

## **My Reflections and Perspective on the last IAC and UAFC participation**

The International AIDS Conference like most meetings is an opportunity to share, learn and reflect on pertinent issues. The last IAC in Vienna is no different, but had added values as one of the principal theme was 'condomize'. There could not have been a better time for universal promotion of the female condom – as almost all people of the world were in that event. Should UAFC have missed this opportunity for promotion, advocacy and linking, it would have been a great loss.

Even though in a shared booth, the UAFC got prominent recognition and attention as the processes of female condom demonstration and distribution of promotional and IEC materials endeared most people to the female condom and the booth received loads of visitors.

I will be quick to reflect on the various outings at the venue of the event, but one which stands out was the chanting and mobilisation rally to 'cry out' for more female condoms to be made available to the many people who are deprived of the product. It is obvious from the questions and concerns raised by visitors to the UAFC booth at the Global village that many people have not seen or heard about the female condom. The lack of choices (types) was also of concern to many, while others worried on the fact that little attention is given by nations on female condom. Regrettably, countries which had earlier started (like the UK) seems to have a diminished/diminishing interest.

Maybe the next time we get this opportunity in an international forum, it will be nice to have schemas or graphics showing how well nations have done in the UAFC programme, what supports have come and what attention is needed and also challenge people of different nations to take up the challenge to promote the product –How? We will all need to work this out.

I will consider the immediate outputs of the UAFC participation at the conference such as the marked interest shown by people on the female condom as a success. I cannot remember any visitor to the booth or delegate at the conference who spoke against the female condom promotion.

Also I feel representatives of the UAFC programme from different nations worked harmoniously together and the cordial relationship and warmth was huge success as this means all are chasing one goal and there is congruence. The coordination by Lucie and Nienke was good and so also the contributions of Tania and few others.

People learned from each other and I have started discussing some of the lessons from the conference with the Nigerian team - especially on ways to use mid mass and community influencers as stronger advocates for messages, product sales and way to achieving sustainability.

I guess we should have kept (more) proper records of those who came to the booth, taken notes of the comments in more structured ways such as that will enable us have a statistical analysis and also document (video clips) of some of the things we did. We could make a documentary out of such and use the documentary for advocacy and resource mobilisation.

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