



USAID
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

**Combination
Prevention for HIV**
Central America and Mexico



Success Story

Integrating HIV prevention and family planning for a better future

“My children are my main motivation. Today, I take care of my future for them”.



“My children are my main motivation. The most difficult thing I’ve ever done is raise them on my own”, says Rocío, a 27 year mother of two children working in a brothel in San Salvador. Rocío was first contacted by PSI’s Central American affiliate, the Pan American Social Marketing Organization (PASMO) under the Combination Prevention Program for HIV, funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). Aracely Corado, PASMO El Salvador’s outreach worker, met Rocío when conducting behavior change communication activities in her workplace. Under the combination prevention approach, PASMO also provided referrals to biomedical services such as HIV counseling and testing and STI screening, in addition to referrals to other complementary services such as the prevention of violence, alcohol and drug abuse, and referrals to family planning services.

Integrating services such as family planning has been a key component in the combination prevention approach, especially when conducting outreach with sex workers. In Rocío’s case, she expressed her concern about becoming pregnant and asked to be referred to a doctor where she could begin a family planning method. “At first, I was worried when Aracely spoke to me about protecting myself and using condoms, but I soon began to trust her because she was professional and she treated me well”.

At September 2011, there were an estimated 11,900 of female sex workers in El Salvador (Country estimation / Regional M&E Committee) and the HIV prevalence rate in this population is nearly six times that of the general population (5.7%, UNAIDS 2010). Moreover, in the last demographic health survey in El Salvador, 3 out of 4 women ages 15-49 who are married or in a union report using some sort of family planning (FP) method; however, of those who are not currently using a FP method, nearly 60% would like to.

PASMO began the Combination Prevention program in 2010, offering an integrated approach to HIV prevention that combines testing and counseling, condom promotion and distribution, and family planning, as well as other services to promote an improved well-being. The program’s goal is to provide each individual reached with a complete and essential package of prevention services, products and referrals.

Rocío was referred to a private clinic that is part of the Combination Prevention Program and provides family planning services at accessible prices and she choose a sub-dermal implant, Jadelle. “Today, I feel more confident, I think about my future and about not exposing myself to illnesses. I also now know where to go to plan my future and take care of my health”.

