

Global Campaign Europe: A Brief Overview

Global Campaign Europe is the European arm of the Global Campaign for Microbicides. The goals of the initiative are to:

- Build political support for increased investment in microbicide research and development
- Create a supportive policy environment for the timely development, introduction and use of microbicides
- Prepare NGOs and other civil society actors to take an active role in advocating on behalf of end-users, the public interest and communities involved in clinical trials

Global Campaign Europe joins the widening web of NGO-based microbicide advocacy work occurring under the platform of the Global Campaign for Microbicides. The Campaign amplifies the voices of advocates by equipping them with a growing body of free resources and materials, supporting their efforts through sub-grants and offering guidance regarding effective awareness-raising, media cultivation and lobbying strategies.

The Global Campaign for Microbicides serves to mobilise the “civil society” arm of the global microbicides movement – forming an interface between the “scientific microbicide establishment” and the millions of citizens whose lives will be influenced by this enterprise – either as eventual users, trial participants, taxpayers, or individuals at risk of HIV/AIDS. Global Campaign Europe, as a part of this worldwide network, is bringing together the voices and energies of civil society entities across Europe, creating a supportive context for local, national and pan-European advocacy.

Global Campaign Europe Secretariat

Since April 2004, Global Campaign Europe has been based in Brussels in the ‘Stop AIDS office’ along with IPM, IAVI and the Stop AIDS Alliance. There are now two staff supporting the regional work. As the Regional Coordinator, Rebekah Webb works to cultivate and sustain new GCM partner groups in Europe and communicate policy priorities to them, through on-going exchange of information, policy advice, materials, and strategic partnerships. In July 2005 Arwa Meijer joined the team to take forward communications and event organising, in particular the European tour of the exhibit ‘In Her Mother’s Shoes’.

Global Campaign Europe offers on-going support and capacity building assistance to its partners and endorsers through frequent contact, trainings and technical assistance, as well as through the provision of updates and briefing papers. We are committed to expanding the body of available educational materials and to assuring that our compendium of tools, materials and resources are readily accessible, translated and otherwise adapted to make them as useful as possible to our organising sites and other European partners.

Our particular focus is building a political base among European NGOs, including women’s groups, AIDS service organisations, reproductive health associations, international development agencies, vaccine and treatment activists and social justice groups. As a “global public health good,” microbicides will only become a reality if policy makers and governments are forced to respond to citizen demands for more options. Because political leadership is subject to change, it is important to cultivate a sustained NGO/grassroots constituency for microbicides so that pressure can be brought to bear if the winds of political support start to shift.



Expanding HIV prevention options, especially for women
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Relationship to Other Institutions

There are three major microbicide entities with a profile in Europe: the International Partnership for Microbicides (IPM), the Microbicide Development Programme (MDP) and Global Campaign Europe.

The IPM serves as a “virtual pharmaceutical company”, to accelerate product development and testing through milestone-driven agreements with key collaborators. It also pursues an ‘access’ agenda to ensure that any product developed is made readily accessible to women in the developing world.

The MDP is a research collaboration among several British universities, the Clinical Trials Unit of the UK Medical Research Council, and investigators at clinical trial sites in five African countries. The MDP develops and tests new leads and is conducting a Phase III trial of Pro 2000.

By contrast, Global Campaign Europe conducts no research of its own and is not involved in funding or collaborating in direct product development. NGOs participating in GC-Europe advocate on behalf of the field and seek to protect the public interest and represent the needs and interests of communities, trial participants and users.

Coordination at the European Union

Based in Brussels, Global Campaign Europe works cooperatively with other NGOs such as the International AIDS Vaccine Initiative (IAVI), International Partnership for Microbicides (IPM), and the Stop AIDS Alliance to engage in EU-focused HIV/AIDS advocacy. This collaboration facilitates the collective tracking of relevant policy developments at the level of the European Union. It also helps us to coordinate mutually supportive advocacy strategies for maximum impact, while avoiding overlap or duplication of effort.

IPM and IAVI staff, for example, focus primarily on policy issues related to prevention technologies, HIV research and clinical trials. The Stop AIDS Alliance, by contrast, attends to a broader set of global HIV policy issues and Global Campaign Europe specifically tracks developments in the areas of gender equity, women’s rights and sexual/reproductive health as they relate to microbicides and/or global AIDS. This sharing of expertise offers us the opportunity to pursue otherwise unachievable depth and breadth of policy analysis.

The Global Campaign, for its part, reviews issues with specific attention to the needs of prospective users of new prevention technology, their communities and the civil society actors engaged in advocating for these prevention alternatives. We are uniquely suited to take leadership in this area because of our origins in the women’s sexual and reproductive health movements.

The Global Campaign also “translates” these complex policy discussions into action items and serves as an informational conduit between the grassroots and the “higher level” policy debates. Our partner and endorsing NGOs, in turn, generate action to raise public awareness of these emerging issues and foment pressure on their national governments, as well as on their MEPs, for increased commitment to microbicide development.

GC Europe Partners

Currently, GC Europe partners include: ActionAid International, GNP+, the International HIV/AIDS Alliance, International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF), European AIDS Treatment Group (EATG), SENSOA (Belgium), IFPA (Ireland), AIDS Fonds (the Netherlands), GTT and Creacion Positiva (Spain), Interact Worldwide (UK), AHPN (UK), AIDES (France), HIV Denmark, Positiiviset (Finland), the Naz Foundation, and the International Community of Women Living with HIV/AIDS (ICW).