices for women. #FundTheRing."

*Margaret Akinyi Atieno*
Calls for PEPFAR to support the ring for women to choose

Why do we continue putting a price tag on the lives of young womxn and girls? We participated in the trials, the next sound step is implementation and funding the ring.

Lerato Morulane

Do African Women’s Lives Not matter... PEPFAR is breaking our hearts. What do we tell women now?

Yvette Raphael

Donors have a responsibility to #FacilitateChoice and #FundTheRing to ensure it is included in the range of HIV options for women.

Joyce Nganga

You speak of women’s choice, yet we have limitations when it comes to health prevention tools. #FundTheRing #WomensVoicesMustBeHeard #FacilitateChoice

Cwayita Jemsana
Gender inequality affects access to HIV prevention options

“Did we have men and men and men tell their stories when it came to [getting support for] VMMC?”
Lillian Mworeko

“Why Must women always fight for what is right?”
Joyce Nganga

“Not giving women and AGYW the ring highlights gender inequality that exist in our society.”
UGogo Silungile Mtambo

“Women are smart enough to understand that ring efficacy is lower than oral PrEP, but it is better than nothing for those who can’t use oral or injectable PrEP.”
Patriciah Jeckonia

“PEPFAR’s decision limits the choice women have on prevention. PEPFAR’s decision is against feminine preventative methods. I smell patriarchy at the centre of PEPFAR’S decision.”
Khanyisa Dunjwa
Learnings from the contraceptive space can be applied

We know how to message varying efficacy with contraception options - it is not a mystery how to do this.

Jim Pickett

Why can’t we learn from contraceptives then?

Ulanda Mtamba

The experience from contraception demonstrates that efficacy is not the only reason users pick a method.

Manju Chatani

We should learn from the contraceptives. We need options for HIV Prevention as well.

Ruth Akulu
An option for pregnant and breastfeeding women is needed

The Ring could be a safe and non-systemic HIV prevention option for pregnant and breastfeeding women, they need that choice.

Yvette Rapheal

The ring is very convenient for me as a breastfeeding mom. Fund the ring!

Aphelele Gumede

Pregnant and breastfeeding women - they need that choice. #CHOICEMATTERS

Dr Lilian Benjamin Mwakyosi
Hashtags from the meeting chat box

- #NoRingNoStudiesInAfrica
- #FundTheRing
- #FacilitateChoice
- #PrioritizeWomenandGirlsLives
- #TimeForScienceToFollowEvidence
- #WomensVoicesMustBeHeard

"We cannot forever be study subjects. We are women."

Yvette Raphael
Acknowledgements

Thank you to the advocates and participants who expressed their views about the PrEP ring.

This summary was developed by Emily Donaldson and Sarah Salinger, FHI 360