



MEN TAKING RESPONSIBILITY IN HIV/AIDS PREVENTION WORK

# Men's Interventions: HIV/AIDS Peer Education in the Workplace

Binh Dinh and Can Tho Provinces

## The Situation

### THE NEED TO FOCUS ON MEN

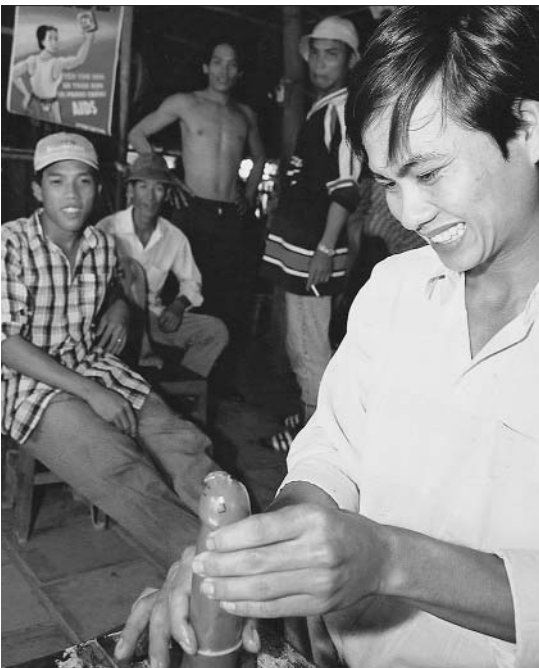
In Viet Nam, there are few AIDS prevention programs or Behavior Change Communication (BCC) materials targeted toward sexual health and healthy living needs of the general population of men who may be susceptible to HIV infection through their sexual activity or drug use.

- As of September 30, 2002, more than 55,200 people in Viet Nam were reported to be HIV positive, but the actual number is likely to be three or four times higher. 85% percent of reported HIV+ persons are men, mostly young, sexually active injecting drug users (IDUs), and sometimes clients of sex workers (SWs). Often these men do not practice safer sexual or injecting practices. They come from all strata in society. Many men in different occupational groups visit sex workers and about 90 percent of IDUs are men. These men are viewed as the bridge populations that could spread the currently concentrated epidemic among IDUs and SWs to the general population through unprotected sexual relations with their spouses, girlfriends, and/or casual sexual partners.

**Can Tho**, in the Mekong River Delta region is one of the few cities in Viet Nam where most reported HIV infections resulted from heterosexual transmission, when the project began in 2000. In 2002, authorities report increasing numbers of IDU-related HIV infections. In the 2000 BSS the percentages of men in Can Tho reporting having sex with a sex worker in the past 12 months were: long distance



FHI supports PE activities at government and private factory work sites.



FHI supported PE activities at private rice mill in Can Tho.

**PROJECT GOAL**

**To improve HIV/AIDS awareness and knowledge and to promote safe behaviors concerning HIV/AIDS prevention among male populations**

The “Workplace Peer Educators,” a component of the Men’s Intervention project, has trained men to serve as HIV/AIDS peer educators for both men from the local community and temporary migrant workers who are working in the factories. Some women working at the factories also benefit from the HIV/AIDS education and information provided. PE programs run in eight

factories, seven government and one private, with large populations of mobile male employees, best reached for HIV/AIDS education by their peers. The factories specialize in pharmaceuticals, textiles, clothing, urban construction, transportation, rubber, rice mill and vegetable oil processing.

In Binh Dinh , the activities in four factories are complemented by community events through the Viet Nam Youth Union, Peasants’ Association, Labor Union and others through joint community activities, leading to more effective work. Can Tho, with four factories, boasts a garment factory with its model program’s success attributed to collaboration with the Labor Union. The trained Workplace Peer Educators also receive education materials, project shirts/caps, supply bags, condoms for distribution, penis models and aprons printed with female and male reproductive organs for educational use.

truck drivers (LDTDs) 39%; Migrant workers 7% and IDUs 6%. Those who reported using condoms consistently with sex work partners were: LDTDs 70%, Migrant Workers 62% and IDUs 38%. With casual and regular partners the percentage fell dramatically. 42% of street-based SWs do not consistently use condoms with their regular clients. Can Tho province ranked eleventh (out of 61 provinces) in HIV infection numbers in 2002.

**Binh Dinh**, with seaports, Highway 1, Highway 19 to Cambodia, and many students and workers returning from Ho Chi Minh City shows increasing drug use and HIV infection rates.

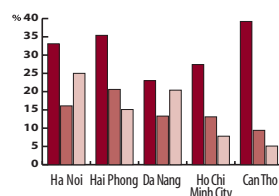
**The Project**

**The HIV/AIDS Peer Education in the Workplace intervention** is part of a larger set of activities under the Men’s Interventions implemented by the Can Tho and Binh Dinh provincial AIDS Standing Bureaus (PASBs) that began in October 2000. The Can Tho and Binh Dinh PASBs receive financial and technical support from FHI. FHI also supports DKT International to promote condom use and to open and maintain condom distribution in non-traditional outlets in hotspot areas.

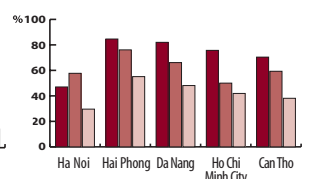
**Project Objectives**

- (1) to reinforce social norms that support male responsibility to families and society and safer behaviors for HIV/AIDS prevention;
- (2) To raise awareness of men’s sexual health;
- (3) To increase the sense of responsibility and obligation of the owners of enterprises to support HIV/STI prevention training for company workers;
- (4) To reach men in a natural setting.

**Male Populations Percent having Sex with a Sex Worker in the Past 12 Months** (BSS Round I: 2000)



**Percent Used Condoms Consistently with Sex Worker Partners in Past 12 Months** (Male Populations with a Sex Worker in the Past 12 Months)



■ Long Distance Truck Drivers ■ Migrant Workers ■ IDUs

For Hai Phong and Da Nang migrant workers are seafarers; for Hanoi and HCMC they are construction workers; and for Can Tho they are porters/stevadores.

## Activities

- **Situational Analysis · Rapid Assessment** of Men's Perceptions of Barriers to HIV/STI prevention · **KAP Focus Groups/Key Message Development** · **Advocacy Meetings** with Authorities · **Coordination and Planning Meetings**
- **BCC Materials Development** with Advertising Agency · **Launching Meeting**
- **Peer Educator Teams Formed · Training** for PEs · **Designed and Implemented Peer Education Activities:** group discussions, one-on-one discussions, workshops, question and answer sessions/contests, drama, performances for special days, meetings, camping and sports events · **Development** of Individualized Workplace BCC Materials
- **Establish** mini-libraries
- **Monitoring** by PASB/FHI/Partners · **Mid-term and Final Evaluation/Meeting**

## Training:

Four-day courses for workplace peer educators include HIV/AIDS prevention education, communication skills and facilitation methodology work. The PASBs and DKT train the peer educators about condom use and promotion. Refresher training occurred in the second year of the project run by the PASBs.

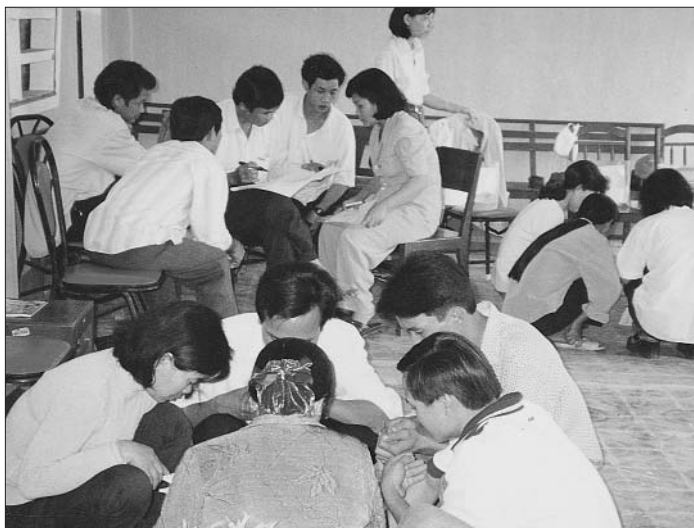
## Achievements

- **Company management** became involved and invested in the project.
- **BCC materials appropriate to the workers** were designed and disseminated. Proactive Peer Educators developed BCC materials beyond those created in the project.
- **Condoms are made more accessible** with outlets established in and/or around some of the enterprises.
- **Positive images of male responsibility** are created and reinforced.
- **Interventions reach stable populations** as well as many migrant workers.
- **Substantial numbers of men** have been reached through the workplace peer education activities: By September 30, 2002, 135 workplace peer educators trained; 18,747 workers reached

by Peer Educators in factories and in the community; 13,268 BCC materials distributed and 8 HIV/AIDS mini-libraries established in workplaces (in response to requests for a wider variety of educational materials, including both a range of print and audio-visual BCC materials).

## Lessons Learned

- **Interventions that focus on men as key-decision makers** in sexual negotiation are critical to promoting safer sex practices.
- **Community authorities** (Police, Social Affairs, the Peoples' Committee) must be important players in the activity as they can help make it easier to do community work.
- **The workplace activities** succeed best when company Boards of Directors, the Labor and Youth Unions are involved and supportive. State companies may be more active than private ones.
- **Peer education in workplaces** requires quality training for the educators, with sufficient follow-up training, especially when requested by them.
- **The project needed to develop a wider range of BCC materials** for the PEs, because many workers soon became bored with the brief leaflets on HIV/AIDS and condom demonstrations and wanted more information, pictures and videos on HIV/AIDS and STIs, and more diversified, colorful and entertaining BCC materials.



Group Peer Education activities.



## MEN'S INTERVENTIONS: PEER EDUCATION IN THE WORKPLACE

Binh Dinh and Can Tho Provinces



- **Activities such as contests** are effective for the immediate target group who attend and participate. However, they do not appear to have a broader impact beyond those attending the activity.
- **Peer educators** need to know where the non-traditional condom outlets are so they can recommend them to their customers.
- **Condom distribution/sales** by the PEs at the factories was not initially a standard part of peer educators activities or responsibilities (but it could be in the future).
- **As with the IDU and SW interventions in provinces where the BSS is conducted**, the BSS could also be used to assess men's exposure to the PE in workplace interventions, and to track changes in these men's sexual behavior and condom use.

### FHI VIET NAM HIV/AIDS INTERVENTION: 1999-2002

- HIV/AIDS Behavioral Surveillance Surveys
- Capacity Building for Individuals and Organizations
- Behavior Change Communication (BCC) Campaigns
- Condom Social Marketing Using Non-Traditional Outlets
- Men's Interventions: Peer Education by Barbers and Shoeshine Boys
- Men's Interventions: Peer Education by Motorcycle Taxi Drivers
- **Men's Interventions: Peer Education in the Workplace**
- The Women's Health Club and Community Peer Education Project
- Risk Reduction Through Drop-In Centers and the "ECHO" Peer Education Model
- Peer Education in 05/06 Rehabilitation Centers: Risk Reduction and Support for People Living with HIV/AIDS
- STI Management Training for Pharmacists and Private Physicians



A "Community Corner" and mini-library for HIV/AIDS Peer Education at Hau Giang pharmaceutical factory.



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