

Who's Who in the Microbicides Field: *An Annotated Summary*



This information was compiled by the Global Campaign for Microbicides to help microbicide advocates develop familiarity with the field. It is by no means a complete listing of all entities involved in microbicide advocacy and research. Omissions have been made for the sake of brevity and carry no implication about the entities omitted. No privately owned companies involved in microbicide research and development are included. For more information, please contact: info@global-campaign.org)

ADVOCACY

Please note that only microbicide-focused advocacy groups operating internationally are listed here. Numerous valuable national and regional advocacy coalitions have also emerged and can be located through the Global Campaign's website.

African Microbicides Advocacy Group (AMAG) (<http://www.global-campaign.org/amag.htm>)

The African Microbicides Advocacy Group is a coalition of microbicide and other NPT advocates from organisations and institutions based and/or working in Africa. Its main objectives are to foster the creation and implementation of an African-driven agenda for microbicides research, development, advocacy and sustainable access; and to strengthen the capacity of national or community groups for advocacy work. The AMAG network is comprised of over 400 members – researchers, community advocates, policy-makers and journalists - from 30 countries across and beyond Africa. Through conference events, community trainings, strategy sessions, capacity-building activities with partners and through a closed moderated email discussion forum - AMAG builds partnerships and collaboration among those actively working on microbicides advocacy, research and policy in Africa.

Look here for:

- Information about how to apply to join the AMAG e-mail discussion forum
- Breaking news on microbicide issues of immediate relevance to AMAG members
- Reports and updates on current and future AMAG activities

Alliance for Microbicide Development (www.microbicide.org)

The Alliance is a consortium dedicated to advancing the needs and interests of the scientists, small biotechs, nonprofit research groups, public health advocates, and trialists doing the hard work of developing microbicides. To do this, it monitors activity and investment in the field, facilitates information exchange, collaborates in key advocacy activities, supports strategy articulation, and convenes dialogue on critical research and policy issues. Through its interactive website, database, e-bulletins, quarterly journal, meetings, and other information channels, the Alliance is a comprehensive, neutral resource for discussion, problem-solving, and information for microbicide researchers, developers and the wider microbicide community.

Look here for:

- Searchable database of products in the clinical pipeline, reports sorted by key variables, and detailed trial information and updates
- Summaries of pre-clinical, supportive, and acceptability research completed and underway
- Searchable bibliography
- Weekly News Digests, Microbicide Quarterly, and key documents (Microbicide Development Strategy, Mapping the Microbicide Effort)

Global Campaign for Microbicides (www.global-campaign.org)

The Global Campaign for Microbicides is a unifying platform for advocacy to build momentum among policymakers, opinion leaders, and the general public for increased investment in microbicides and other user-controlled HIV and STI prevention options. Through civil society mobilisation, policy analysis, and social science research, the Campaign works to accelerate product development, facilitate widespread access and use, and protect the needs and interests of users, especially women.

In collaboration with its 285 endorsing groups worldwide, of whom 55 serve as active Campaign partners, the Global Campaign amplifies advocates' voices by providing a growing body of free resources and materials; support through sub-grants; and guidance on effective awareness-raising, media cultivation and lobbying strategies. We currently work with microbicide advocacy coalitions in Canada, the UK, Spain, the Netherlands, France, Finland, India, Ghana, Thailand, Nigeria, South Africa, Uganda and nine US cities. We also partner with major NGOs and regional networks in Belgium, Scandinavia, Germany, Australia and in the regions of Africa and southeast Asia.

Look here for:

- Comprehensive information (in every-day language and searchable by topic) on microbicides, how they are being developed and their potential utility to various populations
- "Download centre" in English, French, Spanish and Russian offering fact sheets, standardized presentations (slides and script), 10 and 26-minute films, sample articles adaptable for newsletters and opinion column submissions, organizing strategies, advocacy tools for community use and other materials – all available in multiple languages and free of charge (small charge for video to those who can pay)
- Links to local and regional Global Campaign partners and advocacy groups around the world and listings of regional events and trainings
- Notes on the Global Campaign's on-going work to engage civil society in addressing such difficult issues as clinical trial ethics, community involvement in scientific agenda-setting, assuring global access to emerging prevention options and the intersection of HIV risk and violence against women.

International Rectal Microbicide Working Group (www.irmwg.org)

The International Rectal Microbicide Working Group (IRMWG) is comprised of over 500 advocates, policymakers and leading scientists from 35 countries. It unites AIDS advocates, scientists, and policymakers around the globe in efforts to confront the institutional, socio-cultural and political stigma and denial around the public health need for rectal microbicide research and to increase funding and commitment within this field of inquiry. The IRMWG hosts a moderated listserv and sponsors regular international conference calls featuring expert updates on the status of rectal microbicide research as well as other relevant developments in HIV prevention technology. It also engages in transnational projects such as a lubricant use survey, designed to gather important data for future research on the safety of over the counter sexual lubricants and insights into acceptability issues for future rectal microbicides.

Look here for:

- Slides and minutes from recent tele-conference presentations, including the latest in research and science
- Information about applying to join the IRMWG moderated listserv
- The lubricant use survey
- *Rectal Microbicides: Investments and Advocacy*, a groundbreaking report issued in April, 2006

RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT

Please note that no privately owned companies involved in microbicide research and development are included here.

CONRAD (www.conrad.org)

CONRAD (Contraceptive Research and Development), established by the Eastern Virginia Medical School in Norfolk, Virginia, USA and the USAID, exists to facilitate the rapid development of safe, acceptable, affordable products and methods that provide contraception and/or prevent the sexual transmission of HIV/AIDS and other infections. Currently, CONRAD has three candidate microbicides in clinical trials: UC-781 and ACIDFORM in Phase I and Tenofovir gel in Phase 2b.

European and Developing Countries Clinical Trials Partnership (EDCTP) (www.edctp.net)

The European and Developing Countries Clinical Trials Partnership is a collaboration that partners European countries (14 EU members, Switzerland and Norway) with African countries. It aims to link relevant European national research programmes to African counterparts for the purpose of developing new clinical tools against AIDS, malaria and tuberculosis. Although no microbicide trials have yet been funded by EDCTP, three capacity building projects at six future trial sites in Africa are due to start in 2007. Financing for EDCTP is scheduled to come from three sources: the European Commission, European member states and the private sector.

European Microbicides Project (www.empro.org.uk)

Funded by the European Commission, the European Microbicides Project (EMPRO) is a consortium of 35 principal investigators from institutions in Europe and Africa. Using a range of novel technologies and approaches, EMPRO is developing a pipeline of candidate microbicides with defined molecular targets that block the entry of HIV at mucosal sites, specifically the vagina. Another smaller EC project called Selection and Development of Microbicides for Mucosal Use to Prevent Sexual HIV Transmission/Acquisition (SHIVA) is focused on the pre-clinical development of a compound currently known as MC 1220.

European Vaccines and Microbicides Enterprise (EUOPRISE)

(http://ec.europa.eu/research/health/poverty-diseases/projects/132_en.htm)

Also funded by the European Commission, EUOPRISE is a new European collaboration of over 130 institutions in 22 countries to pursue promising candidate microbicides and vaccines. The principal aim of this project is to bring together EU scientists from both fields to embrace a coordinated approach to HIV infection prevention research. EUOPRISE conducts a wide portfolio of activities encompassing the whole research and development pipeline from early discovery through to clinical trials.

Family Health International (www.fhi.org)

FHI is among the largest international public health NGOs, managing research and field activities in more than 70 countries to meet the public health needs of some of the world's most vulnerable people. It serves as the Coordinating and Operations Centre for the both the HIV Prevention Trials Network and the Microbicide Trials Network (see note within MTN below); and has conducted trials of various candidate microbicides, as well as social science research on potential microbicide use and acceptability.

International Partnership for Microbicides (www.ipm-microbicides.org)

The International Partnership for Microbicides is a non-profit product development partnership established in 2002 to accelerate the development and accessibility of microbicides to prevent the transmission of HIV in women. By screening compounds, designing optimal formulations, establishing manufacturing capacity,

developing trial sites and conducting clinical trials, the organization works to improve the efficiency of all efforts to develop and deliver safe and effective microbicides as soon as possible.

International Working Group on Microbicides

The IWGM is a voluntary network seeking to ensure closer coordination of microbicide research programs and to establish a consensus on such issues as requirements for pre-clinical and clinical testing for microbicides and criteria for selecting promising leads for evaluation. It serves as a mechanism for the independent/neutral assessment of significant issues by some of the most experienced and knowledgeable individuals in the field. Contact Alan Stone, Chairman of the IWGM at alan.stoneX@virgin.net

Microbicide Development Programme (MDP) (www.mdp.mrc.ac.uk)

The Microbicides Development Programme is a public private partnership funded by the UK Department of International Development with support from the UK Medical Research Council (MRC) and EDCTP. Coordinated by the MRC Clinical Trials Unit and Imperial College London in collaboration with institutions in South Africa, Tanzania, Uganda, Mozambique, and Zambia, the MDP is fielding a trial of two concentrations of PRO-2000/5™. Additionally, MDP is assessing the suitability of new products to enter safety studies in the UK and Africa.

Microbicide Trials Network (MTN) (www.mtnstopaids.org)

The Microbicide Trials Network is an HIV/AIDS clinical trials network established in 2006 by the Division of AIDS, National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, part of the National Institutes of Health. Based at the University of Pittsburgh and Magee-Women's Research Institute, the MTN carries out its mission through a strong network of expert international and domestic scientists, investigators and community partners, working within a unique infrastructure specifically designed to facilitate research required to support licensure of topical microbicide products for widespread use. The MTN anticipates conducting 17 separate clinical trials of microbicides between 2006 and 2013. It has clinical trials of four candidate microbicides underway: PRO 2000/5™, BufferGel™, tenofovir 1% gel (PMPA) and SPL7013 Gel (VivaGel™).

Population Council (www.popcouncil.org)

The Population Council, headquartered in New York City, is an international, nonprofit, nongovernmental organization that conducts biomedical, social science, and public health research on global issues, focusing on reproductive health, HIV and AIDS, and poverty, gender, and youth. Established in 1952, the Population Council has 19 field offices and collaborates with governments and NGOs in 60 countries. The Population Council has been at the forefront of microbicide development since the late 1980's. The Phase 3 clinical trial of the Population Council's lead first-generation microbicide candidate, Carraguard®, began in March 2004. Data collection was completed in March 2007, and final results are expected at the end of 2007. Work on second-generation candidates continues in the Council's biomedical laboratories.