

**Southern African AIDS Trust
Position Statement
On Microbicides**

The search for more prevention methods, particularly those that are initiated and controlled by women has been gaining momentum since 2004, when the International AIDS Society provided a platform for advocacy for the development of Microbicides, at the Bangkok Conference. Microbicides are products currently under development, which when inserted to the vagina would prevent infection during sexual interactions. The need for Microbicides comes in the wake of increasing evidence that social, cultural and economic gender inequalities limit women's inability to protect themselves from HIV infection.

In the last few years, SAT has conducted several activities at the national and regional levels, in a bid to contribute to the growing demand for female initiated and controlled prevention methods. SAT therefore aims to continue to implement similar activities, and where relevant, identify opportunities, in collaboration with other strategic partners, in order to keep the discussion and demand for microbicides live. In the event of evident successful clinical trials in the development of Microbicides, SAT will also contribute towards getting communities at all levels, prepared for the eventual availability of microbicides.

SAT realises the need for female controlled prevention devices and ascribes to the views that the ideal microbicide should be one that is effective, safe, affordable, colourless, odourless, easy to store and use, available in a variety of preparations and available in contraceptive and non-contraceptive formulations. Non contraceptive formulations would be critically important for couples wanting to have children, who find consistent condom use impractical.