



Global Campaign News December 20, 2002

Welcome to the biweekly *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 STDs.

We welcome your input and contributions. Correspondence can be addressed to info@global-campaign.org. If you would like to unsubscribe to the Global Campaign News, please reply to this e-mail with the subject line: UNSUBSCRIBE.

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Nairobi Events Bring Together Kenyan Advocates for Prevention Options for Women

Making female condoms available and affordable to young women, and investment and political will for microbicide research were two of the recommendations made by participants in the Eastern and Southern African Symposium on Young Women and HIV, held in Nairobi, Kenya from November 26-30, 2002. The conference brought together young women and men from the region to discuss both challenges and solutions to the particular vulnerability of young women. Interestingly, some young women and professors challenged the assumption that education reduces young women's risk of HIV and STDs, saying that the atmosphere at academic institutions may actually increase their risk. Many noted that financial and academic pressures often lead female students to enter sexual relationships to obtain school fees, better grades, or other means of support. In fact, one participant referred to "sexually transmitted degrees," highlighting the pressures on young women in universities. Participants at the conference felt that in addition to better services and support for young women in academic institutions, female-controlled prevention methods could contribute to protecting young university women in Africa. International Family Health, a Global Campaign partner organization, supported the participation of a team of Global Campaign advocates who presented and facilitated a workshop on microbicides and prevention options for women at the conference.

Veteran HIV and AIDS organizations also met in Nairobi to discuss an advocacy strategy for prevention options for women. The Society for Women and AIDS in Kenya (SWAK- a chapter of the Society for Women and AIDS in Africa) was nominated to coordinate

advocacy activities in Kenya. Other participating organizations included KANCO- the Kenyan AIDS NGO Coalition, which has been very involved in developing community participation models for HIV vaccine and, potentially, microbicide clinical trials, the Kenyan Network of Women living with AIDS, Campaigners for an AIDS Free Society, and others. Advocacy priorities included influencing decision-makers, awareness-raising through the media and public events, coalition-building and capacity-building. For more information on this network please contact Ludfine Opudo, coordinator of SWAK, swak@insightkenya.com

South Africa Microbicide Research Initiative Launched in Durban

Microbicide researchers and product sponsors were joined by policy-makers, community members and advocates to celebrate the launch of a new initiative by the South African Medical Research Council (MRC). The South Africa Microbicide Initiative represents a way for research organizations and the department of health in South Africa to work together to promote and facilitate research and development of microbicides. Dr Gita Ramjee of the MRC pointed out the timeliness of the effort, saying, "South Africa has done numerous trials on microbicides. In fact we are currently the leading country doing research on microbicides." Three different microbicides are expected to enter efficacy trials in 2003 in various sites around the country.

The launch of the South Africa Microbicide Initiative coincided with a two-day meeting of researchers, policy-makers, advocates and community representatives to discuss ethical issues in microbicide clinical trials in South Africa.

In Her Mother's Shoes

The parents are dying. The teenagers are next. In the Africa of AIDS, is there time to save the children? Read a moving account of one family's struggle against the AIDS epidemic in Africa and PATH's efforts to develop new methods to halt the spread of the disease. This story by Seattle Times reporter Paula Bock appeared as a special section in the Seattle Times on World AIDS Day, December 1, 2002. To read more go to: <http://seattletimes.nwsourc.com/news/nation-world/aids/>

Call for Fellows on Sexuality, Gender, Health and Human Rights

The Program for the Study of Sexuality, Gender, Health, and Human Rights is currently inviting applications from scholars, advocates, and activists who are conducting interdisciplinary work in the US and internationally. The program, through the Columbia University School of Public Health (New York), has a focus to examine and expand traditional understandings, definitions, and boundaries around sexuality, health, human rights, and gender. Fellows work from one month to one year in residence in New York, and a stipend, health insurance, and office are provided. The deadline for applications is January 15, 2003. For more information and an application, go to: <http://hora.cpmc.columbia.edu/dept/gender/index.html>.

The Female Health Foundation Launches New Website

A new website for the female condom (FC) has been launched by the Female Health Company. The website is intended to provide a central resource for information about FC and programs to expand access to and use of FC.

Resource materials also include information about talking about FC to trainers and users; easily downloadable background documents, research summaries, programming guides, and training and communication materials.

FC country profiles give an overview of where to find the FC in different countries.
<http://www.femalecondom.org>