



Global Campaign News – Issue #58 September 27, 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 STIs.

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European Campaigns Build

Europe

French-based NGOs AIDES, the French Movement for Family Planning and their colleagues in Paris have had a very active year in raising awareness about microbicides. They launched a postcard campaign on International Women's Day that generated thousands of pieces of mail. The postcards called for greater action and investment in microbicides from the French government and the European Commission. We learned that the EC alone had received a stack of postcards at least a foot high. Officials congratulated all the partners for helping them to raise awareness and secure commitment within their own teams for microbicide research and development.

The UK Campaign for Microbicides now has a Steering Committee open to all UK NGOs who endorse the GCM goals and continues to hold meetings once a quarter. Membership has expanded to 13 organisations. Two new working groups have been established to take the work of the Committee forward: the UK rectal microbicides working group, and the African Diaspora working group. For more information, contact Suzanne Church on +44 (0) 20 7241 8511 or email churchs@interactworldwide.org.

In Spain, local efforts by GTT and Creacion Positiva have resulted in a strong support from the Spanish government to the concept of microbicides. In 2004, these organisations hosted a symposium on microbicides in Madrid in which the Secretary of the National AIDS Plan gave the keynote address. Spain was one of only two countries to mention the importance of microbicides at a recent EU conference in Brussels. [Read more about what the Global Campaign and its partners are doing in Europe.](#)

MDA in the House: Introduction of the Microbicides Development Act

U.S.

On September 23, the Microbicide Development Act of 2005 (MDA) was introduced in the U.S. House of Representatives by Representative Shays (R-CT) and Representative Schakowsky (D-IL).

"We need to dedicate more public health resources to developing microbicides quickly," said Representative Chris Shays of Connecticut. "In many settings, an HIV-infected woman has had only one partner: her husband. Microbicides are being developed with the goal that these products will allow women to protect themselves against the spread of disease and also allow them to conceive children. Current prevention options are not enough. If women and girls are to have a genuine opportunity to protect themselves, their best option is the rapid development of new HIV-prevention technologies like microbicides, which women can initiate."

"Microbicides could well be the first HIV prevention method that allows women to fight HIV-infection on their own. Even a partially effective microbicide could stop the infections of 2.5 million women over three years. This bi-partisan bill may be able to save a generation of women by developing this promising new preventive option," said Representative Jan Schakowsky of Illinois.

The bill, designated as H.R. 3854, seeks to establish a Microbicide Research and Development Unit at the National Institutes of Health and strengthen microbicide activity at USAID and the Centers for Disease Control. Due to the hard work of U.S. microbicide advocates, the bill was introduced with 30 original co-sponsors (27 Democrats and 3 Republicans). The Global Campaign for Microbicides encourages all U.S. microbicides advocates to call, write and/or visit your Representatives and urge them to sign-on to the MDA! If they have already, be sure to call and thank them for their ongoing support! [Find out who has already signed-on as co-sponsors and get tools to help you talk to your legislators.](#)



Tenofovir: A Stakeholder Consultation

Global

In May 2005, the International AIDS Society on behalf of the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, the CDC and the NIH, hosted a Stakeholder Consultation to address issues related to Tenofovir Prophylactic Research. Over 50 participants, including the Global Campaign for Microbicides, attended the Seattle meeting.

Gregg Gonsalves of the Gay Men's Health Crisis was among the participants, "The meeting in Seattle revolved around four key issues: access to care for trial participants that seroconvert during the studies; the standard of care for background prevention interventions offered to both control and experimental groups in the trials; community involvement in trial design and conduct, and; research literacy/community education...The main achievement of the meeting in Seattle was the initiation of a dialogue...this was the first time the critics of the tenofovir studies had sat down with the researchers, ministries of health and sponsoring agencies in the same room. What is more, there were admissions on all sides that mistakes were made and that communication has to continue".

Mr. Gonsalves went on to say that, "If these studies show that tenofovir prevents HIV infection, and animal data has been promising, it will represent a key new prevention intervention and one that will come probably decades before we see an effective vaccine or microbicide arrive on this planet. On the other hand, the promise of tenofovir doesn't negate the responsibility of researchers and sponsoring agencies to promote the health and well-being of communities in which these studies are being conducted or to condone anything less than a full partnership with communities in the design and conduct of these trials".

Yasmin Halima, Senior Consultant for the International AIDS Society, gave a thought-provoking account of the tenofovir controversies and the Seattle consultation at the IAS conference on HIV Pathogenesis and Treatment in Rio de Janeiro earlier this summer. Click here to [view Yasmin Halima's presentation.](#)

[Read the full Tenofovir consultation report.](#)

Media Highlight: Editorial in *The Rising Nepal*

Asia

In an editorial published by *The Rising Nepal*, P. Gopakumar discusses the current state of the HIV/AIDS epidemic in Nepal and how microbicides could help to curb future losses in a country where HIV/AIDS could easily become the leading cause of death among 15-49 year olds over the next decade.

[Read the full article.](#)

Take the CBAS Survey!

Global

To participate in the Cervical Barrier Advancement Society (CBAS) Evaluation, please go the [CBAS website](#) to tell them what you think about www.cervicalbarriers.org. This information will help improve their website and better meet the needs of CBAS members and website users. The survey will take about 5 to 10 minutes to complete. You will not be asked for any identifying information and the survey is completely anonymous. CBAS thanks you in advance for participating!



Female Condom

Global

In [“Whatever Happened to the Femidom?”](#) author Kate Burt introduces the readers of *The Guardian* to the evolution of the Female Condom (named *Femidom* in Britain). From criticisms of its shape, size and sounds to enthusiastic praises of its ability to intensify orgasms and provide women with greater prevention options we learn about the sometimes troubled past of the Female Condom and hopes for a new outlook.

Burt observes, “All the more surprising, then, that it is precisely the female condom’s shape and modus operandi – as well as its funny rustle – that have helped reverse its fortunes. It might not have taken off here, but in at least 80 of the 125 countries outside Britain where the condom is sold, it’s huge news.”

[Read the full article.](#)

New Fact Sheets from the Kaiser Family Foundation

Global & U.S.

Download this [new fact sheet series](#) from the Kaiser Family Foundation.

[The Global HIV/AIDS Epidemic](#)

[The HIV/AIDS Epidemic in the United States](#)

Strides Toward “a living gel”

U.S.

In an article published by the *Science and Development Network*, [“Living anti-HIV gel shows early promise”](#), Wagdy Sawahel discusses new findings by the research community on the use of modified bacteria as a possible prevention for HIV. Unlike microbicides, “living gels” are made up of live bacteria normally found in the human body that have been genetically modified to produce HIV-fighting peptides.

As noted in the article, Harold Kessler, Associate Director of the Infectious Diseases Section at Rush University Medical Center in Chicago states, “It is a fascinating concept. Obviously there is a great deal of work ahead, but it is certainly a novel approach that deserves further investigation.”

The first findings were published this summer in the [Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences](#), with preliminary research showing promise.
[Read the full article.](#)

Upcoming Events: Fall 2005

Global

IPM/GCM Brussels Briefing

On October 7th the International Partnership for Microbicides and the Global Campaign for Microbicides will hold a joint briefing to discuss the vital importance of increased investment in microbicides with various EU institutions. Speakers will include Mr. Lastschenko, Belgian Special Envoy for the fight against AIDS, Françoise Welter of GNP+ and H.E. Mrs. dos Santos Lucas, Mozambican Ambassador to Belgium and the EU. For more information, please contact [Arwa Meijer](#).

Women: Facing HIV in Our Wider Europe

A European seminar on women and HIV will be held in Paris, France, October 6-8th. The seminar, organized by [AIDS Action and Integration](#), will feature a presentation on microbicides by Maria Jose Vazquez from the International Community of Women Living with HIV (ICW).

Campaign to End AIDS



Due to the devastation caused earlier this month by Hurricane Katrina, the [Campaign to End AIDS](#) (C2EA) has rescheduled their caravan campaign to take place later this fall. At the insistence of southern organizers in Louisiana, Mississippi, and other affected states C2EA caravans, originally scheduled to converge in Washington, D.C. in early October, will now kick off on October 15th and come together for 5 days of action in D.C. beginning November 5th. [Read the full story.](#)

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.