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### PROJECT SPOTLIGHT

#### Zim-TTECH KEY POPULATION

**REFRESHER TRAINING:** A two-day healthcare worker refresher training on Key Populations (KPs) service provision was conducted in Bindura to highlight the importance of building the capacity of healthcare workers in offering comprehensive and friendly services to the KPs.

The program was to promote the mentorship and support of healthcare workers. Through mentorship and support, healthcare workers are made aware of their expected roles and responsibilities in providing services to KPs.

Moreover, this training enabled the programming team to learn and adopt to trends on the ground (i.e HIV Prevention options now available); and provide real-time appropriate support to Key Populations i.e. ensuring and promoting their access to SRH services and psychosocial support system.

The training conducted was also taken as an opportunity to introduce the new HIV prevention options through sensitizing the healthcare workers about the Event driven PrEP (ED-PreEP).



Unlike the daily oral PrEP which is taken daily and consistently, ED PrEP is an alternative way of taking oral PrEP.



The ED PrEP utilizes uptake of PrEP on planned sexual encounters that have potential exposure to sex. This is going to be introduced for men who have sex with men (MSM) under the KP program in Harare.

The provision of the ED PrEP is only for MSM because clinical trials conducted so far have shown efficacy among MSM only. ED PrEP is yet to be administered at facilities because the training is a formative process to train health care workers to provide ED PrEP and this is being conducted as a study.

Key partners who were part of the training included Ministry of Health and Child Care (MOHCC), Zimbabwe Technical Assistance, Training and Education Center for Health (Zim-TTECH), Pangaea Zimbabwe (PZ) and the City of Harare.

## In the News and PZ Updates

### CASPR HIV Prevention Needs Assessment Findings



Pangaea Zimbabwe through the Coalition to Accelerate and Support Prevention Research (CASPR) project held a meeting disseminating findings of the HIV Prevention needs assessment report that was conducted in 2021 with 20 Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) involved in Sexual and Reproductive Health (SRH), HIV and/or Adolescent Girls and Young Women (AGYW) issues.

The objectives of the dissemination meeting were:

- To develop an action plan to strengthen CSOs' capacity for evidence-based advocacy around the Dapirivine Ring introduction, HIV prevention literacy on injectable Cabotegravir, and overall women's SRH
- To strengthen and expand an informed, action-oriented national advocacy network of civil society and community- based organizations that support and facilitate HIV prevention research.



The gaps identified during the Needs Assessment findings include limited CBOs involvement in the new HIV Prevention options, lack of financial resources to conduct HIV Prevention work, research literacy capacity and knowledge on Dapirivine ring ; and CAB-for PrEP.

### **Opportunities in HIV prevention included:**

- The need for training and provision of IEC materials to conduct HIV prevention research literacy.
- Interest in improving knowledge and raising awareness around Dapirivine Ring and CAB-LA in Zimbabwe.



- The necessity for capacity strengthening and mentorship around Dapirivine Ring, CAB-LA and HIV prevention research literacy
- Linkage to HIV prevention networking platforms to create partnerships and collaborations.
- Requirement of technical support around HIV prevention programming from biomedical research experts and partners who are currently working on new HIV prevention methods.

The focus is on improving SRH services and HIV prevention for women in their diversity i.e. women living with HIV, women with disabilities, AGYW, pregnant women and other vulnerable groups of women in communities.

## **What You Need to Know about the COVID-19 Booster Vaccine**



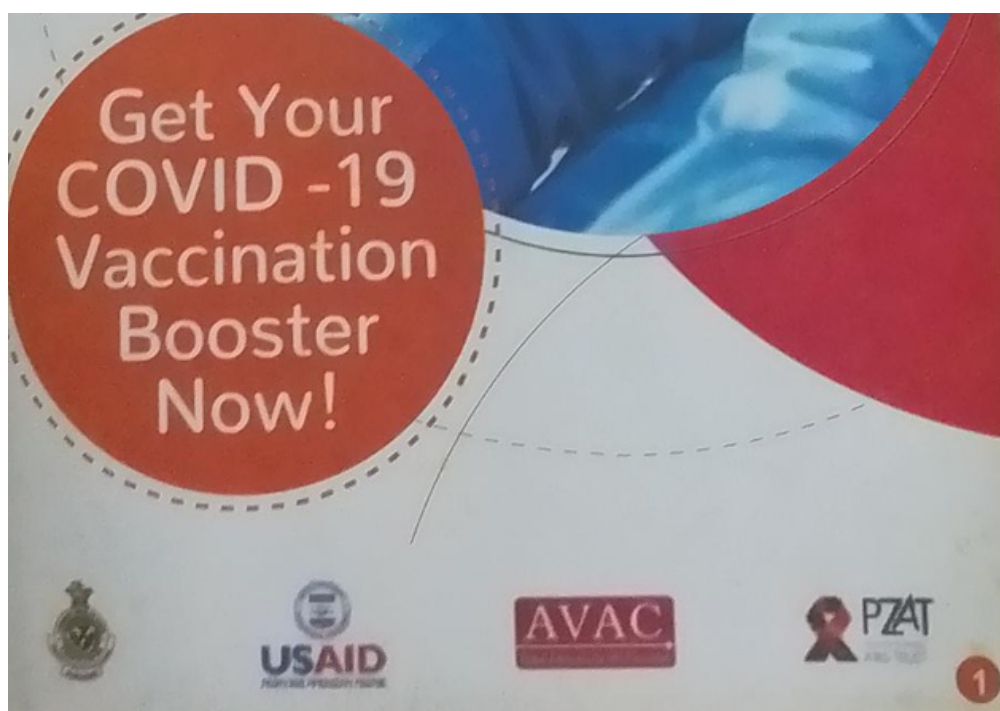
The COVID-19 Vaccine Booster is a dose that is administered to a vaccinated population that has completed a primary vaccination series (currently one or two doses of COVID-19 vaccine depending on the product). It is administered when, with time, the immunity and clinical protection have fallen below a rate deemed sufficient in that population.

The current primary goal of immunization is to fight COVID-19 by protecting against hospitalization, severe disease, and death. Hence, booster doses may be needed if there is evidence of insufficient protection against these disease outcomes over time thus restoring vaccine effectiveness from the protection that is waning.

The Ministry of Health and Child Care (MOHCC) recommends that one should get the booster shot that is similar to the first and second dose that one initially received. Moreover, those who got their second with the period of at least six months are eligible for the booster.

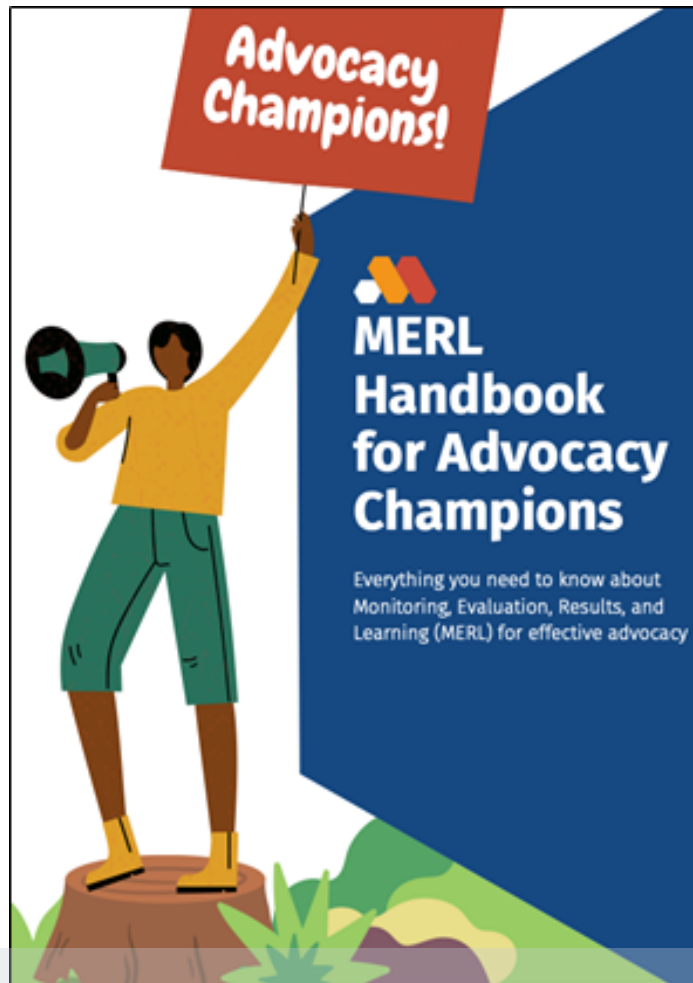
One should note that the recommendation of boosters doesn't represent a failure of the existing vaccines. The concept or goal is to prolong protective immunity, particularly if there is evidence that protection is waning after a period of time.

For more info, visit WHO on <https://bit.ly/3JnITDj> and MOHCC: <http://www.mohcc.gov.zw/>



For more information  
call MOHCC hotlines  
**2019 or 393**

## COMPASS PZ MERL Team's Launches the MERL Handbook



COMPASS Pangaea Zimbabwe Monitoring Evaluation Research and Learning (MERL) Team launched the MERL Handbook for Advocacy Champions.

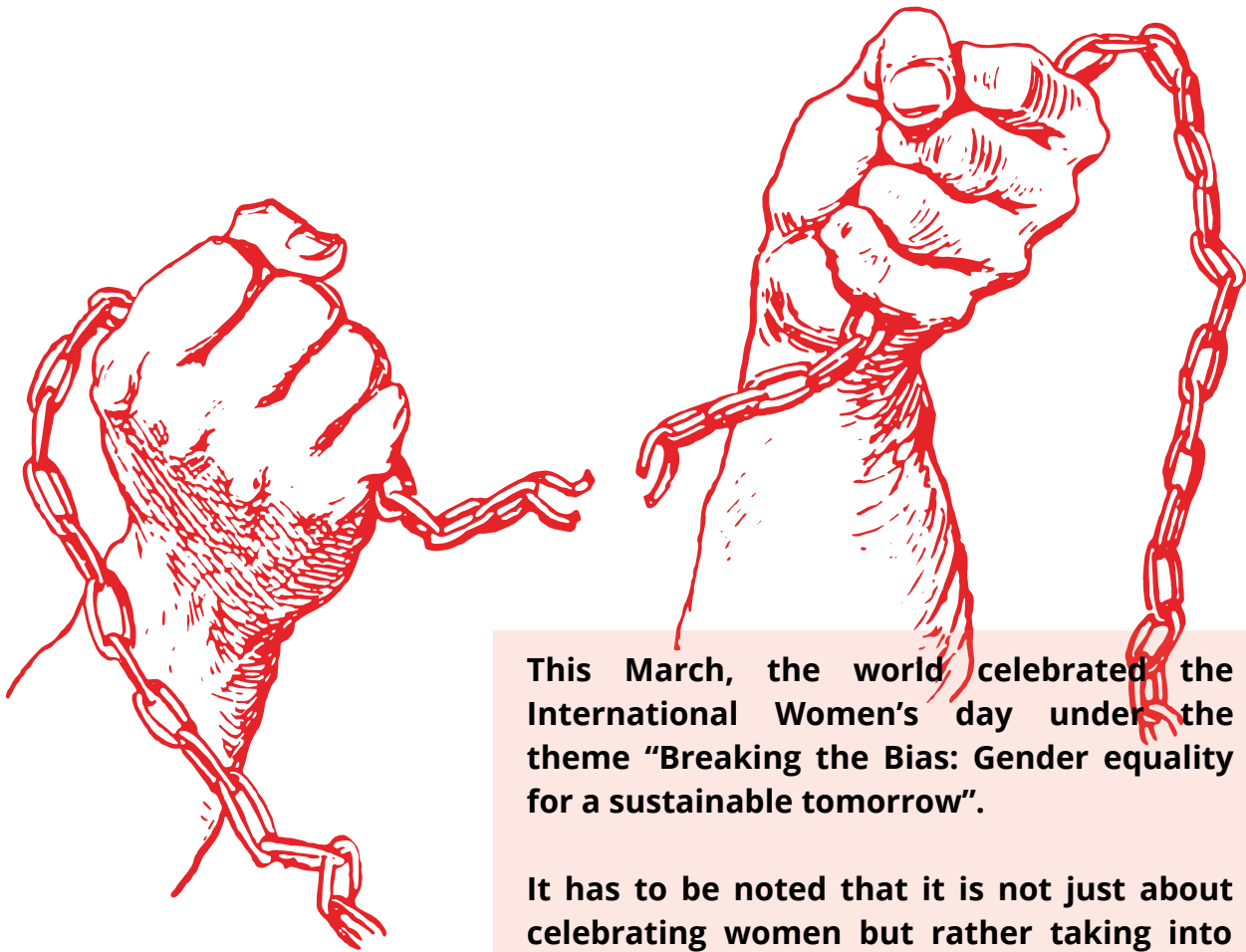
The handbook provides easy-to-read reference material for anyone conducting advocacy to enable them to monitor, evaluate and learn from their advocacy work.

This is a simple guide to understand advocacy MERL! This handbook was co-created by members of the COMPASS Africa MERL team; Barbra Ncube, Hilda Zenda, Megan Dunbar, Roberta Sutton, Jules Dasmarius and Victoria Ndudzo. The content has been put together using insights from COMPASS Africa partners in Malawi, Tanzania and Zimbabwe; who have participated in MERL trainings, webinars and face to face engagements.

**Download the Handbook <https://bit.ly/3LImuGO>**

# **Opinion:**

## **What is Breaking the Bias?**



**This March, the world celebrated the International Women's day under the theme "Breaking the Bias: Gender equality for a sustainable tomorrow".**

**It has to be noted that it is not just about celebrating women but rather taking into consideration actions that can be taken to understand who women are, what women represent, and what can be implemented in order to break the bias.**

**Breaking the Bias refers the promotion of gender equality, breaking of stereotypes, discrimination against women. It is about encouraging diversity, equitable and inclusivity of women in all spheres. It is about promoting a world were differences are valued and celebrated.**  
**<https://bit.ly/36Wvd3F>**



**Each time a woman  
stands up for herself,  
without knowing it  
possibly, without  
claiming it, she  
stands up for all  
women.**

**\*\*\***

**Maya Angelou**

Women are one of the most marginalized groups in most communities and their potential is downplayed because they are “just women”.

Women are still facing gendered stereotypes and discrimination in all spheres of life. Promoting gender equity and equality is one of the human rights challenges, the world is facing.

As individuals and communities, the power lies in us to take the first initiative to break the bias. Yes, it all begins with you; with you taking a stand to empower women and promoting equality for a sustainable tomorrow.





Breaking the Bias means:

- Giving women the opportunity to voice out their concerns and permitting them to exercise their human rights
- Involving and allowing women's participation in decision making spheres
- Educating the women to be aware of their rights and how to exercise them.
- Changing the mindset of society about who women are. Women are viewed as weak and inferior, therefore taking steps to break down the stereotypes.
- Women's access to sexual and reproductive health services at health facilities to protect them from sexual infections, unwanted pregnancies, and promote safe births.

It is not going to be a one-man's task to Break the Bias, this takes a collective approach. Individuals need to take into consideration that the only way to break the bias and the barriers working against women is through community ownership of

the goal to promote gender parity.

We work together to envision gender equality for a sustainable tomorrow. We work together to break the bias

## **What's next on the Ring and Injectable PrEP**

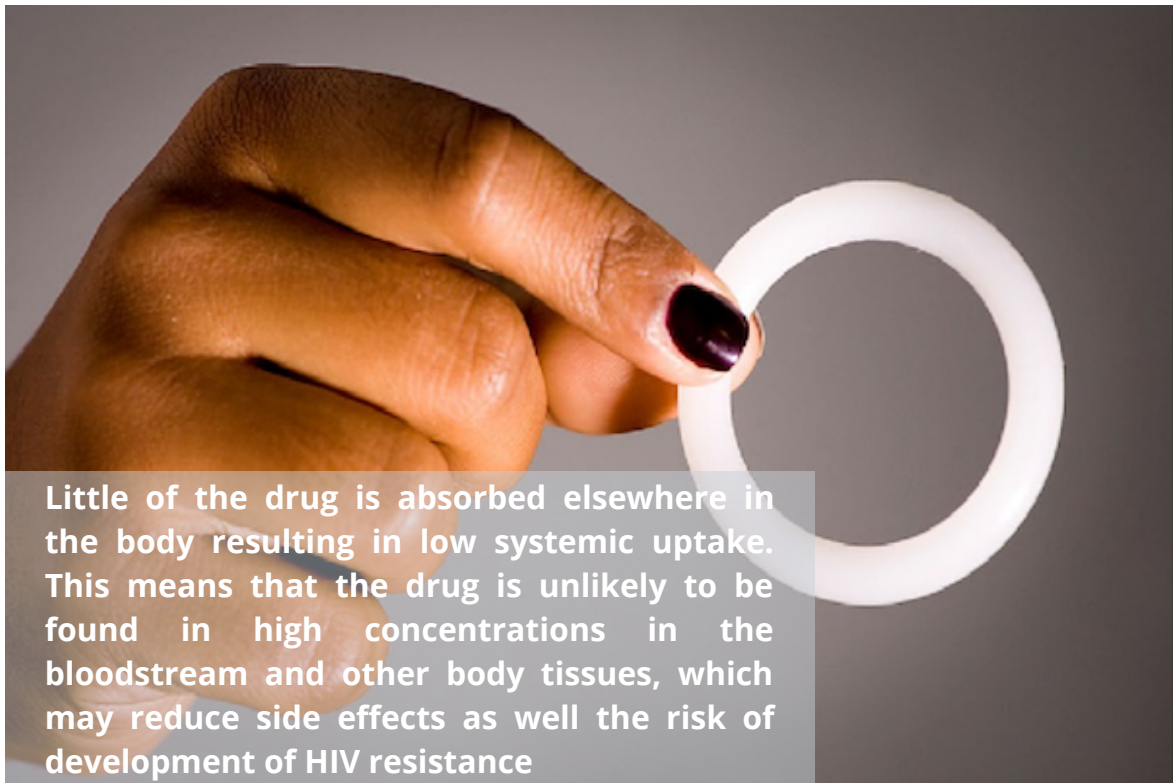
### **Getting Rollout Right for Ring and Injectable PrEP: AVAC**

Taking the right steps now could mean HIV prevention options fulfill their life-saving, epidemic-ending potential, and to do so requires working faster and more efficiently than ever before. The plan is to dive into what lessons the field has learned, what's still off-track, and the steps advocates, policy makers, drug makers and funders should each take right now to turn efficacious options into effective choices.

or more information, follow the clink: <https://bit.ly/3JYdVkJT>

### **DAPIVIRINE RING**

The ring delivers an antiretroviral drug called dapivirine. It's released slowly over the course of one month directly to vaginal tissue to help protect against HIV at the site of potential infection. <https://bit.ly/3Do4KrD>



Little of the drug is absorbed elsewhere in the body resulting in low systemic uptake. This means that the drug is unlikely to be found in high concentrations in the bloodstream and other body tissues, which may reduce side effects as well the risk of development of HIV resistance

## Injectable PrEP

CAB-LA, or long-acting injectable cabotegravir, is an antiretroviral drug developed by ViiV Healthcare and formulated to be administered once every two months as an injectable form of PrEP.

Cabotegravir previously was approved in the US and Canada for treatment, in combination with another injectable ARV, rilpivirine. As of December 2021, CAB-LA was additionally approved by the US for use as a prevention option.

CAB-LA inhibits HIV viral DNA from integrating with human DNA. Blocking this integration plays a role in both treatment and prevention.  
<https://bit.ly/3iOkc6O>



For more details and updates,  
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AIDS TRUST

**Pangaea envisions an environment in which  
all human beings live healthy, productive,  
and quality lives**

