

Women, AIDS, and Prevention in the Face of a Global Pandemic

Take action around World AIDS Day (December 1) to educate and advocate about microbicides! Learn more about why AIDS now ‘has a woman’s face’ and spread awareness about an exciting new development in prevention research.

Partner Organization and Contact:

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Background Information:

With women and girls comprising over 60% of the 34 million people now living with HIV/AIDS worldwide, it is truly appropriate to say that AIDS now has a woman’s face. This demographic shift is not surprising since available prevention options such as condoms, mutual monogamy, and STI treatment are not feasible for millions of people around the world, especially women. Many women do not have the social or economic power necessary to insist on condom use and fidelity or to abandon partnerships that put them at risk. In our attempts to both treat and prevent this disease, we must focus specifically on women and their needs, or we will continue to lose against this global pandemic.

Although still very much in the research and development stage, there is a lot of buzz around microbicides as a viable method to empower women. Microbicides are a range of different products with the ability to prevent the sexual transmission of HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted infections (STIs). The microbicide could come in many forms, including gels, creams, films, suppositories, rings, and/or sponges. Because microbicides would not require a partner's cooperation, they would put the power to protect into women's hands. While male and female condoms are a better barrier against HIV/AIDS and STIs, microbicides will be ideal in situations where condom use cannot be negotiated, or if the couple is trying to have children.

Take Action to Stop the Global AIDS Pandemic!

Learn more about the Global Campaign for Microbicides

The Global Campaign for Microbicides (www.global-campaign.org) is a broad-based, international effort to build support among policy makers, opinion leaders, and the general public to fund microbicide research and development, as well as other user-controlled prevention methods. The Campaign works to ensure that clinical trials for the new products are conducted ethically and involve local communities as equal partners in the research process. They offer a number of organizing tools , including:

- “In Women’s Hands ,” a short video filmed in the United Kingdom, South Africa, and the United States demonstrating the universality of women’s vulnerability to HIV/STIs and the need for microbicides. **For each film that your group purchases for \$15, a copy will be donated to a location or organization in the Global South.** Utilize the video discussion guide to generate a dialogue following the screening of “In Women’s Hands.” In addition to these questions, there is also a presentation that can be downloaded from the website to help you.
- Fifteen fact sheets on subjects related to microbicides that provide up-to-date information are available at <http://www.global-campaign.org/download.htm#fact>.

- Interested in learning more about developments with microbicides? Sign up to receive **GC News**, a bi-weekly email with the latest information at <http://www.global-campaign.org/signupGCNews.htm>.

Work with Other Progressive Groups to Organize Events for World AIDS Day, December 1

- **Table with a petition** downloaded from the website calling on the U.S. government, the European Union, and other national governments to invest in the research and development of microbicides and prevention options for women.