

## **Social marketing project in low income communities of Rio de Janeiro, Brazil: A demand-supply driven approach for condom use and gender-equitable behaviour**

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**Issue:** There is a consensus of the need to incorporate young men in HIV/AIDS prevention and reduction of gender related violence - UNAIDS 00-01 WAC-, and that their behavior may put themselves and partners at risk. Social Marketing strategies for sexual behavioral change associated with the promotion of condoms, negotiation of condom use and gender-equitable relationships are powerful tools for reducing HIV risk among youth. However, those strategies must be demand driven and have to count with a real participation and involvement of the target population in all steps of the strategic planning of the process. Current condom Social Marketing projects are developed based only on supply side strategies: price subsidy and retail sales, lacking involvement of youth and resulting in limited impact for continuous condom use.

**Project:** John Snow Brasil/PROMUNDO developed a Social Marketing (SM) strategy for promotion of sexual behavioral change, gender equitable relationships and use of condoms among youth in low-income communities of Rio de Janeiro. The strategy has been designed in partnership with condom manufacturer, SSL International. 16 young men were trained as promoters to engage peers on issues of gender related violence and sexual health. They were main authors of the development and implementation of a demand driven SM mix strategy, assessment of local market conditions and integration of a condom accessibility approach with an on-going peer education project.

**Results:** A condom SM strategy was launched with local NGOs and community based associations to train young men to act as peer-to-peer promoters for healthy and gender equitable sexual behavior. In order to guarantee accessibility of condoms they were also trained in selling strategies of condoms at youth places. Therefore, this strategy is an income generating and a behavioral change intervention. Demand driven SM mix strategy includes: Place - condoms available at alternative youth gathering places (e.g funk parties and local bars, schools, squares); Promotion - condoms sold with a magazine produced with the input from the youth and design of messages for the reduction of perceived social cost of using and negotiating use of condoms; Social Product - young men's involvement in gender equitable relationships and use of condoms dissemination among peers; Price - setting the "right price" based on youth's willingness to pay, US\$0.33 for pack of 3.

**Lessons Learned:** Condom SM must be demand driven and count with the real involvement of target population. When field testing the SM mix, youth provided useful insights. Data were incorporated into all phases of the condom SM strategy. It is an alternative process to current supply driven projects for condom SM, although accessibility (place) in our strategy is also considered a main issue.