

Use of virtual platforms to promote Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis (PrEP) uptake among Adolescent Girls and Young Women (AGYW) in Matabeleland North districts in Zimbabwe, October 2023-September 2024.

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Background

- Adolescent girls and young women (AGYW) are more likely to acquire HIV than their male counterparts.
- Oral pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) can reduce risk of HIV acquisition by 99%.
- Its uptake depends on awareness of accurate information.
- Pangaea Zimbabwe (PZ) supports PrEP delivery as part of the Determined, Resilient, Empowered, AIDS-Free, Mentored and Safe (DREAMS) program to prevent HIV acquisition among AGYW aged 18-24years in Matabeleland North province districts in Zimbabwe.
- Virtual platforms present an opportunity to increase knowledge and uptake of PrEP among AGYW.



PrEP Champion-Nkayi



PrEP Beneficiary-Lupane

Description

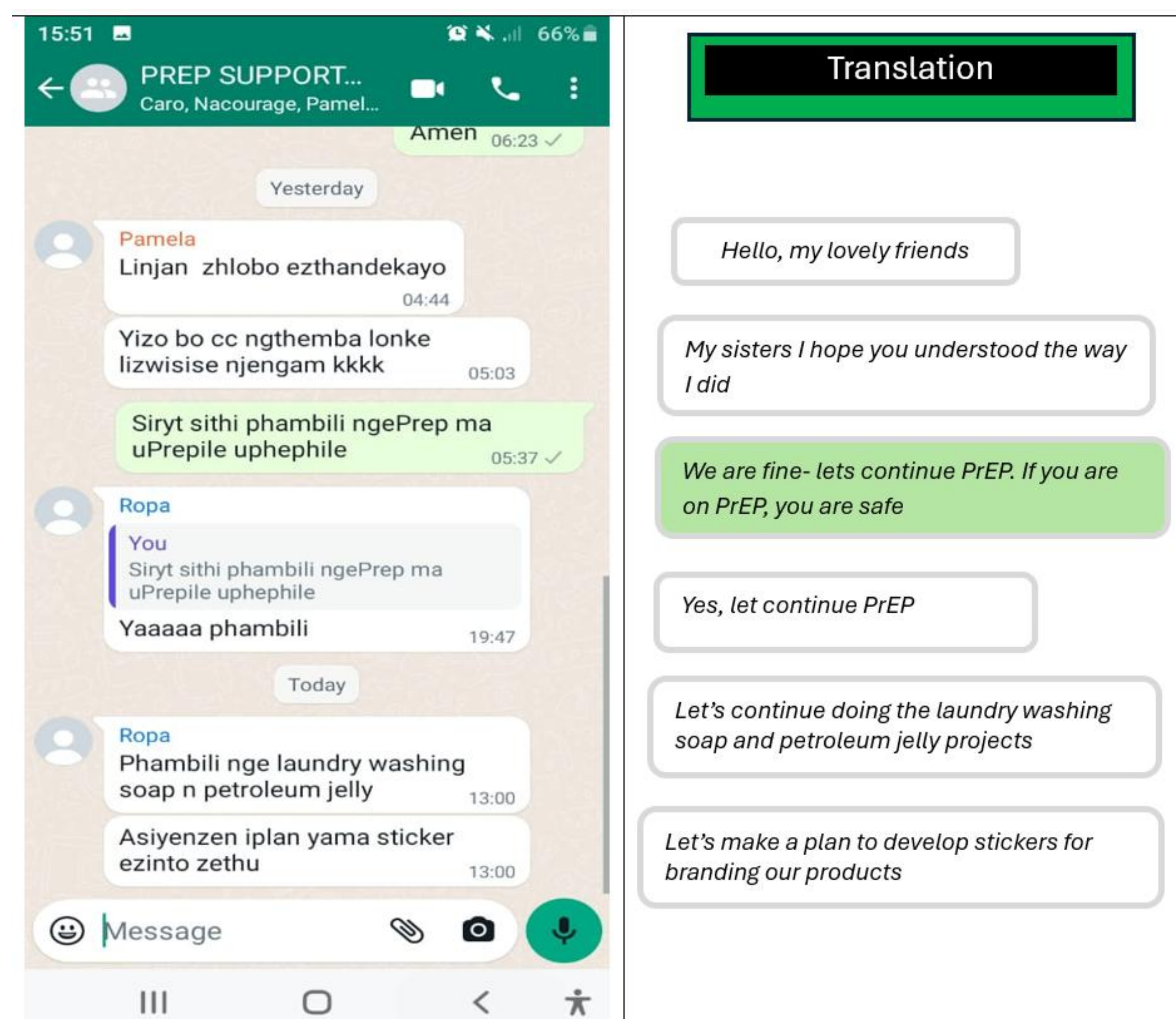
- From October 2023 to September 2024, PZ engaged and trained 30 AGYW as PrEP Champions across 61 supported health facilities to promote, mobilize, educate, and link their peers to PrEP.
- PrEP Champions received cell phones and credit for use on mobile platforms like telephone calls, WhatsApp, and text messages.
- PrEP Champions shared information with AGYW on eligibility criteria (encompassing age, HIV status, sexual practices, risk self assessment and the clinical algorithm (follow-up schedule for PrEP re-supplies).

- Myths and misconceptions about PrEP were clarified virtually to ensure that AGYW could make informed decisions. Data on PrEP uptake was captured on a database.

Lessons learnt

- Virtual platforms allowed for consistent delivery of PrEP messaging to AGYW, which improved PrEP demand by AGYW in remote areas.
- PrEP uptake rose from 4 in May 2023 to 42 in October 2023 and 219 in May 2024.
- From Jan-April 2024 PrEP initiations reduced by 5%, the program had saturated its reach and experienced stock outages.

PrEP support Group- WhatsApp chats



Conclusions

- By disseminating precise information through PrEP Champions, virtual platforms may generate widespread awareness and consistent demand for PrEP.
- Virtual platforms may enhance PrEP uptake and reach AGYW located far away from the facilities.