

## PSI's HIV Testing & Counseling Strategy: 2007 - 2009

PSI's new two-year HIV testing and counseling (T&C) strategy has two purposes: (1) to strengthen PSI's HIV service delivery programs and (2) to make a formal statement about PSI's position on moving into provider initiated testing and counseling (PITC). All PSI programs implementing or seeking to implement VCT<sup>1</sup> will use this strategy to focus efforts on PSI's strengths and address possible weaknesses, ultimately resulting in increased measurable impact of the intervention.

### **THE PARADIGM SHIFT IN HIV TESTING FROM CLIENT INITIATED T&C TO PROVIDER INITIATED T&C AND ITS IMPACT ON PSI'S VCT STRATEGY**

#### ***Background:***

Public health authorities and policy-makers increasingly call for a more comprehensive approach to HIV testing and counseling. Preferred approaches combine the well-established model of VCT with focus on provider-initiated T&C ('opt in' vs. 'opt out' testing). PSI's primary focus is prevention, and VCT is a proven HIV prevention intervention; thus, PSI continues to support traditional models of VCT as well as provider initiated T&C in order to increase access to and use of testing and counseling services in high HIV prevalence settings.

#### ***PSI's response to the paradigm shift:***

PSI will develop, support and implement both client-initiated VCT and provider-initiated T&C programs that complement each other by targeting different populations in high-prevalence settings. PITC will preserve the 3 C's as defined by WHO/UNAIDS: informed Consent, Counseling and Confidentiality of test results. PSI programs will create linkages between tested clients and care and support services including ART in *all* settings. Programs will ensure that high-incidence target populations have access to T&C and care and support services – whether from provider-initiated or client-initiated T&C. PSI will also implement social marketing campaigns to promote all forms of counseling and testing and normalize HIV testing services.

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<sup>1</sup> The term VCT is used throughout this document for simplicity sake, while acknowledging that country programs and donors use a variety of terms from CT, T&C, HTC, etc. PITC is used when discussing provider initiated testing and counseling.

## GOALS OF VCT SERVICE DELIVERY & SOCIAL MARKETING

1. Reduce HIV transmission through provision of high quality VCT and provider initiated T&C;
2. Mitigate the impact of HIV on infected and affected populations through stigma reduction, care and support, and improved access to treatment.

## STRATEGIES TO MEET THESE GOALS

Strategy #1: Increased access to high quality HIV counseling and testing through multiple service delivery models adapted to individual country needs. This includes both VCT and provider initiated T&C

Strategy #2: Create demand for VCT through evidence based communication strategies, adapted to country settings including both branded and generic marketing communications

Strategy #3: Link VCT effectively to treatment, care and support services

Strategy #4: Target those who are most in need of VCT services and those who are least likely to test

Strategy #5: Conduct and promote research in terms of social marketing campaign development and evaluation and research on the impact of VCT and post-test support services on behavior change

Strategy #6: Integrate other services and product delivery with VCT, such as family planning services and products, safe water systems, nutritional supplements, TB/STI screening, opportunistic infection prophylaxis and insecticide treated nets

Strategy #7: Collaborate, cooperate and participate in national and international VCT forums to strengthen PSI's VCT strategy; collaborate with local NGO/CBO/FBOs and stakeholders to further PSI's mission and impact of rapid expansion of VCT

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