



Endorsement of the Dapivirine Ring a Big Win for Women in Africa

28 July 2020, AfNHi joins women and HIV prevention advocates in celebrating the [positive opinion](#) adopted by the European Medicines Agency (EMA) on the use of a monthly vaginal ring as a HIV prevention option for cisgender women aged 18 and above.

This positive opinion from EMA reflects its assessment of the quality, safety, and efficiency and benefit-risk balance of the Dapivirine ring. It paves way for the [International Partnership for Microbicides \(IPM\)](#) the designer and developer of the Dapivirine ring, to pursue national medical regulatory authorities' approval of the ring in African countries. The Dapivirine Vaginal Ring will become the first biomedical prevention method specifically for cisgender women and be the first long-acting HIV prevention method. EMA recommends the ring "in combination with safer sex practices when oral pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) is not used, cannot be used or is not available."

"AfNHi is truly committed to ending new HIV infections in Africa and promoting the Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights of women. We look forward to the advocacy efforts needed to speed up the regulatory approvals and to make the Dapivirine ring available to women in Africa who have been falling behind in the fight to end HIV." Joyce Ng'ang'a, AfNHi Coordinator and Policy Advisor at WACI Health.

"The existing HIV prevention techniques have not done enough in preventing the spread of HIV amongst women in Africa especially in the sub-Saharan Africa where our cultures bar us women from making decisions on sex. Even suggesting to your partner to use a condom, you'll be considered as unfaithful". Noted Evelyn Odhiambo, a member of the AfNHi Youth Cohort representative to the AfNHi Steering committee. With the Dapivirine Ring, women have bodily autonomy right and power as it empowers one to learn, self-educate and decide on her own body. As a woman, I insert and remove the ring myself. The method is women controlled and that gives women power to ensure self-protection." She emphasized.

"This is a long-awaited day for the thousands of women who participated in clinical trials of the ring and those of us who have advocated for access to the ring and other women-initiated prevention options for two decades." said Manju Chatani-Gada in [AVAC's press release](#)

As requested by EMA, IPM will conduct additional research among cisgender women aged 18-25 years to gain better understanding of the ring's efficacy and to collect additional data on safety and potential ARV resistance. Results from the study could also inform strategies to support young women to use the ring consistently.

Joining in these great efforts, AfNHi will continue to promote the biomedical HIV prevention innovations such as the Dapivirine ring. We applaud this milestone in HIV prevention, as we congratulate IPM for the monthly ring which takes into account women's needs and preferences while it reduces their risk of HIV infection.

ABOUT AfNHi

Africa Free of New HIV Infections (AfNHi) is an Africa regional advocacy network hosted by WACI Health which unites African Civil Society voices and action on regional advocacy for HIV prevention research. AfNHi is committed to influencing Africa

regional policies in order to accelerate ethical development and delivery of HIV prevention tools towards ending the AIDS epidemic by 2030.