**MTN-032 Phase 2**

Male Partner In-Depth Interview (IDI) Topic Guide

**INSTRUCTIONS for the Interviewer: How to use the IDI Guide**

1. Section topics are in shaded in gray and **bolded**.
2. *Instructions/suggestions to interviewer are in italics and [brackets].*
3. Not ALL questions need to be asked. It is up to the interviewer’s discretion if a question should be skipped if the participant has already provided a response to the question earlier in the interview. Please ensure that by the end of the interview, all the topics and key themes have been covered.
4. Purpose statements should be considered notes to the interviewer and are not meant to be read aloud. They explain the reason for asking that question or set of questions in order to provide more context to the interviewer who can then rephrase in her own words or clarify to the participant as necessary.
5. There are two levels of questions:
   1. Primary interview questions: appear in **bold** text. They address the topics that you as the interviewer should ask and discuss with participants. You are not required to read them verbatim, but they are written to ensure some consistency across IDIs.
   2. Probing topics are indicated with a bullet. If you find that the participant does not provide much information in response to the primary question, these probing topics may be used to encourage further discussion. Probes with the words “*KEY PROBE*” written before it are probes that are the most important to try to address. Depending on what has already been discussed, and the IDI context, you may or may not ask the rest of the probes.
6. Words found in (parentheses) are meant to provide wording options to interviewers to fit various situations. For example, they often provide a present or past tense verb.
7. The IDI guide is not meant to be used to take notes. Rather, you should use the separate notes form, where you will also insert your initials, the participant’s PTID, as well as the date, start and end time of the interview.
8. **Special note about seroconverters:** It is important for study staff to review the participant’s HIV status before conducting any study procedures. When asking questions to seroconverters, start off by emphasizing that confidentiality is maintained in the study and reassure the participant that her study information will not be shared with anyone outside the study. Then inform the participant that you are aware that she has seroconverted.

**Before starting the IDI, ensure the participant has provided written informed consent.**

[*Start Recorder and Read Introduction*]: **My name is \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. Thank you again for your willingness to be in this study. The main goal of this discussion is to better understand your experience of being the partner of a woman who participated in HOPE. I want to remind you that there are no right or wrong answers, and what we discuss here will be kept confidential; we will not share your personal information or responses with anyone outside of the study.**

**If during our discussion, there are issues or concerns that you would like to talk about, feel free to bring them up; I will take note of them and answer them directly after the interview. If I cannot answer them, I can refer you to someone who may be able to help. Before we start, can you confirm for the recorder that you have already provided written informed consent to take part in this discussion?** [*Wait for oral confirmation to begin*].

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| 1. **Perceptions of health and HIV Risk** |
| 1. **What concerns do you have about your health?**   *Possible probing topics:*   * What are you most concerned with? * How has this changed since your partner finished with the HOPE study (e.g. different types of worries? Increased or decreased?) |
| 1. *[HIV+ men skip]* **How worried are you about getting HIV? Why?**   *Possible probing topics:*   * *KEY PROBE*: How do your worries about HIV compare to other worries in your life (e.g. financial, work, partner relationship, family issues, etc.)? * *KEY PROBE*: How did your concern about HIV affect your support for your partner’s ring use? * How worried are you about your partner getting HIV?   + Did these worries change due to your partner’s participation in HOPE? (e.g. due to HIV testing, use of the vaginal ring male engagement activities, HIV risk reduction counseling, etc.)   + How did your worries about HIV affect your opinion about your partner participating in HOPE? (supportive or not supportive) * Are you more worried about getting HIV from your primary partner or from someone else? Please explain. |
| 1. *[HIV+ men skip]* **What are you doing to protect yourself from HIV?** (*e.g. condoms, HIV testing, medical male circumcision, mutual monogamy, etc.*)   *Possible probing topics:*   * Which methods are most preferred? Why? * Which methods are least preferred? Why? * In a couple, who is responsible for HIV prevention? * Do you (or have you) used protection with some partners and not others? Why? |
| *[Interviewers should use transition language in their own words to ease into this next section about asking more personal questions about their sex lives]* |
| 1. **Tell me about your sex life.**   *Possible probing topics:*   * How many sexual partners do you have? * What kind of partners are they (i.e. primary, casual, client, etc.)? * What kind of sex do you have with each partner (vaginal, anal, oral)? How often? * *KEY PROBE*: How did your partners participation in HOPE/ use of the ring affect how and/or with whom you have sex? |
| 1. **Knowledge of and Opinions about HOPE** |
| *Purpose: To hear about what he knows about and thinks of the HOPE study.*   1. **What do you know about the HOPE study? (Purpose, product used, etc)**   *Possible probing topics:*   * What do you know about what your partner did while they were at study visits? * How did you learn that information (*e.g. male partner engagement activities, partner, study staff*)? When did you learn it? * What was your initial reaction when you found out about the study? |
| 1. **What are your opinions about the HOPE study?**   *Possible probing topics:*   * How did your opinion about the HOPE study change over time? * Did you discuss your opinions with your partner? How did that go? * What concerns did you have about the HOPE study?   + What did you do about the concerns? * Did those concerns change at any point (get worse or go away)?   + If yes, why did they change?   + Do you still have those concerns? * Were there any challenges in your relationships due to your partner participating in HOPE? * What do men in your community think about the HOPE study? (concerns, changes, etc.) |
| 1. **Knowledge and opinion of vaginal ring** |
| *Purpose: To explore what they and their communities know about and think about the vaginal ring for HIV prevention.*   1. **What do you know about the vaginal ring?**   *Possible probing topics:*   * KEY PROBE: How did you learn that information (*e.g. male partner engagement activities, partner, study staff, community meetings, etc.*)? When did you learn it? |
| 1. **What is your opinion about the vaginal ring? Likes/dislikes?** [U*se opinion tool; sample of the ring*]   *Possible probing topics:*   * *KEY PROBE*: What concerns did you have about the ring?   + What did you do about those concerns?   + Did those change at any point (get worse or go away)? If yes, why did they change?   + Do you still have those concerns? * *KEY PROBE*: How did your opinion of the ring affect your level of support for your partner using the ring in HOPE?   + What kind of support did you offer your partner (if any)? * *KEY PROBE*: How could the ring be improved so that men would like it more? * Did you discuss your opinions with your partner? How did that go? * What do other men in your community know and think about the vaginal ring? |
| 1. **Ring Efficacy** |
| *Purpose: Find out current understanding of ring efficacy and how the ring works, and what impact that had on his support of his partners ring use.*   1. **Please explain your current understanding about how well the ring protects against HIV.**   *Possible probing topics:*   * Where did you learn that information? (e.g. research staff, media, your partner, other participants, other sources?) * How do you feel about the level of protection the ring provides? * How did this knowledge affect your support of your partner using the ring? * What level of protection would the ring need to provide for you to want your partner to use it in the future? * Did your understanding change at any point? If yes, how? From whom did you hear the new information? |
| 1. **How do you think the ring works?**   *Possible probing topics:*   * When you think about the drug in your partner’s body, how does that make you feel? How do you think the drug in the ring affects you? * How fast do you think the ring provides protection after insertion? * How fast do you think the ring loses protection after removing? |
| 1. **How was your partner using the ring?**   *Possible probing topics:*   * How did she describe how she was meant to use it? * When did she remove the ring? Why? (*e.g. bathing, cleaning, during sex, other?*) |
| 1. **How did the ring affect your sexual life, if at all?** [*Use penis & pelvic models, sample of ring, etc.]*   *Possible probing topics:*   * *KEY PROBE*: Could you tell when your partner was wearing the ring? How did you know it was there? * *KEY PROBE*: What did sex feel like when your partner was wearing the ring? Please describe how it was different. * *KEY PROBE*: What challenges have there been in your relationships due to your partners participating in HOPE? (positive or negative?) What happened? * If there were changes, do you think they were good or bad? * Did you talk to your partner about the ring and your sexual experience? Why or why not? |
| 1. **Tell me about a situation when you felt the ring during sex with your partner.** *(i.e. What happened, how did you react, how did she react?)*   *Possible probing topics:*   * How often did this occur? * Did you change sexual positions because of the ring? * Did you change what you did to your partner? (insert fingers, other types of foreplay) * Did you ever remove it? |
| 1. **HIV prevention preferences** |
| 1. **How do you feel about your partner using the vaginal ring to prevent HIV compared to you wearing a condom?**   *Possible probing topics:*   * *KEY PROBE*: What do you think about using the ring and condom together? (Are you willing? Do you think it’s necessary?) * *KEY PROBE:*  What do you think about using the ring and PrEP together (either you or your partner taking PrEP)? * Would you rather that your partner used PrEP or the ring? Why? * Would you rather that your partner used the ring or you used PrEP, why? * What other products would you like to have available for HIV prevention? (For men/women) * What are the benefits of having men vs women having control over the HIV prevention product? * What are the drawbacks of men vs women controlling HIV prevention products? |
| 1. **Male engagement in future vaginal ring projects** |
| 1. **What do you think about being involved in women’s decisions to use the vaginal ring for HIV prevention?**   *Possible probing topics:*   * *KEY PROBE*: Did you attend any clinic events? Which ones? What did that entail?   + (*If did NOT attend events*): Why did you not attend any clinic events? * *KEY PROBE:* Besides clinic events, how and where can male involvement and participation take place? * Do you think that men should always be involved? To what extent? * How do you think men can best be involved in getting more women to use these products? * How can men be encouraged to support women’s use of HIV prevention methods in general? |
| 1. **As the vaginal ring for HIV prevention continues to be studied, how do you think male partners should be involved in the research?**   *Possible probing topics:*   * What roles can men fulfill in research, why is male participation important? * Do you think that men should always be involved? To what extent? * How do you think other men from the community should be involved in future research? |
| 1. **If the ring becomes available, how do you think other men like you could be encouraged to support women to use it?**   *Possible probing topics:*   * What would you say to your male friends about the ring – what advice would you give? * What type of concerns would they have about the ring, or about their partners using the ring? * What would you say to your female friends and relatives about the ring? |
| 1. **Wrap Up** |
| 1. **Thank you for taking the time to share your opinions with me today. We truly appreciate your willingness to participate and discuss your experience with us. We’ve now reached the end of our discussion. Do you have any questions for me or any additional comments about the HOPE study or the vaginal ring?** |