



TINGIM LAIP FEMALE CONDOM PROMOTION STRATEGY



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Tingim Laip (TL) is Papua New Guinea's largest targeted peer-led HIV prevention and care project, operating in 20 locations over 10 provinces. It is a joint National AIDS Council and Australian aid project, funded by the Australian Government and managed by Cardno Emerging Markets.

The objective of Tingim Laip is to ensure that key populations in selected locations engage in safer sex by using condoms regularly, obtain regular treatment for STIs, know their HIV status and access treatment if living with HIV. To achieve this, Tingim Laip works where there is a higher convergence of HIV risks. Tingim Laip engages more than 150 volunteers and staff from key populations, and supports them to implement a range of peer-led activities to increase knowledge; condom use and accessibility; STI and VCCT service uptake; the number of people who know their status; support for people living with HIV; and to contribute to more supportive environments for key populations.

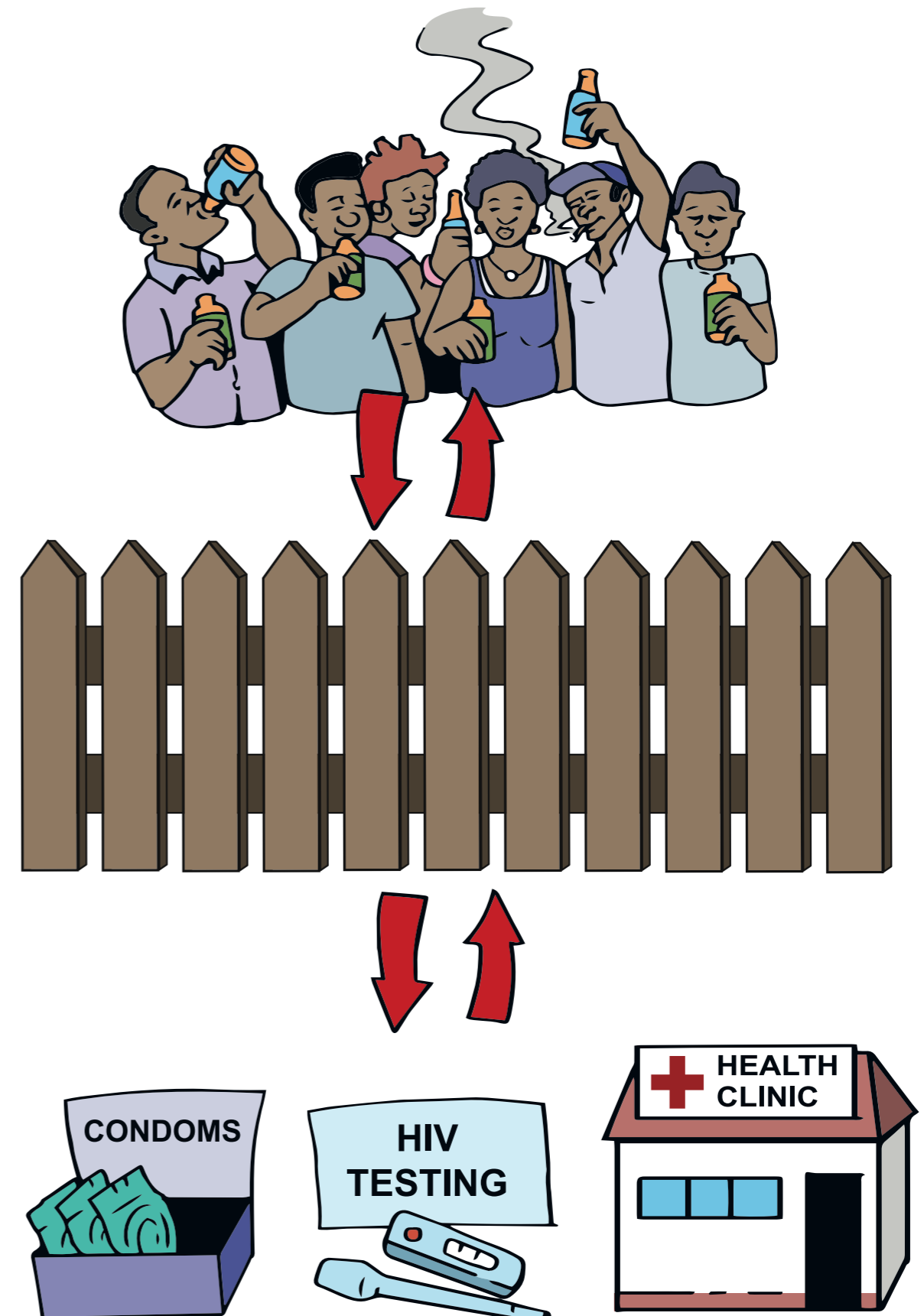
Condoms are an essential part of any comprehensive, effective and sustainable HIV prevention and care program. Research from around the world has shown that consistent and correct use of condoms for both men and women significantly reduces the risks of getting HIV. A key component of the project is to ensure that targeted key populations understand the benefits of correct and consistent male and female condom use and that they are able to access condoms if and when they need to. (This is outlined in detail in Tingim Laip's Condom Distribution Strategy). Tingim Laip also works with partners and stakeholders to ensure that condoms are readily available.

Globally, female condom distribution increased by 10 million between 2008 and 2009. In PNG, while the distribution of female condoms throughout the country has improved tremendously, female condom uptake and usage is surrounded by myths and lack of information.

The risk to HIV infection for PNG women is real- nearly 50% of people living with HIV (PLHIV) in PNG are women (Robinson, 2013). The uneven socio-cultural context of PNG, contributes to women's increased vulnerability to HIV and STIs. It is estimated that 70% of PNG women will be raped or physically assaulted in their lifetime (MEDECINS SANS FRONTIERES, 2014).

Tingim Laip's Female Condom Promotion Strategy has been developed within the context of PNG women's risks for HIV, addressing both the individual and structural factors as well as identifying opportunities to make female condoms a common and accepted tool for sexual reproductive health. The **Strategy** builds on and complements existing Tingim Laip initiatives that aim to improve the coverage and acceptability of female condoms. While innovative campaigns such as PSI's 'Orange Plus' have generated interest in male condoms, feedback from TL key populations indicate that there is still a general lack of 'know-how' when it comes to female condoms.

Within the project, specific strategies have been developed for each TL location and their respective target populations. Male and female condom promotion is a core part of all HIV prevention and care interventions.



TINGIM LAIP FEMALE CONDOM PROMOTION STRATEGY

The Tingim Laip **Female Condom Promotion Strategy** is embedded in Tingim Laip's comprehensive prevention and care strategy and overall approach to condom programming presented in the Tingim Laip Condom Distribution Strategy, which advocates for increased accessibility and availability of both male and female condoms. This is also in line with PNG's National Strategy on Comprehensive Condom Programming (2013 – 2017).

Female condoms are relatively new in PNG. TL's experience working across 10 provinces of PNG has highlighted the limited knowledge of female condoms amongst members of key populations. In places where female condoms are available, there is stigma associated with carrying female condoms. Many women have misconceptions about female condoms, while others are 'too scared' to even try one.

Some of the reasons, reported to TL against the use of female condoms include:

- Lack of knowledge and awareness about female condoms
- Misconceptions about female condoms and how to use them
- Low self-esteem and lack of confidence to carry and/ or negotiate female condom use
- Cultural restrictions/ taboos preventing women from discussing sensitive issues
- Alcohol use
- Belief that women are 'not important' and are often 'led' by men
- Unavailability of female condoms
- Men's preference for skin-to-skin

The Tingim Laip **Female Condom Promotion Strategy** attempts to address these issues and create a supportive environment that will improve availability and acceptability of female condoms across TL locations in PNG, contributing to their increased use. While it will not 'answer' all of the issues relating to female condom use in PNG communities, it will raise the profile of female condoms, correct misconceptions and support ongoing interventions that promote the use of female condoms.

The aim of the **Strategy** is to increase female condom use in all TL project locations.

The objectives of the **Strategy** are:

- To increase self reported female condom use by WES/SW
- To increase female condom acceptability amongst MMM
- To increase female condom acceptability amongst key population 'gatekeepers'

TL FEMALE CONDOM STRATEGY SLOGAN:

“Ring” it’

STRATEGY KEY MESSAGE:

“Ring it” to prevent HIV and unintended pregnancy’

TARGET AND ROLLOUT:

The **Strategy** will be piloted in five TL locations: Goroka, Hagen, Markham, Central and Milne Bay.

The primary target audience is women exchanging sex (WES) for goods or money. TL works with women engaged in sex work and has developed a strong network in each project location. Interventions will take into consideration the unique social and cultural factors that further escalate their vulnerability to HIV in that location.

Secondary target audiences are:

- Mobile men with money (clients of women engaged in sex work) – truck drivers, buai traders, security guards
- Gatekeepers (men and women who influence the exchange of sex) – guesthouse and bar owners, mummy/ daddy bosses, condom distributors

INTERVENTIONS:

The **Strategy** will be delivered in line with TL's existing peer-based prevention strategies and will be comprised of three different interventions:

INTERPERSONAL COMMUNICATION

Peer education outreach and LikLik Lipstik (WES Support Group Meetings) will be the **Strategy's** primary mechanism for delivery of interventions to both primary and secondary target audiences. Key messages on female condoms, their use and negotiation, including myths will be developed for each of the **Strategy** target populations. These messages will be disseminated by TL volunteers and Field Officers to their peer networks on an on-going basis.



Key messages are:

- Female condoms, when used correctly and consistently prevent HIV, STIs and unintended pregnancy.
- Female condoms provide an option for women to protect themselves if their partner is unwilling to use a male condom due to personal, cultural, religious or other reasons.
- Female condoms can be placed inside the vagina prior to sexual intercourse - it can be inserted up to 8 hours before intercourse
- Female condoms make it faster for men to ejaculate during sex
- Female condoms can also be used for anal sex

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Project Officers and Field Officers will target gatekeepers and service providers in locations where members of key populations are based. Key messages around female condoms, their use and negotiation, including myths will be developed for each of the community target populations to encourage them to promote and make female condoms available.

For instance, TL Project Officers and Field Officers will conduct regular meetings with security company management to share information about female condoms and seek opinions on how to improve female condom acceptability and availability. This will inform peer education outreach to promote female condoms amongst clients of sex workers and gate keepers. The TL HIV Sik Blong Koap, Topics 21 and 22 will be the reference point for this activity.

IECs

TL will use a range of communication and marketing items to reinforce peer and community based messaging. IECs will reinforce and remind target populations of key messages from the **Strategy**, which will have a trickle-on effect in the environment that becomes more accepting of female condoms.

Items with key messages will include:

- Posters
- Wristbands
- Lanyards
- T-shirts

MEDECINS SANS FRONTIERES. (2014). *Papua New Guinea*. Retrieved February 12, 2014, from Medecins Sans Frontieres: <http://www.msf.org/papua-new-guinea>

Robinson, J. (2013). *Understanding the PNG HIV Epidemic*. UNAIDS, Port Moresby.

UNAIDS. (2013). *AIDS by the numbers*. Retrieved February 12, 2014, from UNAIDS: http://www.unaids.org/en/media/unaids/contentassets/documents/unaidspublication/2013/JC2571_AIDS_by_the_numbers_en.pdf

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