

Global Campaign News - Issue #104

Welcome to the 104th issue of Global Campaign News! The Global Campaign News is a forum for international exchange on microbicide activities and information with an aim to build a more informed and integrated movement for microbicide development and other prevention options against HIV and STIs.

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Advocates in Action



GCM Reports from the AWID Forum Global

Nearly 1,500 women from around the world convened in an energetic forum in Cape Town from the 14th to 17th of November 2008. The 11th AWID forum entitled 'The Power of Movements' was a point of convergence for ideas, perspectives, experiences, agents of change and commitments that aim to enhance women's rights worldwide. Topics addressed at the conference included organising in conflict situations, women in leadership and the gains

(GCM's staff discuss with AWID Forum participants visiting the booth)

thus far, women with disabilities, the use of technology for advocacy, women and the environment and marginalised groups. Issues surrounding violence against women were addressed in most of the sessions and a successful march for this cause was organised by the '1 in 9 campaign'. The training tracks of the conference included social networking, digital story telling and use of video and audio for advocacy.

A session by GCM entitled 'Does the women's movement have time to demand HIV prevention options for women?' was hosted by Pauline Irungu of GCM. Presenters included

Tina Musuya (Centre for Domestic Violence Prevention, Uganda), Prudence Mabele (Positive Women's Network, South Africa), Grace Mukankuranga (Society for Women and AIDS in Africa, Rwanda) and Dr Samukeliso Dube (GCM.)

The session opened the topic of wider access to HIV prevention tools for women to the broader AWID forum by asking 'How do we overcome the fragmentation in our movements and the increasing specialization on particular issues to build bridges, common political agendas and shared strategies?' Discussion was rich and showed that many are willing to cross-programme and make the connection between gender based violence and HIV prevention, even those for whom word 'microbicides' was new. Importantly, there



(Visitors view information at the GCM booth)

was also consensus that HIV prevention advocacy efforts should be aligned with socioeconomic issues affecting women and the idea that this, in turn, would enable women to stand up and advocate for their sexual and reproductive rights.

Other topics raised were the female condom and how the women's movement needs to get on board promotion and advocacy of this vital prevention tool, the need for involvement of women living with HIV on the prevention front and the need to focus on young women and the risk they are at in terms of cultural practices such as virginity testing which may encourage them to engage in risky sexual practices such as unprotected anal sex.

In all, it was a very successful and enlightening session with much food for thought. GCM thanks all who attended and in particular the presenters.

Michel Sidibe appointed head of UNAIDS Global



Michel Sidibe (fourth from left) sits on a panel talking about New Prevention Technologies with (from left to right) Dr. Chris Elias, President and CEO of PATH; Ms. Nonkosi Khumalo, Chairperson, Treatment Action Campaign (TAC); Prof. Gordon Conway, Imperial College of London, UK Department for International Development (DFID) ; (Mr. Michel Sidibé,) and Rt. Hon Gareth Thomas, Minister of State, DFID

World AIDS day brought with it the announcement of Michel Sidibe as the new head of UNAIDS taking over from Peter Piot who has been Executive Director of the Programme since its creation in 1995.

Sidibe, originally from Mali has a wealth of experience in public health, international development and HIV/AIDS, having worked for over 20 years in the field in Africa and in New

York with UNICEF and since 2001 at UNAIDS in Geneva, first as Director of Country and Regional Support and then as Deputy Executive Director.

During a recent European Aids Treatment Group symposium on New HIV Prevention Tools Sidibe said that new prevention technologies offer a powerful “source of hope” and stressed that the issue of new infections seriously needs to be addressed. “The reality is we are still far from where we need to be in coverage of proven HIV prevention tools.” Upon his appointment he also said that “The AIDS epidemic is not over in any part of the world. We have to ensure that there is strong and long term leadership and financial commitment to respond to AIDS that is grounded in evidence and human rights.”

As advocates for expanding prevention options, especially for women, the Global Campaign welcomes this language and his recent appointment as the Executive Director of UNAIDS.

Introducing the Community Involvement Community of Practice Global

“Community involvement is an evolving process. We have the basic principles in place, now we are developing the ‘how we do it’.”

-- CoP Member, CoP Meeting, Cape Town, South Africa, November 2008

In November 2007 at a meeting convened by the Global Campaign for Microbicides to discuss issues around community involvement at HIV prevention research trials, the idea of establishing a community of practice for community involvement practitioners was born.



The CoP held their first meeting last month in Cape Town, South Africa.

Generally speaking, communities of practice are networks of people bound together by shared expertise and a passion for a joint enterprise. Specifically, they allow for personal connections, create synergies and foster collective problem solving, and create a level playing field where all experiences and information are valued.

While information sharing occurs within specific research networks and institutions, until now there has been little communication on community-related issues across networks or between independent research centers. In the absence of such a mechanism, the Global Campaign for Microbicides officially launched the Community Involvement Community of Practice.

Practice, or CoP.

The CoP seeks to bring together community staff working at trial sites, community program managers and others working on community involvement issues to share their experiences and challenges, dialogue on important issues and foster a culture of sharing and collective problem solving within the field.

Since its inception in early 2008, the CoP has grown to include over 50 members from across 14



countries representing 17 individual trial sites from the microbicide, PrEP and vaccine fields.

On November 18-19, the CoP held its first face-to-face meeting in Cape Town, South Africa. The meeting brought together 33 of the CoP's members. Meeting participants represented 13 countries, three civil society organizations and 17 trials sites. Over the course of the two days, participants considered the mission and future of the CoP, learned how community departments at various trial sites are structured and discussed a number of issues immediately relevant to community engagement and preparedness including: male involvement in HIV prevention research trials, care for seroconverters, how to sustain community advisory boards, a range of community advisory mechanisms, and how to interpret trial results and disseminate them to participants and communities.

Andrew Mujugira of the Partners PrEP study and Doreen Medupe of MUCCP discuss community structures.

A report of this meeting will be available in early 2009.

Highlighted Resources

US National Institute of Health HIV related Research Plan for 2010 North America

The US National Institute of Health has released their Plan for HIV related research for the financial year of 2010. Details of the prospective research objectives and strategies for microbicides and vaccines research can be found in chapter two which deals with prevention research. There is also a section on behavioral and social science research which can be found towards the end of the same chapter. To download the plan chapter by chapter please go to <http://www.oar.nih.gov/strategicplan/fy2010/>

Journal of Visualized Experiments (JoVE) Global

JoVE is the first video journal for biological research that has been accepted in PubMed. It publishes video demonstrations of biological techniques and methods, as applied in the laboratories of leading academic institutions, including Harvard, MIT, Stanford, Berkeley and others. Hundreds of peer-reviewed video-protocols demonstrating experimental techniques in Neuroscience, Cellular Biology, Developmental Biology, Immunology, Bioengineering, Microbiology and Plant Biology are available, free of charge. To have a look at what JoVE does, visit : <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xApdKYFMgLE>

If you know of any scientists working in HIV prevention and research field that would like to publish their findings in this online journal, please forward them this information. JoVE could be an excellent resource for helping to educate advocates and activists about the scientific developments in HIV prevention research.

Visit <http://www.jove.com> for more information

