



**INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY
OF WOMEN LIVING WITH HIV
EASTERN AFRICA (ICWEA)**

For Immediate Release

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ICWEA STATEMENT ON THE APPROVAL OF LENACAPAVIR FOR HIV PREVENTION IN UGANDA

The International Community of Women Living with HIV Eastern Africa (ICWEA) welcomes and affirms the approval of Lenacapavir (LEN)—a twice-yearly injectable HIV prevention option—by the Uganda National Drug Authority as the right and timely decision for Uganda.

Uganda's approval is especially significant given that Uganda was one of the countries where Lenacapavir clinical studies were conducted, with Ugandan communities, researchers, and advocates playing a direct role in generating the evidence that informed this milestone. It is both scientifically sound and ethically right that communities who contributed to the science now benefit from its outcomes.

ICWEA further recognizes the meaningful leadership and contribution of Ugandans in global decision-making spaces, including representation on the Purpose 1 Global Community Advisory Group (G-CAG). We particularly acknowledge Lillian Mworeko, Executive Director of ICWEA, and Stephen Mugamba, whose engagement ensured community voices, women's realities, and equity remained central throughout the research and development process.

The approval of Lenacapavir directly advances ICWEA's and African Women Prevention Community Accountability Board's call for CHOICE under the HIV Prevention Choice Manifesto for Women and Girls in Africa. It strengthens the prevention toolbox by expanding options, recognizing that no single method works for everyone.

Lenacapavir adds to the growing mix of HIV prevention choices, alongside condoms, the Dapivirine Vaginal Ring (DVR), long-acting injectable CAB-LA, and U=U, reinforcing the principle that prevention is most effective when people—especially women and girls—can choose what works best for their bodies, lives, and circumstances.

Long-acting options like LEN hold particular promise for women and adolescent girls who face barriers linked to stigma, gender inequality, violence, and challenges with daily or frequent prevention methods. By reducing adherence burdens and enhancing privacy, LEN has the potential to support greater prevention autonomy.



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However, approval must translate into access.

ICWEA calls for:

Rapid, equitable, and well-resourced rollout of Lenacapavir within Uganda's national HIV prevention framework.

- Affordability and sustainable financing, ensuring cost does not become a new barrier.
- Clear implementation guidance, including integration into public health facilities and community-led delivery models.
- Meaningful involvement of women living with HIV and women at risk in rollout planning, demand creation, and monitoring.
- Strong community-led accountability mechanisms to track access, uptake, and equity.

We urge the Government of Uganda, implementing partners, and pharmaceutical stakeholders—including Gilead Sciences—to ensure Lenacapavir moves swiftly from regulatory approval to real, affordable, and sustained access for the communities who helped make it possible.

Ending AIDS by 2030 requires more than innovation—it demands choice, equity, accountability, and community leadership.

Nothing for us, without us. — ICWEA

About ICWEA

The International Community of Women Living with HIV Eastern Africa (ICWEA) is a regional feminist network of women living with HIV across Eastern Africa. ICWEA works to advance the health, rights, and dignity of women and girls through advocacy, community-led monitoring, movement building, and accountability, with a strong focus on HIV prevention choice, sexual and reproductive health and rights, and ending all forms of violence against women and girls.

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