

For Inclusion in Existing Slide Decks

These slides describe gender analyses for microbicides introduction conducted in Kenya and South Africa. Results and potential next steps are included. Please freely use and modify this content.



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Sonke Gender Justice
HIV/AIDS, Gender Equality, Human Rights



**PREVENTIVE
TECHNOLOGIES
AGREEMENT**

Gender Analysis Background

- Gender inequality increases women's risk for HIV infection and limits their HIV prevention options
- Microbicides could be a fundamentally different prevention option for women
- Microbicides will not change underlying gender inequalities; women could face many gender-related obstacles to access and adherence
- USAID, as part of the Shared Vision and Strategic Plan for Microbicide Introduction, funded a gender analysis to identify barriers as well as opportunities to promote women's agency

Gender Analysis Process

- Conducted in Kenya and South Africa in 2013
- Led by FHI 360 and Sonke Gender Justice
- Desk review of HIV and gender-related policies as well as demographic data in each country
- Extensive review of microbicides literature
- Interviews with local stakeholders
 - Policymakers
 - Funders
 - NGO representatives
 - Health care providers
- Interpretation meetings in both countries

Key Findings and Recommendations (1)

- Microbicides should be **made available to all women**, and not just high-risk populations. However, women in steady partnerships and youth are key populations to reach.
- Marketing should “**normalize**” **microbicides** to create an enabling environment for women to use the product.
- Microbicide promotion should be **tailored** to the specific context. In some settings, this includes highlighting pleasure.
- Messages on microbicides should **reach couples**, in addition to women.

Key Findings and Recommendations (2)

- Women have the **right to choose** whether they inform their partner of their microbicide use, and health providers need to support them in making the decision that is appropriate for them.
- Microbicides should be made available **free-of-charge** in public health facilities, but additional costing and branding options should also be made available to cater to the diversity of women.
- Microbicides should be **integrated into existing health services** and programs.
- **Providers need to be equipped** to identify, support, and refer women experiencing partner violence.

Key Findings and Recommendations (3)

- **Men should be positively engaged** to help increase microbicide acceptability and adherence and promote couples' communication and relationship quality.
- Microbicides are strongly linked to issues of sex, sexuality and women's health. Working within spaces created for women to introduce microbicides may **create opportunities for women to have broader conversations** on all of these topics.
- Microbicides have the potential to empower women, but **underlying gender norms** and power imbalances need to be challenged for real changes in gender equality to occur.

What You Can Do

- Advocate for prioritizing HIV prevention for women
- Strengthen and expand programs that promote positive male engagement and couples' communication
- Advocate for a stronger IPV referral and support system
- Help strengthen or create community platforms for women to voice their needs and learn from one another

For more information about this project:

EMAIL ROSE WILCHER (RWILCHER@FHI360.ORG)