

Engaging in the Contraceptive Discourse on: CHOICE;ACCESSIBILITY; ACCEPTABILITY AND SAFETY

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Background

At the moment, there is lack of definitive scientific evidence on whether there is a connection between DMPA and HIV. All the information which is available is not conclusive in nature and most of it is based on observational studies. While Kenya is one of the countries where the ECHO trial is being carried out, Kenya is not yet prepared for the outcome of the ECHO trial in 2019.. There are no clear plans on how the country will respond to the ECHO trial results, yet DMPA is widely used by women. As stated earlier,

If the ECHO trial proves that there is a link between DMPA and HIV, the country needs to have put in place clear strategies on how to manage expiry of the DMPA in case of reduced demand for it by the users, the financial resources, alternatives to DMPA, the burden of pregnancy if DMPA has to be withdrawn and preventing maternal mortality .There is also need to prepare for unclear trial results.

However, If the trial proves that there is NO connection between DMPA and HIV, there is the need to have clear communication strategies so as to mitigate the anxiety that has been created by the existing literature and as advocates we shall continue advocating for respect of women' SRH rights and increased method mix for informed choices.

Therefore, this project will focus advocacy efforts on engaging with various stakeholders in preparation for the outcome of ECHO trial in Kenya and the region.

Objectives

- 1.To increase . awareness of DMPA Users about HC and HIV and strategically engage the GCAG members, policy and decision makers to prepare for the ECHO trial results**
- 2. To strengthen Advocacy for additional contraceptive options and increased method mix**

Key Accomplishments

More than 100 women were reached 3 counties; Nairobi, Kisumu& Migori

- Key actions were developed to inform the dissemination process.**
- Selected to be part of the National ECHO Taskforce.**
- .Selected to be part of the team that developed the DTG Advocacy Booklet**

Lessons Learnt

Young women should be included from the onset of the research through to the dissemination processes.

The media plays a key role in disseminating the study to the general public.

Key messages should be well designed, packaged and delivered in the right way to reach a wider scope of young people
SRHR and HIV cannot work separately

Sensitization of the community should consistent and continuous in order to dispel myths about contraception.

Research is broad and one doesn't need to be a researcher or a scientist to be engaged

One can not work alone; you need to work with others.

