

## Project Overview

# You're the Man!



As part of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID)-funded Technical Support for HIV/AIDS Prevention, Care and Treatment program, FHI 360 developed *You're the Man!* (YTM), a pioneering program targeting high risk men through a combination of mass, experiential, and interpersonal communications. YTM, which ran from 2009 to 2013, focused on challenging negative norms of masculinity and fostering a sense of responsibility among men, combining HIV and gender-based behavior change messages through two main formats. The first used individual and group outreach with sweethearts, partners, and sugar daddies of the EWs in order to discuss sexual health and risk reduction in areas where key populations socialize and work, including brothels, bars, karaoke and massage parlors, parks/streets, private homes, etc. at times convenient for the beneficiaries.



Outreach sessions were structured around the delivery of a core prevention package that contained: targeted education, product promotion and/or provision (e.g. condoms and lubricants), and systematic health service referrals. In the second half of 2011, the Joint United Nations Program on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) provided funding to FHI 360 for a series of events working with military personal in border provinces. This included four largescale outreach events using the YTM format, which helped promote an awareness of key messages, and brand awareness for the forthcoming series.

The second approach YTM used was mass-media through which positive male role models for healthy behaviors were presented, destructive gender norms that make men and women vulnerable to HIV transmission were challenged, and social problems such as gender-based violence and the risks associated with excessive drinking were addressed. At the same time positive, gender-equitable, healthy male role models were presented to the general public. The primary (but not exclusive) target audience of the campaign was male clients and/or sweethearts of entertainment workers, as well as men with multiple and concurrent sexual partners, who live in urban or periurban areas of Cambodia. They were often young, aged 18-35 years, and married or single. They were mostly low- and middle-class professionals and/or students with disposable income used for entertainment.

In 2009, the *You're The Man!* reality television program was launched. Six contestants were chosen from 4,600 applicants for a reality TV show that aired weekly. The television show was complimented by social media, such as a website, YouTube and Facebook, where viewers could preview episodes, and participate in a quiz that tested men's knowledge of the show's core messages.

Seasons 1, 2 and 3 of the show addressed peer pressure, condom use and binge drinking. Throughout the show challenged the definition of masculinity, in relation to HIV, domestic violence, and drug and alcohol consumption. Season 3's reality TV format has provided a unique opportunity for Cambodian men to see their behavior reflected in others. In particular, viewers had the opportunity to witness the ramifications of binge drinking, and subsequently reflect on their own behavior. The YTM Season 3 Grand Finale was held on March 25, 2012 in front of a live audience in a studio, while viewers' voted for their favorite contestant. Following approximately 15,000 text message votes, Mr. Vin, an ice cream seller from Phnom Penh, was crowned Season 3's *You're The Man!*. Prizes included a check for \$7,000, which was part of leveraged funding through private sector sponsorship.

The final season of the *You're The Man!* campaign concentrated on the promotion of safe sex and condom use with sweethearts through a series of small, targeted live events and a televised competition series between five men and their female partners. An innovative ticketing system was developed using the SMARTgirl network, to ensure participation and to encourage sweethearts and male clients of EWs to access HIV and STI testing facilities available on site. Unlike previous seasons, men competed with their female partners in activities that were designed not only to entertain, but also to challenge negative masculine norms affecting condom use, and to encourage joint decision making, open communication and dialogue between sexual partners.

The events attracted a total 3,229 participants (both men and EWs) of whom 1,249 received an HIV test. Through the uniquely designed ticketing strategy, FHI 360 recorded 678 sweethearts who accessed HIV testing directly as the result of the program. In addition, 48 EWs and 523 members of the public requested an HIV test at the events, providing evidence for the feasibility and popularity of mobile testing.

YTM Season 4 was complemented by intensified outreach through social media channels, including Website, Facebook and SMS. A mobile phone reminder system, which included texts and voice messages, was developed to remind and encourage sweethearts of EWs to undertake HIV testing prior to the events, as well as to inform them about the health services available on site. Facebook proved to be extremely successful, registering up to 7,862 views per day, while the website was visited by 1,019 individuals throughout the campaign.



### Program rationale

In Cambodia, studies showed a blurring of the distinction between commercial partners and sweetheart relationships, with over 35% of men reporting paying their sweetheart for sex<sup>1</sup>. Anecdotal evidence suggests that many sweethearts of entertainment workers (EWs), women who are engaged in the sex and entertainment industry, are previous clients. Although condom use with clients was relatively high (81.5% among EWs with less than two partners per day, and 86.2% reported by men in the past three months) [2], studies found that condom use in sweetheart relationships is much less consistent (39.4% in the past three months according to EWs, and 51.3% according to men)<sup>2</sup> despite previous relationship status and condom use. Of note, condom use with sweethearts is also on the decline. Furthermore, according to BROS Khmer<sup>3</sup>, among high-risk urban men, 72.3% reported using condoms with a paid partner, while 51.2% reported condom use with a non-paid partner.

Historically, prevention programs in Cambodia focused largely on the role of female EWs in transmitting HIV to the general population. Men who have sex with EWs had been overlooked and underserved by HIV prevention activities and campaigns, yet it is often men who determine when and where sex will occur and whether condoms will be used. Furthermore, while many men have high levels of HIV awareness and risk perception, they are less likely to take responsibility for HIV transmission because they believe that the 'danger' stems not from their own behavior but from that of their sex partners<sup>4</sup>.

### References

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