

Contact: (U.S.) Annmarie Leadman, +1 (301) 608-2221, [aleadman@ipm-microbicides.org](mailto:aleadman@ipm-microbicides.org)  
(U.K.) Saul Walker, +44 790 500 5277, [swalker@ipm-microbicides.org](mailto:swalker@ipm-microbicides.org)

## Nearly US\$30 Million Committed to Microbicide Development

### *IPM Lauds Significant Support from European Nations for HIV Prevention*

SILVER SPRING, MD (December 1, 2005) – The search for a microbicide for women received a major boost today with announcements from four European governments totaling nearly US\$30 million in new funding for the International Partnership for Microbicides (IPM). Announced on World AIDS Day, the new commitments from the United Kingdom (GBP 7.5 million, over three years), the Republic of Ireland (EUR 9 million, over three years), Denmark (DKK 27.5 million, over three years) and Sweden (SEK 10 million) will significantly contribute towards the development and accessibility of critically needed new HIV-prevention technologies for women.

“IPM gratefully acknowledges this generous and farsighted support,” said Dr. Zeda Rosenberg, Chief Executive Officer of IPM. “New prevention strategies such as microbicides are desperately needed by women in developing countries and these commitments take us one step closer to making them a reality.”

Microbicides are products applied vaginally to reduce HIV transmission during sexual intercourse. Microbicides could take the form of a gel, cream, film, suppository, sponge or vaginal ring that releases the active ingredient gradually. With five microbicide candidates in large-scale efficacy trials and a new generation of microbicides already in safety studies, microbicides could be available in five to seven years.

“The AIDS crisis represents a human tragedy for the more than 40 million men, women and children suffering from the disease around the world. As President of the G8 and the European Union, the United Kingdom is showing leadership in the global fight against AIDS through a strong commitment to increased prevention and treatment,” said Prime Minister Tony Blair of the United Kingdom. “Today’s funding looks to the long-term and will encourage the development of vaccines and microbicides that will benefit both the developing and developed world.”

“Crucially, microbicides will give women more control over preventing HIV transmission,” said Conor Lenihan, T.D., the Minister of State at Ireland’s Department of Foreign Affairs. “Ireland supports this vital research through its investment in the International Partnership for Microbicides, a public-private partnership.”

“The government of Sweden has made advancing microbicide research and development a priority,” said Carin Jämtin, Sweden’s Minister for International Development Cooperation. “Safe and effective microbicides, along with existing prevention options, will ultimately reduce the spread of HIV/AIDS, and therefore will directly contribute to the achievement of the UN Millennium Development Goals.”

“We applaud these governments for responding to the need for microbicides expressed within their own countries,” said Lori Heise, Director of the Global Campaign for Microbicides, an international movement of activists, citizens and non-profit organizations dedicated to accelerating access to new HIV-prevention tools, especially for women. “For the last three years, we have been working with non-governmental organizations across Europe who see that new HIV prevention tools are urgently needed, both in their own countries and in the developing world. These significant contributions to IPM show that governments can and do respond to the political will and priorities of their citizens.”

Even with these new commitments, additional financial support is still needed to fund IPM’s expanded program including the establishment of additional clinical trial sites and the preparation for large-scale efficacy trials.

In a show of growing support for microbicide development, Merck & Co. and Bristol-Myers Squibb in October announced licensing agreements with IPM to develop new antiretroviral compounds as potential microbicides to protect women from HIV. In two separate agreements, the pharmaceutical companies granted IPM royalty-free licenses to develop, manufacture and distribute their compounds for use as microbicides in resource-poor countries. Three leading pharmaceutical companies have now entered agreements with IPM. In March 2004, IPM signed an agreement with Tibotec Pharmaceuticals Ltd., a subsidiary of Johnson & Johnson, to develop a non-nucleoside reverse transcriptase inhibitor as a microbicide.

IPM is also grateful for its support from Canada, the Netherlands, Norway, the United States, the European Commission, the Rockefeller Foundation, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and the World Bank.

#

### **About IPM**

The International Partnership for Microbicides was established to accelerate the development and accessibility of vaginal microbicides to prevent the transmission of HIV in women in developing countries. By screening compounds, designing optimal formulations, establishing manufacturing capacity, developing trial sites and conducting large scale efficacy trials, the organization works to improve the efficiency of all efforts to develop and deliver safe and effective microbicides for women as soon as possible. For more information and to view IPM’s recently published policy paper “*Microbicides: An Essential HIV Prevention Strategy for Achieving the Millennium Development Goals*” visit [www.ipm-microbicides.org](http://www.ipm-microbicides.org).