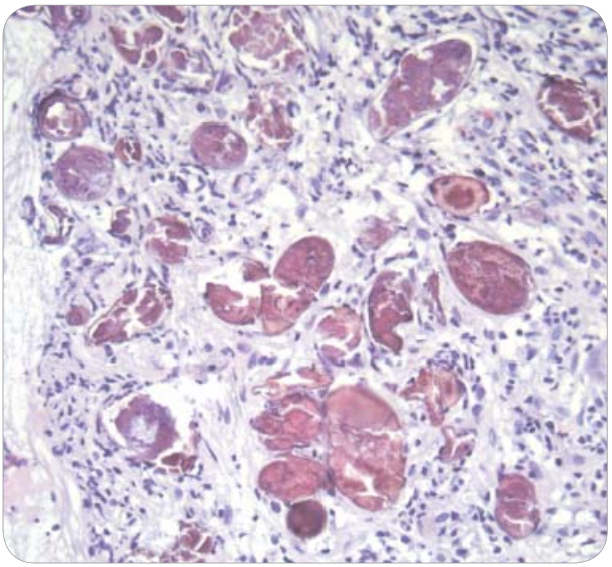
REPORT OF AN INFORMAL WORKING GROUP MEETING ON UROGENITAL SCHISTOSOMIASIS AND HIV TRANSMISSION

Geneva, Switzerland, 1–2 October 2009

World Health Organization



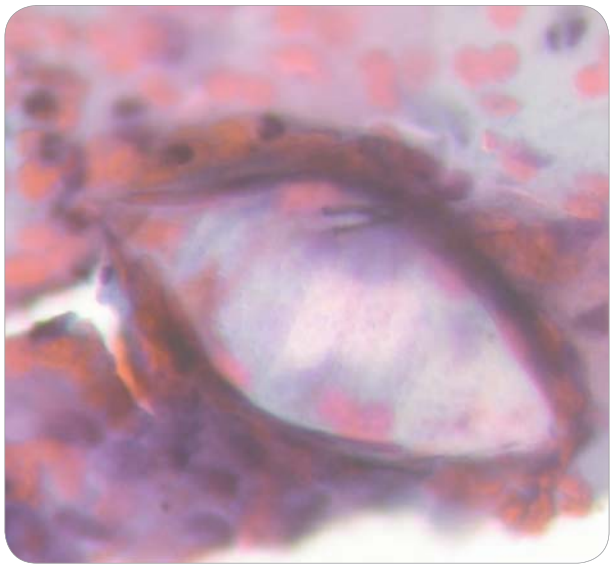


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Table of contents

Preface

Recent investigations have provided information about a possible association between urogenital schistosomiasis and human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) infection, but the available epidemiological evidence is not sufficient to make policy recommendations. The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation convened a meeting in Seattle, Washington, United States of America, in April 2009 to review the existing evidence for an association between *Schistosoma haematobium* infection and risk for HIV infection among women and to determine whether there are short-term opportunities to gain additional knowledge rapidly. The Gates Foundation is considering multiple investments: for retrospective analysis of adults enrolled in a cohort of couples discordant for HIV infection to determine whether there is an association between HIV status and *S. haematobium* infection, and for an investigation of whether current schistosomiasis control programme recommendations are sufficient to prevent female urogenital schistosomiasis, by cross-sectional follow-up of previously treated women and a study of prospective treatment of schoolgirls.

WHO convened an informal working group to address: methodological issues, such as the diagnosis and clinical description of female genital schistosomiasis; opportunities for integrating new studies into existing large-scale schistosomiasis treatment programmes; and ethically acceptable designs for such prospective studies. Agreement on these guidelines opens the door for further investment in studies of the potential causal association between urogenital schistosomiasis and HIV infection.