

Community Statement: We welcome Ambassador John Nkengasong as PEPFAR lead and urge rapid action to support access to critical HIV prevention interventions

Over the last decade, community voices have been crucial for ensuring equitable and affordable HIV treatment access. Central to our efforts has been our ability to facilitate dialogue between communities, multinational and generic drug manufacturing companies, policymakers, UN agencies, civil society organisations, and prominent researchers. This has included close engagement with PEPFAR. We recognize PEPFAR's critical role in driving access to life-saving HIV interventions in low- and middle-income countries (LMICs) and recognise and appreciate their partnership to help scale the use of DTG-based regimens.

So many community collaborations with PEPFAR have been successful because they are rooted in our shared commitment to a community-led HIV response. It is because of this that we welcome and congratulate Dr. John Nkengasong's confirmation as the next U.S. Ambassador-at-Large and Coordinator of the United States Government Activities to Combat HIV/AIDS Globally. Having served as the Director of the Africa CDC, combined with his over three decades of experience as a leading virologist on the African continent, Dr. Nkengasong is well-positioned to successfully drive PEPFAR's mission and, importantly, centre community voices to ensure PEPFAR's HIV response is locally led and sustainable.

Dr. Nkengasong's appointment comes at a pivotal moment for HIV prevention efforts. In 2020 alone, there were 1.5 million new HIV infections globally, far exceeding the UNAIDS target of no more than 500,000 annual new infections by 2020. Progress towards reducing new HIV infections has plateaued, and several populations, including adolescent girls and young women in sub-Saharan Africa and key populations, bear a disproportionate burden of new infections. This includes the almost 5,000 young women, many of whom are our daughters, sisters, friends, and neighbours, who are newly infected with HIV every week.

While treatment coverage has made significant contributions to reducing new HIV infections, primary prevention remains essential to reach and sustain epidemic control. High rates of new infections persist, in part, because HIV prevention options in our settings are limited. Oral pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) is both safe and effective, but associated challenges are cited in numerous publications and in our recent [community position statement](#). Effectiveness and overall utilization of oral PrEP are limited by adherence challenges associated with daily pill taking and stigma related to ARV use, among other factors.

New HIV prevention technologies, in particular the cabotegravir long-acting injectable (CAB-LA), hold the promise to transform HIV prevention in our communities. Approved by the US FDA in December 2021, CAB-LA offers a safe, highly effective HIV prevention option without the burden of daily pill taking.¹ For years, communities have advocated for diverse HIV prevention options that respond to the needs, lifestyles, and unique experiences of our community members at greatest risk for HIV infection. Affordable, widespread access to CAB-LA can represent a step change for HIV prevention.

However, our communities cannot afford to wait for access to CAB-LA. Since CAB-LA's FDA approval, **over 500,000 individuals around the world have newly become HIV positive** – and while regulatory applications have been filed with several African regulatory agencies, none have yet been approved. In addition, despite calls from communities and partners around the world and various analyses that suggest feasibility and affordability of CAB-LA manufacture by generic companies, [no meaningful steps](#), including issuance of a

¹ CAB-LA was shown to be statistically superior compared to daily oral PrEP in preventing HIV in two large-scale efficacy trials. In HPTN 083 ([Landovitz et al, 2021](#)) there was a 66% reduction in incident HIV infections in the CAB-LA arm compared to oral PrEP and an 89% reduction in HPTN 084 ([Delany-Moretlwe et al, 2022](#)).

AFRO CAB

voluntary license by ViiV Healthcare, have been completed to ensure availability of low-cost generic product in LMICs. ViiV continues to avoid transparent discussions with the community, and, in a private virtual meeting, has stated that their initial not-for-profit price would be between [\\$240-270 per patient per year](#). However, even using conservative assumptions, analysis demonstrates that CAB-LA can be produced for [less than \\$25 per person per year](#). Without immediate action, it will be years before this vital product reaches our communities at scale and at an affordable price point. Over 7,700 women, men, and transgender women participated in CAB-LA clinical trials. Access to CAB-LA for thousands of participants, as well as the millions more in need of highly effective, long-acting injectable PrEP is at stake.

Now more than ever, PEPFAR and Ambassador Nkengasong must undertake bold, decisive action and support our access to urgently needed HIV prevention products. PEPFAR has a crucial role to play in rapidly driving widescale access to affordable CAB-LA and we urge you to utilize all available tools at PEPFAR's disposal. We are committed to supporting you in these efforts and invite you to meet with us and other civil society organizations to discuss this pressing issue further.

PEPFAR's decades-long mission has been grounded in saving as many lives as possible, while empowering communities worldwide. Now, at the start of PEPFAR's next chapter, we call on Ambassador Nkengasong to re-commit to this principle and stand with us at this crucial turning point in the fight against HIV.

A Call to Action

We call on PEPFAR to initiate the following actions:

- **Confront ViiV on the access barriers** they are creating for CAB-LA by not granting a voluntary license and **refuse to purchase CAB-LA from ViiV until the following conditions are met:** (1) a voluntary license is in place; (2) ViiV has committed to a rapid, efficient technology transfer; and (3) an affordable price point has been established (via transparent access for PEPFAR to ViiV's manufacturing process and COGS data).
- Support community demands for ViiV by **establishing and sharing PEPFAR's willingness-to-pay price point for CAB-LA**.
- **Engage and consult communities to set HIV prevention COP targets and co-develop PEPFAR's prevention activities and projects (including those for CAB-LA)**, ensuring prioritization of preferred delivery channels and demand generation strategies and reflecting an ambitious vision for PrEP delivery at scale.
- **Invest in large, resourced, and coordinated implementation studies** to begin immediately to answer critical questions about how CAB-LA performs outside the clinic setting and across populations.
- Commit to supporting **high-volume procurement of PrEP** and widescale access to critical prevention interventions to drive meaningful change in HIV prevention and send a market signal to encourage needed investment by generic suppliers and others.
- **Prioritize primary prevention interventions** by increasing funding, in line with the resource needs outlined in the [Global AIDS Strategy, 2021-2026](#).

For further information please feel free to contact:

info@afrocab.info or Jacqui Wambui at jcqwambui@gmail.com

Community Organization Endorsements

ABPF Benin	ICW CA
Activist Education and Development Centre	ICW CI
AGEP C	ICW EA
Afrique Arc-En-Ciel (AAEC)	ICW Togo
AfroCAB Treatment Access Partnership	Long-Acting Technologies CAB (LAT CAB)
Aides	Lean On Me Foundation
AIDS Vaccine Advocacy Coalition (AVAC)	Lesotho Network of People Living With HIV/AIDS
Association of Positive Youths Living with HIV In Nigeria (APYIN)	Liberia Network of Persons Living with HIV (LIBNEP+)
Association Des Femmes Actives Et Solidaires (AFASO)	LVCT Health
Association Espoir Pour Demain (AED)	MILOGO
Association Féminine Vision Positive (AFVIPO)	National Network of Positive Women Ethiopians
Association of Women Living with HIV In Senegal	National Network of Tanzania Women with HIV And AIDS (NETWO+)
Association Pour Le Bien-Etre Familial/Naissances Désirables DRC	Network Of African People Living with HIV West Africa, NAP+WA
Association Sante Scolaire (SASCO)	Network Of People Living With HIV/AIDS In Nigeria (NEPWHAN)
Association Togolaise Pour Le Bien Etre Familial (ATBEF)	NGO "AGEP'C"/Директор ОФ "AGEP'C"
AYARHEP	Pan-African Treatment Access Movement
Bokk Yakaar	Pangaea Zimbabwe
CBO 7 Days	PEPFAR DOD
Cbo Gà Vàng	Planned Parenthood Association of Ghana (PPAG)
Club Des 7 Jours	Positive Malaysian Treatment Access & Advocacy Group (MTAAG+)
Coalition Of Women Living with HIV In Malawi (COWLHA)	Positive Response for Treatment Access, Adherence, and Support Foundation
Coalition PLUS	PrEP4All
Community Of Women Living with HIV Lesotho	REBAP+
Concern Citizen of Shuni Progressive Union	RECAP+
CONERELA+	Rede Moçambicana De Pessoas Vivendo Com HIV (MONET+)
COLTMR CI	Take Care of Human Being (TAHBE)
DACASA	The European AIDS Treatment Group
DARE Organization Tanzania	Tororo Forum for People Living with HIV Network
Discordant Couple's Welfare Group	Treatment Action Group
Emthonjeni Counseling and Training	Uganda Network on Ethics, Law & HIV/AIDS (UGANET)
Global Coalition of Women Against AIDS In Uganda (GCOWAU)	UK Community Advisory Board
GNP+	UMATI
Good Health Community Programmes	Venus Social Enterprise
Health GAP	
ICHANGE	

Vietnam Network of Young Key Affected Populations

Women Fighting AIDS In Kenya (WOFAK)

Y+ Kenya

Youth Arise Against HIV/TB In Kisumu

Individual Signatories

Abena Amoah (Ghana)

Adaga Dinah Doosen (Nigeria)

Agbomadji Selom (Togo)

Airton Valdano Baessa Dupret Miranda (Guinea-Bissau)

Angom Mercy Joy (Uganda)

Anita Hetteema (Eswatini)

Anton Pozniak (United Kingdom)

Astou Diop (Senegal)

Bahati Thomas Haule (Tanzania)

Bassey Blessing (Nigeria)

Beatrice Wamuyu Kabugi (Kenya)

Besthy Bombum (Nigeria)

Caroline Mubaira (Zimbabwe)

Cesar Mombunza (DR Congo)

Cheikh Ba (Senegal)

Cheuka Regine (Cameroon)

Chifuniro Misomali (Malawi)

Christine Kafando (Burkina Faso)

Cindy Amaiza (Kenya)

Delphine Ngwenyi (Cameroon)

Delphine Willy (Cameroon)

Dickson Mwaniki Njogu (Kenya)

Đỗ Gia Trường Đức (Vietnam)

Đỗ Văn Tuấn (Vietnam)

Dr. Mbuyi Kayombo Placide (DR Congo)

Dr. Lilian Benjamin Mwakyosi (Tanzania)

Duong Tu Anh (Tran Quoc Viet) (Vietnam)

Edith Otalike (Nigeria)

Edward Low (Malaysia)

Elizabeth Bernice Odaba (Kenya)

Elizabeth Oloo (Kenya)

Fifa Rahman (United Kingdom)

Fredalene Booysen (South Africa)

Gabriel Chioma (Nigeria)

Ganhoue Israël (Côte d'Ivoire)

Gbanen Barididum (Nigeria)

Hiwot Tadesse (Ethiopia)

Hussein Aliyu Mohammed (Nigeria)

Ibrahima Ba (Senegal)

Ifewulu Chidiebube (Nigeria)

Imelda Mahaka (Zimbabwe)

Immidex Akinyi (Kenya)

Iriebe Gboh (Côte d'Ivoire)

Isaac Rabari (Kenya)

Jacque Wambui (Kenya)

Janet Tatenda Bhila (Zimbabwe)

James Lule (Uganda)

Jeremy Kwan (Malaysia)

Joshua Oliyo (Kenya)

Joyce Ouma (Kenya)

Júlio Ramos Mujojo (Mozambique)

Kakmeni Wembou Raphaël (Cameroon)

Kenly Sikwese (Zambia)

Kibwe Katchelewa Delphin (DR Congo)

Kristine Yakhama (Kenya)

Kumsa Gudeta Aleba (Ethiopia)

Landom Henry Shey (Cameroon)

Le Duc Anh (Vietnam)

Luckyboy Edison Mkhondwane (South Africa)

Mammenyane (Lesotho)

Mamoletsi Moletsi (Lesotho)

Memory Sachikonye (United Kingdom)

Miracle Monday Sagu (Nigeria)

Mirembe Jovia Birungi (Uganda)

Mogodé Judith (Chad)

Mounton Pauline (Cameroon)

Mpendwa Abinery (Tanzania)

Munene Adrienne (Burundi)

Nadia Adingra (Cote d'Ivoire)

Namakula Proscovia (Uganda)

Nchotu Benedict Anye (Cameroon)

Ngaminkumu Rose Sonia (Cameroon)
Noelie Koevi-Koudam (Togo)
Nombeko Mpongo (South Africa)
Nomfundo Eland (South Africa)
Nwankwo Francis Casmir (Nigeria)
Olubukola Oyeyinka Ayinde (Nigeria)
Onuh Faith Ebere (Nigeria)
Patricia Ocheng (Kenya)
Patson Chabala Kasali (Zambia)
Ramona Bhatia (Vietnam)
Raymond Kwesiga Crypsin (Uganda)
Seynabou Diop (Senegal)
Shyrene Mvula (Malawi)
Sophie Ayobami (Nigeria)
Takaléa Gisèle (Côte d'Ivoire)
Talkmore Taurai Mazorodze (Eswatini)
Tapiwanashe Kujinga (Zimbabwe)
Tsitsidzaishe Musvosvi (Zimbabwe)
Tyrone Lapidos (Eswatini)
Violeth Edwin (Tanzania)
Vuviseka Dubula (South Africa)
Wokie Cole (Liberia)
Yahaya Umar (Nigeria)
Yao Jean Léo Dzogbema (Togo)
Zintsem Angele Epouse Dim (Cameroon)