

Why women need micro-finance

## **Tackling HIV infection among women matters**

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# Current HIV prevention options are not doing enough to slow the epidemic

- The spread of HIV/AIDS continues to outpace the world's response to it: for every 3 people starting treatment in 2010, 5 people became newly infected.
- Women and girls continue to bear the burden of the epidemic, especially in sub-Saharan Africa where approximately 6 in 10 HIV-infected adults are women.
- In some countries, HIV prevalence is three to eight times higher among women ages 15-24 than it is among men in the same age group

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- Current prevention strategies are therefore not enough to stop the spread of HIV particularly among women.
- Many women are unable to negotiate successfully with their male partners to use condoms or to be faithful.
- Abstinence is not realistic for women who are married, who want children or who are at risk of violence.

# New female-initiated prevention options like microbicides are urgently needed

- Vaginal microbicides are antiretroviral (ARV)-based products being developed to reduce the transmission of HIV to women during sex with an HIV-positive male partner.
- The active ingredients in the products are based on the same types of ARV drugs used successfully to prolong the lives of HIV-positive individuals and to prevent mother-to-child transmission of the virus.
- Microbicides would give women a new way to prevent
- HIV — one that would empower them to protect their own health.

# Microbicide development has entered a new and promising chapter

- Decades of research into microbicides have resulted in proof-of-concept that ARV-based microbicides can offer women protection against HIV infection and potentially save millions of lives.
- In July 2010, the results announced from CAPRISA 004, a clinical trial in South Africa, showed that a vaginal gel containing the ARV *tenofovir* used around the time of sex offered women 39 percent protection against HIV.
- Confirmatory trials are ongoing, and if the results are confirmed, tenofovir gel could become the first microbicide approved for use around 2015.