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Roosevelt in Action: Yale-Brown Collaboration HIV/AIDS Microbicides



Project Overview:

In response to Jennifer Tolan's recent *Roosevelt Review* article, the Yale chapter of the Roosevelt Institution was eager to further explore innovative policy solutions to encourage investment in research for microbicides, a form of female-controlled HIV prevention. With the support of Kate Brandt at Brown the project took off. An initial summary is below, a preliminary report is on display, and the final report will be released to the Clinton Foundation by early March at a joint Yale-Brown health policy conference.

Executive Summary (Preliminary):

New approaches are needed to address the global HIV/AIDS epidemic, and investment in developing microbicides, a type of female-controlled HIV prevention, offers one such policy that promises to pay big dividends. As HIV infects thousands of new people every day, the status quo simply has not been effective enough. Young married women in developing countries are particularly at risk due to cultural norms which leave "75 percent more likely to be HIV-positive than sexually-active unmarried girls."¹ Fortunately however, conservative mathematical models estimate that introducing a microbicide in developing countries could avert an estimated 2.5 million HIV infections over three years.² While by no means a cure-all, microbicides are a worthwhile investment for us all.

How can this happen? The economics behind microbicide investment suggest several push-pull mechanisms through which the public sector can encourage pharmaceuticals to invest. This paper will explore these policy options in depth. The market potential is present for microbicides, and pharmaceuticals have already shown some interest. What are needed now are structural and financial catalysts from the public sector. Following the guiding principle of public-private partnership, we can offer a new, cost-effective alternative in the fight against the HIV/AIDS epidemic.

Contact: Luke Palder (stuart.palder@yale.edu) or Robert Nelb (robert.nelb@yale.edu)

¹ Jenny Tolan, "Voices from Rural South Africa: Married Women and AIDS Vulnerability: Moving Toward Female-Controlled Prevention," *Roosevelt Review* 1 (2005): 71.

² Brown, G et al., *Mobilization for Microbicides: The decisive decade*, 2002, The Rockefeller Foundation, 23 Oct. 2005, <<http://www.microbicide.org/microbicideinfo/rockefeller/mobilization.for.microbicides.english.pdf>>.