

# Microbicides 2002

Understanding the importance of  
female controlled prevention methods  
for HIV & other STIs, An HIV  
Perspective

# Challenges of living with HIV

- Stigma
- Late presentation
- Issues around motherhood

# Challenges of living with HIV

- Treatments
- Lack of access to services
- Social care issues

# Challenges of living with HIV

- Returning to work
- Disclosure
- Relationships

## What is Available ?

- Male Condom
- Problems of negotiation
- Male Attitudes
- Cultural values/practice
- Settled Relationships
- If intoxicated
- Violence re; negotiation

## What is available ?

- Female Condom
- Bigger problem, re: negotiation
- Uncomfortable – difficult to insert
- Too noisy – kills pleasure (spend more time worrying than having fun)
- Takes away spontaneity

# Why Microbicides?

- There is a global need to empower women – enable them develop confidence, self esteem, assertiveness and effective communication skills
- Limited access to information, treatments, suitable preventative methods, all remain a major issue world wide
- There is still no cure for HIV

# Case for Microbicides

- Microbicides a DIY method - universal
- Women given the control - power to safely protect their health without partner consent or knowledge
- Provide enabling experiences to encourage practicing safe sex
- Removes sole responsibility from the woman
- Takes away the guilt – enable women to enjoy sex
- The role of the woman in society

## Case for Microbicides

- gives women control over their own bodies
- reduces vulnerability to STIs
- the reality of relationships after a positive diagnosis
- women in discordant relationships
- reduce transmission of resistant virus?
- Enjoyment - “nyama kwa nyama”

# Positively Women supports Microbicides providing:

- The microbicides will not damage the reproductive system
- Are widely & cheaply available in the countries where most needed
- There is sufficient monitoring & follow up to indicate quickly if there is a problem
- Microbicides are used to benefit the people they are tested on

## Quotes – the reality

- “So when do you tell someone you’ve got it? On a first date? When you are in bed about to do? Or afterwards?”
- “Sometimes I just get sick and tired of thinking about my responsibilities all the time. What about my partner’s?”
- “Since being positive I have had unprotected sex with three men. I would use a condom now, but at the time, it felt incredibly important that I wasn’t rejected and I could have ‘normal’ sex. It was always their choice and it made me feel human again.”
- “I don’t want sex with condoms. I want sloppy, noisy, liquid, fluid, messy unprotected sex.”