PrEP Power: Vernacular and Slang Repository

About this repository

This repository brings together the vernacular, slang and common phrasing about PrEP that community members used in the PrEP Power human-centered design workshops in Eswatini, Kenya and Zambia. Terms are grouped by country, then by theme. This is a reference for partners adapting the My PrEP My Choice materials into relevant language for key populations.

Two cautions came out of those sessions. Zambian participants warned that some slang can be offensive or stigmatising, so use a term only once your community has confirmed that it is acceptable and means what you intend. Kenyan participants noted that Sheng changes quickly and suggested using it sparingly. The terms under *Stigma Related References* are listed so that you can recognise and avoid them.

We encourage you to continue to explore vernacular and slang language relevant to your country and area to adapt the My PrEP, My Choice materials.

Vernacular by country and theme

Eswatini	Word or Phrase	Meaning and Context	Notes
General PrEP References	Bukhohlokhohlo	Rattling sound of pills; the noisy container	Refers to the burden of daily oral PrEP
	Pill for prevention	General understanding of PrEP	Commonly used phrase
Stigma-Related References	Auwtiphatsi kahle	You are promiscuous	Moral judgement and stigma
	Kugijima	Being very sexually active	
	For sexually active people	Framing of PrEP users	Commonly used phrase
Safety-Related References	Ngiphephile	I am safe	Sense of security that PrEP can provide when trusted and used correctly; reassurance and protection. Used in “I AM…” creative assets.

	Word or Phrase	Meaning and Context	Notes
Key Populations References	Maga	Term men who use drugs use for themselves	Suggested for captions aimed at people who use drugs
Kenya			
General PrEP References	PrEP ni chaguo langu	PrEP is my choice	
	Afya Yangu	My Health	
	Tukwach MaPrEP	Use of PrEP(s)	Sheng
	Kwani Nyi Huduu? PrEP	What do you guys do? PrEP	Sheng
	Kwani Si Hudo? Prep	What do we do? - PrEP	Sheng
	Ji-PrEP, Jibambe	PrEP yourself, feel good	Sheng
	Tuko rada ndani ya PrEP	We are fine with PrEP	Sheng
Taking PrEP and Adherence	Jasiri Hodari Shujaa	Brave	Validation participants asked to keep Jasiri, with hodari and shujaa as alternatives
	Zimeze tukisonga	Swallow as we move on	Sheng
Long-Acting PrEP References	LEN	Simple term people like for PrEP	Refers specifically to lenacapavir (injectable PrEP)
	PrEP ya kudungwa	Injectable PrEP	Kiswahili
	PrEP ya sindano, PrEP ya kudunga	PrEP in syringe; injectable PrEP	Kiswahili. Used to introduce LEN to communities.
	LEN ni Kidungi	PrEP is a sure injection	Sheng
	LEN ni Miezi sita safi	LEN is six clean months	Sheng
	Dungwa usi tense	Be injected, do not allow tension to engulf you	Sheng
	LEN yangu ni sita	My LEN is 6 months	Sheng
	PrEP ni kidungi msee	PrEP is a sure injection my guy	Sheng
	Umedunga PrEP	You have been injected PrEP	Sheng

	Word or Phrase	Meaning and Context	Notes
	Jasiri LEN PrEP, sindano ya jilinde	Courage LEN-PrEP, protective injection	Sheng
	Shot ya kujidunga	Injectable shot	Sheng
	LEN PrEP: Shot moja, miezi sita, unajibamba	LEN-PrEP, one shot, six months, you feel good	Sheng
Safety-Related References	Malengo ni kufika	Reach your goals	
	Good life ni matokeo ya maamuzi sahihi leo	Good life is the result of the right decisions today	
	Sare vako za kufanya sex na unajua ukona ukedi, PrEP sio kitu ya kugwaya	Stop risky sex, PrEP wont let you down	Sheng
	#Jiprep Jikinge	PrEP yourself, protect yourself	Suggested hashtag
	Jikinge Ukedi, Dunga Prep	Be protected from risk, inject PrEP	Sheng
	Mjanja	Smart	Suggested in the validation to replace the word “safe”
	Usitense Usiogope	Do not be tense, do not be afraid	Suggested in the validation in place of fear based messaging
	Chagua afya	Choose health	
	Chagua kesho yako	Choose your tomorrow	
	Elimu ni power	Education is power	
Access References	Sare docky, apige mbogi yake	Relieve the doctor to do his/her/their job	Sheng
	Mzimbiting, usikubali kujengwa LEN na morio wako. Enda hosi, upimwe, ndio upatiwe hiyo Shiet!	My guy, do not be dooped with your friend. Go to the health facility for testing, so as you may be given the thing.	Sheng
	Achia Daktari kazi yake	Let the doctor do his/her/their work	
Zambia			
General PrEP References	Ma PrEP / Ama PrEP	Plural form of PrEP in Bemba and Nyanja	Local slang and nicknames for everyday PrEP use

	Word or Phrase	Meaning and Context	Notes
	Ma pills ya protection	Pills for protection (Nyanja)	
	Ama pills yaku preventer	Pills for prevention (Bemba)	
	Ici ca ku blocka HIV	This is for blocking HIV	
	Bodyguard Shield	Popular metaphors for PrEP (Bemba)	“Bodyguard” named as natural language in the validation
	Condom mukati ya mubili	Condom inside the body (Bemba)	
	Backup	As in “I have backup”	
	Nili na PrEP, So even if things go wrong I am covered	I have PrEP, so even when things go wrong, I am covered (Nyanja)	
	Ma Vitamins Ma supplements Ma drugs ya health Something for my body Medicine for my blood Private medicine	Euphemisms for PrEP	Used to avoid stigma
Taking PrEP and Adherence	Nili pa PrEP	I am on PrEP (Nyanja)	Named as natural language in the validation
	Ukunwa bwino	Taking properly; adhering well (Bemba)	Adherence and daily use
	Ninwa lelo?	Did I take it today? (Bemba)	
	Happy hour	Time to take ART or PrEP	Can refer to ART or PrEP; add context when used
	Mwati walanga kumbuyo	Reminder to take medication	
	Ka pre-paid	Taking ART or PrEP in advance, for example the injection	Can refer to ART or PrEP; add context when used

	Word or Phrase	Meaning and Context	Notes
Long-Acting PrEP References	The injection Jab ya HIV prevention 2 months protection Long-acting No more pills Injection ya freedom	Terms for injectable PrEP	"Jab" named as natural language in the validation
	Iya 6 months	Used in conversations about LEN	
Stigma-Related References	Uyu ni wa ma ARVs	This one is on ARVs (implying HIV positive) (Nyanja)	Negative, stigmatising language
	Uyu akudya ma drugs	This one is taking drugs (Nyanja)	Negative, stigmatising language
	Uyu ali pa risk sana	This one is very risky (Bemba)	Negative, stigmatising language
	Ba mulomo	Snitch (Bemba)	
Safety-Related References	Kudziteteza	To protect yourself (Nyanja; used for prevention)	Named as natural language in the validation
	Ukuilinda	To guard or protect yourself (Bemba)	Named as natural language in the validation
	Ni ma drugs ya ku protect	These are drugs for protection (protection medicine)	
Access References	Kuno kulibe	It's not available here (Nyanja)	
	Stock-out Long queue Ku clinic ni problem Better ku community	Language describing stock-outs, long queues, problems at the clinic and a preference for community services	
	Ku clinic ni stress	Going to clinic is difficult (queues, stigma, time) (Nyanja)	
	Ka ntenkwe	Borrowing ARVs when you run out	Can refer to ART or PrEP; add context when used
Key Populations References	Kankra	Community member	Earlier HCD notes recorded "Kankras" for MSM or gay men, used in public to confuse the general population

	Word or Phrase	Meaning and Context	Notes
	NChenga	Potential partner or crush	
	Ganana	Queer person, especially the bottom partner	
	Poly	Multiple partners	