



*Expanding HIV prevention options, especially for women*  
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## **Global Campaign for Microbicides to close by September 2012**

We are writing to share with you that the Global Campaign for Microbicides (GCM) will close its operations in the coming months.

Earlier this year, we shared with many of our colleagues that funding reductions to GCM, currently housed at PATH, required us to plan for significant reductions in the scope and reach of our work, and that we would be assessing the current environment and considering the best next steps for GCM. Leadership and staff at PATH carried out a series of consultations with a number of our advocacy partners, with the intention of learning more about the needs of the field as well as the space that GCM currently occupies in advocating for HIV prevention options for women.

GCM was initially established to generate political pressure for increased investment in microbicide development and to ensure that the rights of trial participants, users, and communities were represented and respected throughout the development process. Over the course of nearly 15 years, GCM worked to achieve these initial goals and has been a champion for the ethical development of and access to HIV-prevention options, especially for women. The incredibly dedicated staff and steering committee members have advanced the field by mobilizing political will, enabling ethical clinical research, and strengthening advocates' and communities' involvement in research and clinical trials. GCM has been known as a trusted partner and convener, and has worked to forge collaborations between civil society, policymakers, researchers, industry, and others.

Since GCM was established, the contributions of multiple partners and advancements in the field have meant the context for this critical work has changed. There continues to be a need for a strong voice to ensure that women's issues remain on the agenda when discussing emerging technologies like oral PrEP as well as microbicides. However, changes in funding and in GCM's operations over the past several months mean that GCM's ability to fill this role has shifted. After serious considerations and deliberations about the needs of the HIV prevention field relative to GCM's current scope and funding situation, we have made the decision to close GCM's operations and activities by the end of September 2012.

There are many successes from GCM's work to be celebrated. We would like to recognize in particular the staff and leadership, both current and former, for their hard work and dedication; their work has made a significant impact on the lives of women around the world that will continue to resonate for years to come. Additionally, GCM has long been advised by committed steering committee members who have provided critical guidance and leadership throughout the history of the campaign's work, and whose commitment to the goals set out by GCM did not waver, even in the face of significant challenges. And finally, we want to extend a sincere thanks to our partners who have worked alongside us in shaping the field and working towards a world where women everywhere have the power and tools to protect themselves from HIV. We have all accomplished a great deal together, but much remains to be done to ensure that women's health remains a priority on the HIV prevention research agenda. As we transition GCM's efforts in the coming months, we will continue to work with you, the staff, and our steering committee toward this goal.