**Population Council's Three-Month HIV Prevention Product Receives Positive Scientific Opinion from European Medicines Agency**

*New three-month dapivirine vaginal ring offers longer-acting protection against HIV and cost savings compared to one-month ring; Kiara Health to lead market introduction in Africa*

**New York, NY — November 16, 2026** — Population Council, an international nonprofit research organization, announced today that its three-month dapivirine vaginal ring (DVR) has received a positive scientific opinion from the European Medicines Agency (EMA) through its EU-Medicines for All procedure, supporting its use for HIV prevention for women and adolescent girls ages 16 and older, including breastfeeding women.

Developed by the Population Council and its affiliate IPM South Africa, the three-month DVR is a user-controlled HIV prevention method that slowly releases the antiretroviral drug dapivirine over three months. Designed to build on the one-month DVR, which received a positive EMA scientific opinion in July 2020 and has received regulatory approval in 12 African countries, the new ring requires replacement just four times per year. It is expected to reduce annual product costs by nearly 60% compared with the unsubsidized price of the one-month ring, offering the potential to expand access at a time when funding pressures are straining HIV prevention programs.

The milestone represents an important advancement in efforts to expand HIV prevention choices for women and adolescent girls in sub-Saharan Africa, who face a disproportionate burden of HIV. By offering a longer-acting alternative designed for women alongside oral and injectable prevention methods, the three-month DVR can help more women and adolescent girls choose an HIV prevention product that fits their individual needs, preferences, and circumstances.

"Women and girls deserve HIV prevention options that work for their lives," **said Leonard Solai, Country Director and Global Access and External Affairs Lead, Population Council**. "This milestone reflects years of research and development aimed at making HIV prevention more practical, affordable, and accessible. By reducing how often the ring must be replaced and lowering anticipated costs, we can address barriers to sustained prevention and bring greater choice and autonomy to women and adolescent girls across Africa — and beyond."

The EMA's positive opinion follows a review of evidence that included a Phase I crossover trial involving 124 women in South Africa who used both the one-month and three-month DVRs. The three-month ring was well tolerated and delivered higher dapivirine levels than the one-month ring, suggesting that the efficacy of the three-month ring will be at least equal to that of the one-month ring.

To support the product's introduction and expand access, the Population Council will transfer the commercial license for the three-month DVR to Kiara Health, a South Africa-based pharmaceutical manufacturer and healthcare solutions provider. The partnership advances the Council's long-standing commitment to working with local manufacturers in high-burden countries to bring HIV prevention products to market.

"The positive EMA scientific opinion represents an important step toward expanding HIV prevention choices for women across Africa," **said Dr. Skhumbuzo Ngozwana, Chief Executive Officer, Kiara Health.** "Kiara Health is proud to partner with Population Council to advance access to the three-month dapivirine vaginal ring. We look

forward to working with regulatory authorities and public health partners to support its introduction in African markets and, over time, explore opportunities for sustainable local manufacturing."

Advocates and users of the ring applauded the news, highlighting the importance of providing more prevention options for women and adolescent girls.

"We welcome the European Medicines Agency's positive opinion on the three-month dapivirine vaginal ring. This is an important step towards expanding HIV prevention choices for women. The ring's favorable safety profile, strong user acceptability, and potential for less frequent replacement are encouraging," **said the African Women's HIV Prevention Accountability Board (AWPCAB) in a statement.** "Women and communities must remain at the center of decisions about prevention, and we urge continued efforts to make the product accessible, affordable, and supported by clear, community-informed information. Every woman deserves prevention options that fit her life."

"I would love to switch to the 3-month ring once it is available because the monthly ring has already made my life so much more convenient," **said Oyama Eland, Ring User, Cape Town, South Africa**. "With the 3-month ring, I wouldn't have to worry about changing it every 28 days. Having longer-lasting protection would be an even greater benefit."

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**About the Three-Month Dapivirine Vaginal Ring**
Developed by the Population Council, the three-month dapivirine vaginal ring (DVR) is a user-controlled HIV prevention method designed to reduce the risk of HIV transmission during vaginal sex. Once inserted into the vagina near the cervix, the ring slowly releases the antiretroviral drug dapivirine at the site of potential infection over three months. Dapivirine works by blocking HIV's ability to make copies of itself inside healthy cells. Users replace the ring every three months, requiring four rings for a full year of use.

**About the Population Council**
The Population Council is a leading research organization dedicated to building an equitable and sustainable world that enhances the health and well-being of current and future generations. We generate ideas, produce evidence, and design solutions to improve the lives of people around the world. Learn more at https://popcouncil.org.

**Media Contact:**
Francesca Heintz, Director of Communications
Population Council
media@popcouncil.org