



## Global Campaign News – Issue #54 May 24, 2005

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. This and previous issues of GC News are available online at <http://www.global-campaign.org/gcnews.htm>

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### Forging partnerships in Nigeria for new HIV prevention trials

#### Africa

By Nnenna Ike, Programme Officer, NHVMAG, [info@nhvmag.org](mailto:info@nhvmag.org)

On 27-28 April, a National Consultation was held in Abuja, Nigeria to define mechanisms for effective partnerships between all stakeholders involved in the HIV prevention research process. The meeting, entitled “Creating effective partnerships for HIV prevention trials” was organised by the Nigeria HIV Vaccine and Microbicide Advocacy Group (NHVMAG), in consultation with the National Action Committee on AIDS (NACA) and the Nigeria country office of UNAIDS. Support for the meeting was provided by the Global Campaign for Microbicides.

Participants came from a broad range of groups including NACA, UNAIDS, the federal ministry of health, the National Agency for Food and Drugs Administration and Control, as well as the provosts and chairs of ethical review boards of the Colleges of Medicine of the universities of Port-Harcourt, Lagos and Ibadan. Representatives from civil society, the scientific community, and communities participating in the trials also attended the two day meeting.

Case studies of past and on-going trials were discussed and dissected to determine their effectiveness in creating true partnerships among stakeholders. Discussions provoked frank critiques and interventions on many issues such as standards of care for trial participants, defining genuine community representation, efficacy of regulatory agencies, and acceptable mechanisms for facilitating community inclusion.

The meeting defined the following consensus recommendations for new HIV prevention trials in Nigeria:

1. Community preparedness is essential before the commencement of any research
2. Community representatives must be involved in an early and sustained manner in the design, development and implementation of clinical trials and in the dissemination of research results
3. Motivation and incentives such as lower cost for the eventual product, capacity building for local production of product, treatment and compensation in cases of trial risks and other such benefits should be given to participants. They are not to be viewed as inducement but as measures to facilitate trials
4. Trial participants should be guaranteed access to trial product at no cost after completion of the trial
5. Trial sponsors should provide funds for the empowerment and capacity building of the community to facilitate frequent meetings and information dissemination on the study
6. NACA and UNAIDS should set up an independent monitoring system to monitor progress of on-going trials in the country
7. NACA should facilitate the development and implementation of a research agenda for HIV/AIDS in line with the National Strategic Framework. It should also facilitate development of legal backing for moving guidelines to policy

8. Members of the community at all levels must be informed about scientific research taking place in their community as well as issues of participation
9. Feedback mechanism where trial subject have access to research team including IRB and trial coordinators should be put in place and encouraged

Professor Babatunde Osotimehin, Chair of NACA, commended NHVMAG for initiating the national consultation and called on all stakeholders in the research process to see themselves as joint partners within the national HIV/AIDS response. NACA used the opportunity of the meeting to disseminate its recently published *National Guidelines on HIV Research Involving Human Subjects*.

The meeting participants selected five representatives to participate in the West African regional consultation on new HIV prevention trials, being organised by UNAIDS in Lagos later this month. Participants agreed that the meeting helped strengthen the partnership between NACA, UNAIDS and NHVMAG in the promotion of development of new HIV prevention technologies in Nigeria.

## **Microbicides exhibit at the United Nations in June North America**

The Global Campaign is pleased to announce that the *Giving Women Power Over AIDS* exhibit will be displayed from 1 to 28 June at the United Nations Headquarters General Assembly Visitors' Lobby in New York City. The exhibit coincides with UNGASS, a high level meeting on HIV/AIDS of the United Nations General Assembly on 2 June. The meeting will provide an opportunity for an interim technical review of the 2005 goals set out in the Declaration of Commitment on HIV/AIDS adopted by the UN General Assembly Special Session on HIV/AIDS on 27 June 2001.

For more information on the exhibit, visit [www.global-campaign.org/exhibit.htm](http://www.global-campaign.org/exhibit.htm)

For more information on the high level meeting, visit [www.unaids.org](http://www.unaids.org)

## **French NGO community hosts first meeting on microbicides Europe**

To commemorate International Women's Day, ACT UP Paris, AIDES, Le Kiosque, Mouvement Français pour le Planning Familial (MFPF) and the SIDA Info Service joined together to present *Women, AIDS & Sexuality*, a conference dedicated to women living with and affected by HIV/AIDS on 5th March. Over 40 women came to Paris for a day of deliberation on the concerns they face in their lives with HIV/AIDS.



*Panelists at the meeting on microbicides. Photo courtesy of AIDES.*

The afternoon session was dedicated to microbicides, the first time that such a discussion had taken place in France. Among the presenters were Dr Laurent Belec, prominent microbicide scientist, Rebekah Webb, European Coordinator of the Global Campaign for Microbicides, Marion Zibelli of El Grupo de Trabajo sobre Tratamientos del VIH (GTT) and Pauline Mouton of the Association for Solidarity and Action among Women (AFASO) in Cameroon.

Pauline Mouton gave a particularly compelling presentation, stating that it was vital for clinical trials to happen in Cameroon and other countries, so that African women can access microbicides immediately once they are approved.

Mrs. Mounton contended that these trials must involve communities as much as possible, and described the difficulties women face in Cameroon, where infection rates for women are almost twice that of men.

A lively debate took place following the presentations. Comments from attendees focused on whether microbicides would allow conception and why trials are taking place in Africa but not in France. When the topic of the recent halting of the Tenofovir trials arose, participants suggested that given the speed at which young women are acquiring HIV and dying from AIDS, it would be unethical to *not* pursue Phase 3 trials of microbicides. They pleaded “how can we move forward faster now?”

“It was encouraging to see so much interest and strong support for microbicides from women’s groups,” Rebekah Webb said after the meeting. “Once women learn about microbicides and what they might do, they want to be able to use them immediately! I look forward to working with the organisers of this event to ensure that France plays the leading role that it should be in getting a microbicide as quickly as possible.”

## **Launch of the newest site in the U.S. – The Cleveland Chapter North America**

The Global Campaign is pleased to welcome our newest site in the United States – the Cleveland Chapter! The Cleveland Chapter is a volunteer effort that is hosted by the AIDS Taskforce of Greater Cleveland with a steering committee that consists of more than 15 local leaders in the fields of HIV/AIDS and reproductive health. In its inaugural year, the Chapter’s activities will focus on developing community events to build public awareness about microbicides, writing letters to the editor and Op/Ed pieces in Ohio newspapers, and mobilizing Ohio policymakers in an effort to increase funding for microbicides research and development.

The Chapter was launched on 10 May at a Forum jointly Sponsored by the AIDS Taskforce of Greater Cleveland, the Center for Women at Case Western Reserve University, and the AIDS Clinical Trials Unit of University Hospitals. The “Forum on Promises and Prospects in Microbicide Research” featured local researchers, staff members from the AIDS Taskforce of Greater Cleveland, and an outreach worker from the Cleveland AIDS Clinical Trials Unit. The following day, an excellent article highlighting microbicides, the Global Campaign, and the Cleveland Chapter appeared in the *Cleveland Plain Dealer*.

## **Job announcement: program assistant in Brussels Europe**

The Global Campaign for Microbicides is seeking an energetic and creative individual to join our team as European information/communications and events program assistant, working out of our Brussels office.

The successful candidate will have excellent communication and organisational skills, experience working with grassroots organising, familiarity with “e-advocacy”, the ability to use the web as a vehicle for movement building and fluency in English and French. Responsibilities will include event coordination, communication with partners, development of advocacy materials, and website development.

For the full job description and to apply, go to <http://www.path.org/about/jobs.php> and click on Job #1635. Please send this job description on to any qualified candidates who are interested in a challenging entry level position!

## Microbicides hit the street in Philadelphia with a “Burma Shave” North America

On 6 April, the Pennsylvania Campaign for Microbicides participated in their first ever “Burma Shave”. A Burma Shave is a unique messaging strategy that originated from the Burma Shave company, an American shaving cream manufacturer. In the 1920’s, the company began an inventive and highly successful advertising campaign that consisted of several signs at intervals along the road, each sign with one line of a 4-part rhyme or jingle that ended with “Burma Shave”.

The Pennsylvania Campaign adapted this idea by holding up signs during evening rush-hour in downtown Philadelphia. Each sign said one word and together they read, “Honk To Give Women Power Over AIDS & STDs [www.global-campaign.org](http://www.global-campaign.org)”.



Campaign members distributed postcards and brochures to pedestrians and passing by cars. A handful of donations were even collected. Everyone involved in the effort enjoyed the process from creating the signs to standing out on the sidewalk!

## Microbicides featured in London School newsletter Europe

The latest newsletter from the DFID Knowledge Programme on HIV/AIDS and STI at the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine is dedicated to updates on microbicides. In particular, the April 9<sup>th</sup> newsletter provides excellent synopses of the following:

- An introduction to microbicides
- The Microbicide Development Programme’s clinical trials
- The potential impact of microbicides in the Bagalkot district of India
- The reliability of coital diaries in collecting sexual behaviour data in a microbicides trial feasibility study in Tanzania

The DFID Knowledge Programme on HIV/AIDS and Sexually Transmitted Infections is a five-year research project based at the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine and the Medical Research Council, Glasgow, with collaborators in Africa and Asia, and funded by the Department for International Development. The Programme is working to find the most (cost) effective interventions in disadvantaged populations for the prevention of HIV/STIs and the care of people with HIV/AIDS and STIs. This and previous issues of the newsletter are available on the Programme’s website: <http://www.lshtm.ac.uk/dfid/aids/>

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We welcome your input and contributions for future issues! Please send emails to: [info@global-campaign.org](mailto: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.