

# Lubricant Social Marketing -- Lessons Learned

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## **Lubricant Social Marketing -- Lessons Learned**

With the most and longest experience social marketing lubricants, PSI is clearly the leader and within PSI is where the lessons learned primarily lie. The findings in this report come from the few PSI and Non-PSI lubricant social marketing projects implemented (or to be implemented) in Bolivia, Cote d'Ivoire, Romania, the Philippines, Nigeria, Laos, Bombay India, Myanmar, Papua New Guinea, and Central America and some projects distributing lubricants free of charge in Jamaica, India, South Africa, Hong Kong, and Chad. Most countries were very cooperative with sharing their lessons, however, with changes in project leadership valuable details of corporate memory have been lost. Even with PSI's pioneering in lubricants, in the midst of all the condom marketing, lubricants are a peripheral product. This report also examines the notion that "a condom is only as good as the lubricant."<sup>1</sup>

### **A. Social marketing lubricants**

#### **Why is there a need for lubricants?**

Condom use for the greatest prevention of HIV/AIDS is highly dependent upon proper lubrication. Sexual lubricants may reduce the risk of HIV and other STI transmission by:

- Increasing use of condoms;<sup>2</sup> and
- Reducing tissue damage and laceration to the genitals;
- Reducing likelihood of the condom breakage;<sup>3</sup>
- Preserving the natural antiseptic, lactobacilli, contained in vaginal moisture; and
- Potential anti-HIV properties of some lubricants (any microbial effects would require confirmation in human clinic trials).

It should be noted that although there is strong biological plausibility for lubricant use helping to reduce HIV/STI transmission, the results from definitive epidemiological studies to demonstrate such effectiveness are not available. Hence, lubricants should not be positioned as being able to reduce HIV transmission unless used with condoms.

In many countries, lubrication with condom use is insufficient because of:

- Traditional harmful practices such as "dry" (removal of vaginal fluid with absorbent materials-see attachment) sex and female genital mutilation;

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<sup>1</sup> Biofilm.

<sup>2</sup> "The Bandhu Social Welfare Society in Dhaka, Bangladesh, works with low-income men who have sex with men, particularly male sex workers. In its early stages, Bandhu encountered great difficulty in gaining acceptance for condoms... It has also pushed hard for the provision of lubricants, along with strong condoms. With these measures in place, and having achieved a better social environment, Bandhu is now finding that condoms are becoming more accepted, and more used, among its male sex worker clients in Dhaka. (UNAIDS).

<sup>3</sup> In a US study of MSM, lubricant use with greater than 80% of anal sex acts was significantly associated with decreased failure rates (Stone, JAIDS, 1999).

- Factors limiting natural lubrication of most women (emotional and physical-- stress, depression, fatigue, FGM, lack of sexual pleasure, breastfeeding, menopause);
- Practice of anal sex with inadequate lubrication (among both MSM and heterosexual couples); and
- Pre-lubricated condoms coated with too little lubricant.

### **Why is lubricant marketing difficult?**

As a behavior change effort, encouraging the use of appropriate lubrication would be a significant, although important, undertaking. Barriers to appropriate use include:

- Incorrect belief that the lubrication would be harmful to the woman;
- Lubricant use is too noisy;
- On the part of men, lubricant use by women implies “loose” sexual behavior and an unfaithful partner and the view that vaginal fluids are distasteful;
- On the part of women, belief that male partners desire the efforts made by women to provide a “tight” and dry vagina;
- The cost of lubricant is an additional unaffordable expense in addition to condoms;
- Unavailability of lubricants on a regular basis;
- Incorrect belief that lubricated condoms contain sufficient lubricant for sexual practices such as anal sex and some vaginal sex practices;
- Incorrect practice of using oil-based lubricants; and
- Denial of directly targeting the groups most in need of the product in certain countries (problem no different than holds true for condoms, however).

### **The potential for a social marketing lubricant market**

In addition to the need for and in spite of the barriers to lubricant use, there are promising practices that pave the way for lubricant use among many populations. In fact, in many developing countries, there are reports that there is little to no lubricant on the market, much less water-based lubricant, nonetheless:

- In many countries, such as Cote d’Ivoire and in Central America (less Costa Rica), lubricants could be welcome where “wet” sex is already practiced;
- Where dry sex is practiced (such as much of Central & Southern Africa) there exist younger populations who have moved away from the practice;<sup>4</sup>
- In addition, where populations are already using lubricated condoms (as they are lubricated), adding lubricant may be acceptable.
- Among MSM and CSW populations there is often the practice of using lubricants, albeit often inappropriately, such as oil-based lubricants, and making the switch may be a minimal adjustment.
- In markets where there are supplemental items engaged to improve sexual pleasure lubricants may be acceptable; and

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<sup>4</sup> Civic, Diane and David Wilson. Dry Sex in Zimbabwe and Implications for Condom Use. *Social Science Medicine*. Vol. 42; No. 1; 1996.

- As it is with condoms, markets exist for those who would reluctantly use lubricants to decrease their risk of HIV transmission.

While oil-based lubricants are inappropriate,<sup>5</sup> their use demonstrates an acceptance of the need for lubrication and a comfort level with the practice of using lubrication.

Research indicates that high-risk subpopulations such as MSM and CSWs often inappropriately use petroleum and oil-based lubricants (petroleum jelly, hand lotion, or mineral/vegetable oils) as sexual lubricants because they lack basic information about the risk associated with their use. Among MSM respondents who reported having anal sex, 60% reported use of an oil-based lubricant in the last year (Martin, 1992). A multicenter study conducted in Europe found that 10% of female sex workers reported having used petroleum-based lubricants (EWGHIFP, 1993).

In the absence of an appropriate water-based lubricant, many MSM in India report using alternative products, such as oil (60% in Bangalore), oil-based lubricants (60% of gay men in California at least once in the past year), and saliva (85% in Hyderabad). Such behavior, oftentimes a result of misinformation, comes with a high cost; 20% of MSM visiting a VCT in Mumbai who believed that oil-based lubricants were effective in HIV prevention were also found to be HIV positive.

Difficulties with social marketing lubricant include:

- A significant hurdle to changing an entrenched preference in sexual experience, particularly dry sex;
- Beliefs about lubrication vary from country to country and within countries, effective marketing of lubricants is highly dependent upon specific and applied formative research (i.e., very difficult to generalize about practices);<sup>6</sup>
- The likely need to highly subsidize the cost to reach primary target groups;
- Obtaining funding; and
- Gauging impact.

The difficulties hold in common a need for a long-term commitment and funds necessary to maintain that commitment before impact would be apparent, should a program be undertaken. Even where the practice of “dry” sex<sup>7</sup> is prevalent, the business of HIV/AIDS prevention social marketing is to prevent HIV transmitted by improving practices related to sexual intercourse, the greatest source of transmission. Addressing dry sex might be considered the mission, rather than a threat to entering the market as might be a commercial company’s approach.

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<sup>5</sup> OTC oil-based sexual lubricants are not currently manufactured or available because laboratory research has shown that they degrade latex making condoms more likely to break (Voeller 1989). Two studies have assessed the impact of adding oil-based lubricants to condoms, and both have found a significantly increased risk with condom slippage (Steiner 1994, Trussell 1992a).

<sup>6</sup> In a study in South Africa of women near Cape Town versus near Pretoria preferences for dry sex varied greatly (63% versus 11%) as did they think their male partners’ preferences (65% versus 14%); lubricant use was rare (from Jones, H. et al. Vaginal Product Use by Phase II Microbicide Trial Participants in South Africa).

<sup>7</sup> As high as 50% in urban areas and higher in rural areas in Zimbabwe (Civic and Wilson, 1996).

Even with the difficulties, however, efforts at creating a social marketing lubricant market may go on to later benefit the introduction of microbicides.

It appears lubricant use is not a highly researched topic and, in fact, there may be more potential than there is evidence to demonstrate. With projects that have discontinued it is difficult to assess if this is linked to the effort put into the project or the reality of a poor market.

## **B. Implementation Considerations**

The very little experience accumulated in lubricant social marketing suggests some particular strategies might be the best to undertake. More experience is necessary, however, to prove or disprove these strategies.

### **Provide instructions**

Experiences from the PSI Bolivia and Romania programs identify a need to explain what lubricant is for and how to use it (i.e., with a condom; on both partners; add water to reactivate, not necessarily more lubricant, etc.). Ensure that a launch and promotional materials explain use as well as the benefits of lubricant (See Attachment 2, a question and answer tool and lubricant use instructions by Ansell).

### **Give free samples**

Commercial lubricant marketers hinge their efforts on encouraging trial. Free samples are critical to enable trial and should be considered in the marketing mix even when there is a preference for larger units of bottled lubricant. Lubricant samples bundled with condoms also provide a key role in associating the lubricant with condoms, especially where the main lubricant product (perhaps a bottle) is purchased independent of condoms. In addition, samples can be given as rewards for participating in questionnaires on STIs, as occurs in Romania.

### **Bundle lubricant with Male and Female Condoms**

Bundling lubricants with condoms may be more marketable, and have a greater health impact, than selling lubricant, at first, as a stand-alone product. Projects about to be launched in Laos, for example, may help to demonstrate the value in bundling. Nonetheless, lubricant, in many cases, needs to be introduced to the market and bundling provides the message that it must be used with a condom. Furthermore, it may provide an incentive to buy more condoms and begin using the product to be effective in preventing HIV/STI transmission. Through brand extension, existing funds from a flagship condom can be used and the same distribution channels can be exploited, as is the case with *Love Plus Pleasure* in Romania and *Number One Deluxe Plus* in Laos. The lubricant can continue to be bundled or eventually marketed separately. Note: If lubricant is bundled with condoms, the PSI brand condom could be viewed as being substandard because it needs more lubricant. For social marketing whether this would hold true, campaigns should make the point that all condoms would ideally be used with lubricant. Another consideration, and perhaps weakness, related to bundling is that in

Cote d'Ivoire, for example, women are the purchasers of lubricant whereas men purchase condoms.

### **Target Sales to MSM and CSWs**

Experiences in Central America, Asia and Côte d'Ivoire suggest the reasonableness of targeting the product specifically to subpopulations practicing high-risk behaviors such as MSM and CSWs as it may maximize the public health impact – especially where program costs are a consideration. These were the groups that reacted most favorably to the product and demonstrated a clear need. In fact, Haiti research concluded it inadvisable to target the general population. The general population and those who do not self-identify with these groups although practice the behaviors, may be carefully targeted as well so as not to create a limited or negative identity for the lubricant. While financially more feasible because of targeting a specific market, targeting these MSM and CSWs, however, can further perpetuate the notion that lubrication is not necessary for those outside of these groups. The general public might consider reputation of lubricant (if only marketing one) as CSW or MSM-only product if the project only targets these groups.

### **Low Reservation Price and High Subsidy Need**

The price at which consumers, and particularly members of high-risk target groups (MSM and CSWs) are willing to buy lubricant is quite low in relation to the market price of the product. In Romania, CSWs are not targets because they cannot afford the marketed lubricant. In Côte d'Ivoire, participants in a feasibility study placed the reservation price at 500F, which is equivalent to only 7% of the actual market price of lubricant in Abidjan. In India, the cost of lubricant was cited to be unaffordable. The cost recoverability of the product is not yet known and there exists a need to highly subsidize lubricants (which is a costly venture as compared to subsidizing condoms), in order to meet the demands of high-risk consumers.

Feedback from the Bolivia project was that although it offered a lubricant at less than six to eight times the cost of the only other much larger volume lubricants on the market, raising the price would make it unaffordable (per unit ForPlay was already the most expensive). Even as the most expensive, the small packaged offering commanded more than 65% of the market. The Bolivia case demonstrates that smaller packaging can help make lubricant more affordable. Probably need to subsidize to reach high-risk groups. In India, for example, lubricant price will be an important determinant because male sex workers charge only two rupees a time, and even condoms remain beyond their means to purchase and use.<sup>8</sup> Another study in India and Bangladesh found that water-based lubricant was only available in large quantities at a relatively high price.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> UNAIDS, 2002.

<sup>9</sup> Sexual health of males in South Asia who have sex with other males: Results of situational assessments in four cities in India and Bangladesh. Research by Naz Foundation International (funded by FHI Asia); Synopsis by Tim Mackay, JSI UK (funded by DFID India).

### **Strong marketing campaigns**

Lubricant marketing experience in PSI shows that it is better to not rely solely on filling pipelines for existing need and NGO promotion. Marketing and education campaigns to promote lubricant purchase and use will need to promote functional and nonfunctional benefits and motivate behavior change.

Key messages to make through social marketing would be to:

- In conjunction with improved sex, persuade that wet sex should be or is the preferred form of sex (even if it is not—in some cases this needs to be certain to not come from a “Western” source as it can be viewed as an attempt to move men away from desiring “dry” sex so as to emasculate them);<sup>10</sup>
- Persuade that “wet” sex is more enjoyable for women—use lubricant for the sake of women;
- Inform that while there is an association between “messy” sex and oil-based lubricants, water-based lubricants are very different and significantly better—encourage trial;
- Advertise that lubricant improves sensation for men and reduces pain for women
- Promote commercial marketing messages that lubricant makes sex more enjoyable;
- Educate the population of the risks of drying agents;
- Promote the concept that lubricants improve the durability of the condom;
- Squelch the view that lubricant is a luxury item and rather it is essential to HIV/AIDS prevention – condoms and lubricant are peanut butter and jelly, or whatever is culturally applicable;
- Promote the importance of not using oil-based lubricants of any sort;
- Market lubricants as able to improve all condoms, thereby not undermining quality of PSI brand condom; and
- Inform how much lubricant to use and how to use it.<sup>11</sup>

Behavior change communication, in conjunction with local NGOs, could focus on:

- Against dry sex preparation (health factor)
- Against oil-based (and homemade) lubricants
- Against association of wet sex with easy women (social factor)

### **Procurement**

The only findings regarding procurement come from Romania where improvements to the procurement process were to divide the procurements and procure earlier to better ensure constant supply. Perhaps consider Astroglide, Vagisil or ViAmor before other brands for potential anti-HIV qualities. Be sure to negotiate with manufacturers for large

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<sup>10</sup> Hyena, Hank. “Dry Sex” worsens AIDS numbers in southern Africa: Sub-Saharanans’ disdain for vaginal wetness accelerates the plague. Dec. 1999.

<sup>11</sup> Smith, AM et al. “Does additional lubrication affect condom slippage and breakage?” *International Journal on STD and AIDS*. Jun, 9(6):330-5. Sexual practices will inform the amount of lubricant to use. For example, too much lubrication that may cause the condom to slip for vaginal sex but be just right for anal sex.

quantities of free samples to use in demand creation. No information was received for making procurement estimates as most projects were piloted. A guide might be that single use pillows (3 cc) generally serve one sex act and small tubes serve two.

### **Packaging**

There were no common or preferred findings regarding packaging other than preferences for something small and concealable. Programs might consider offering a combination of single-use packaging and bottles. Some specific feedback was provided from Cote d'Ivoire regarding preferences on bottle color and size. The Nigeria trial study shows that twist off disposable caps were not well received.

### **Product**

In Romania, the flavored lubricant is the faster selling lubricant. Flavored lubricant costs two cents more than plain lubricant. In Cote d'Ivoire, there were preferences for non-offensive scents such as strawberry and vanilla. Based on very little feedback, clear lubricant seems to be a preference among women, as colors are perceived to be damaging to the vagina. Some countries may have the capacity to produce lubricant.

### **Distribution**

Retailers may need incentives to carry lubricant, as found in the Romania project.

### **Stability**

Lubricant shelf life ranges from three to five years. Lubricant is stable in most conditions and can even be heated and withstand cold. As Andrew Piller (Bombay, India) is planning to have a lubricant manufactured locally, he would be a good contact for further questions on lubricant formulation and ideal packaging for stability.

### **Cost recovery/cost savings**

If country has little to no water-based lubricant on the market, consider introducing a higher-priced line to cross-subsidize. Invest targeting efforts with CSW and MSM for greatest impact if funds are limited. Biofilm might be a worthy organization to enter into a worldwide contract. It is interested in international work, supports non-profit organizations, does private labeling and is committed to HIV/AIDS prevention work.

### **Partnering**

To avoid inconsistent messages and combine efforts it would be beneficial to partner with local organizations working in HIV prevention and BCC of traditional harmful practices. Central America experience suggests monitoring closely any partners to ensure target groups are actually reached.

## ***C. PSI experience: What went right and what went wrong***

Projects have been considered in Haiti, Nigeria and Cote d'Ivoire. A project is underway in Romania and others are close to operation on Laos, Myanmar and Central America. West and Central Africa is now considering lubricants as well. The lessons to date,

though, come from PSI lubricant projects that are currently operational in Romania and have been implemented and now discontinued in Bolivia and Central America.

Determining what went right or wrong in these projects is dependent upon how you measure success. The social marketing project in Bolivia probably did not have in mind selling large amounts of lubricant, generating large revenues, being in a position to continue lubricant social marketing indefinitely and reaching target groups effectively, whereas the Central America project, with lubricant use as a goal probably did (although very little information was provided to really assess the strengths and weaknesses of the Central America project).

The following weaknesses of the PSI lubricant social marketing experience are generally related more to commitment, funding, planning and follow-up with some strengths found in marketing.

### **Strengths**

- Applying limited funds to target highest risk groups;
- Connected lubricant to the condom line – brand name and bundling (seems to work in Romania);
- Creating demand (Central America, Bolivia, and even through Nigeria’s trial study);
- Giving free samples (Romania); and
- Filling a market need with a desirable size of lubricant with 65% of the market (Bolivia).

### **Weaknesses**

- Two projects were more reactive than planned; either remedial work was done to preserve the program (Romania) or the program was discontinued (Bolivia);
- Lubricant may be less valued as a social marketing product and could arguably have received less attention than other products;
- Supply was not assured (Central America); other criticisms include poor distribution, too little marketing and promotion, including inadequate POP material, and a dependence on a BCC organization to reach high risk groups;
- Romania sites a general lack of initial planning;
- Bolivia reports that the lubricant should have been more attractive to consumers;
- Too little marketing and promotion in all cases was reported;
- Three projects made a study investment and did not or have not been able to follow through in spite of potential and need (Cote d’Ivoire, Nigeria, Haiti);
- Funding agencies need to be convinced of need/importance of lubricant; needs to be seen as hand in hand with condoms;
- Lubricant is too expensive for a key target group, CSWs, in Romania; and
- Too little effort was spent on explaining how to use lubricant in all cases.

## Summary of PSI experience

### Chart: PSI Worldwide Lubricant Experience (2002)

The following is a brief summary of PSI's marketing experience with lubricants by country:

Country/POP	Project	Product and Packaging	Target Groups	Reason	Price	Donor
<b>Researched but not implemented</b>						
Cote d'Ivoire/2002	Study/Possible launch in 2003	TBD – Focus group selected 85ml bottle, liked blue packaging	men and women, CSW, truckers, pharmacists	Address use of oil-based lubricants and condoms tearing	500F (\$.72)	
Haiti/	Study only/ Never launched because of inaffordability		MSM CSW	Reported condom breakage	Expense too high	
Nigeria/2002	Program on hold	10ml branded, pillow-packs, 3,000,000 plain	CSW		~N10?	
West and Central Africa/2002	Studying					
<b>Implemented and discontinued</b>						
Bolivia/1996 to 2002	Donated lubricant	99,400 of 8.5 ml <i>ForPlay</i> brand resealable tubes, initially packaged with female condom and later sold independently	MSM CSW	Received donation	Size affordable; per gram expensive	USAID
Central America/2000	Demand created through BCC but inadequate supply	<i>Rain</i>	CSW  MSM  General public	Lubricant use major program goal; reduce pain of CSWs; great market need	<b>Price (% of?)</b>	USAID

Country/POP	Project	Product and Packaging	Target Groups	Reason	Price	Donor
<b>Recently launched or about to launch</b>						
Central America/2002		<i>Vive Lubes</i> Single and twin pack sachets and tubes	CSW MSM General public	Lubricant use major program goal	<b>Price (% of?)</b>	USAID
Laos/2002	Pilot about to launch	100,000 <i>Number One Deluxe Plus</i> sachets; in pack with two condoms; later single tube	MSM			
Myanmar/2002		In pack with two condoms; later single tube				
Romania/ 2002 to present	Sells through outlets, target groups and gives samples	10ml branded, pillow-packs, 60,000 flavored, 40,000 plain <i>Love Plus Pleasure</i>  <i>Weekend</i> (lubes boxed with condoms)	MSM Youth 18-25	There were no lubricants on the market	\$.80/un it; too expensive for CSWs	PSI

### Haiti

In order to address reported problems of condom breakage in Haiti, PSI conducted a feasibility study to assess the viability of launching a product line of water-based lubricants. The study recommended that lubricants not be marketed to the general population. There was, however, evidence of potential demand among selected high-risk groups, namely CSWs and MSMs. As these groups are at greater risk of experiencing condom breakage and contracting HIV, and the costs of reaching them through existing channels would be modest, the potential health impact of a limited and targeted intervention may well be a good investment. It was, therefore, recommended that PSI test market an affordable water-based lubricant to CSWs and MSMs in Port au Prince in order to 1) determine the acceptability of lubricants among MSMs and CSWs and their clients; and 2) estimate the lubricant market size. There was no follow-up, however, to this study as the cost of lubricants was considered too high.

### Bolivia

The lubricant ForPlay was launched in April 1996 in Bolivia following the donation of 99,409 8.5 ml tubes to the program by USAID. No additional funding accompanied the commodity donation. The product was initially bundled with Reality female condom and then targeted as an independent product primarily at the gay community and commercial sex workers. The positioning of the product was to diminish barriers to condom use and to reduce the probability of lesions, tearing and irritation during sex acts. The product was marketed as a product compatible with condom use. ForPlay was a single use tube

for which a special cap was locally created to reseal the tube. The program has been discontinued because it would not generate enough income to contribute to PROSALUD's sustainability. It is also thought that the health impact was not considered significant enough and this was based on the low volume of sales. No other method of measuring impact was employed. Marketing and promotion for the program have always been weak according to current management and there is the opinion that it should have been presented differently, with a tube appropriate for either a one-off use, or had a top that was easy to take off and on, and that the packaging could have been much more attractive. Men were the primary purchasers of lubricant. The price for 8.5 g of ForPlay was 3.5 Bs. Demand in hotels was low yet high in sex-shops. Other findings in the study were that there is an unmet need for lubricants and there is a new, local producer of water-based lubricants. When ForPlay supply ends, many pharmacies will not have lubricant in stock.

### **Central America**

In Central America, PSI launched the lubricant, *Rain*, in June 2000. Sales have been halted as there is no support for commodity procurement. Increased use of water-based lubricants is part of PSI/Central America's four major goals (the other three are: consistent condom use, partner reduction, and STI referrals/treatment). All of PSI/Central America's BCC modules include messages on the technical advantages of lubricant use. A demand exists among CSWs for this product as a means of minimizing pain. The implementation of these BCC modules have resulted in repeated requests for lubricants from the target population. This has caused the problem of increased demand creation without being able to provide supply. Criticisms of the lubricant marketing includes poor distribution, too little marketing and promotion, including inadequate POP material, and a dependence on a BCC organization to reach high-risk groups. There is an urgent need, no readily accessible brand on the market and PSI/Central America wants to re-launch lubricants as soon as possible. The new marketing strategy is to extend the Vive brand male condoms, marketing the lubricant as Vive Lubes. Single sachets will be targeted to MSM, a larger tube to CSWs, and a twin pack of Vive male condoms plus lubricant (two of each) will be sold to the general public. Feedback from BCC activities support the use of lubes and, particularly among the smaller-sized market of the target populations.

### **Romania**

With no lubricants on the market in Romania, PSI/Romania launched its lubricant product Love Plus Pleasure in Romania in March 2002. Love Plus Pleasure is sold as part of the Love Plus Collection, which includes the normal Love Plus male condoms, and the Love Plus Sensations. PSI/Romania tries to sell all three products at the same fast moving goods outlets. The project plans to have a new presentation box in January 2003 called the Weekend that will include one box of each condom and several lubricants. PSI/Romania targets MSM and youth. IPC work with MSM has been done through a gay NGO, but PSI/Romania does not have the staff or funds to really do promotion directly with CSWs. Product considered too expensive for CSWs. The distributor sells the product through kiosks, small shops, cosmetic shops, and pharmacies. PSI/Romania's current media strategy includes articles for newspapers and magazines to increase

awareness on what the lubricants are and why they should use them. PSI/Romania has done some general promotion through the Love Plus Police activities along with distributing samples. Samples are handed out at events in bars, pubs, parks, discos, nightclubs and concerts in response to answering questions about STI/HIV/AIDS. PSI/Romania works with a local NGO to reach MSM. Sales have been slow and are slowly increasing (55,210 YTD with an annual goal of 160,000 in a population of 22 million). PSI/Romania is rethinking their marketing strategy to help bolster lubricant as a viable product and will have a new marketing plan by January. It is felt that a marketing launch of the program is necessary and will help to increase awareness of the use of lubricants. To better serve the retail marketing, the lubricant will need bar coding on the packaging and more incentives to encourage trade to carry lubricant. There is no long-term plan related to measuring impact.

**Cote d'Ivoire**

In Cote d'Ivoire, a feasibility study for a new water-based lubricant was conducted in 2002 in Abidjan and Bouaké with sexually active men and women, sex workers, truckers, and pharmacists. Roughly half of the respondents reported having used some sort of added lubrication (mostly shea butter, vaseline, and, to a lesser extent, saliva). The majority of respondents were not aware of the risks associated with use of oil-based lubricants. After having sampled the water-based lubricants, the study results were favorable. The study demonstrated the sales potential for water-based lubricants were good.

The results of the SWOT analysis conducted in Cote d'Ivoire are:

<p><b>Strengths</b>                  Functional benefits                  Reduces the risk of the condom tearing                  Prevents sores, cuts and pain                  Can increase pleurability                  Not messy/goopy                  Emotional benefits                  Non-offensive/acceptable odor, almost imperceptible                  Sleek, light                  Lucid                  Other strengths :                  By the few who do use the product, commercial gel lubricants (Manix, Vendome) are well-received</p>	<p><b>Weaknesses</b>                  The odor is sometimes deemed offensive or not strong enough                  Water-based lubricants are hardly utilized</p>
<p><b>Opportunities</b>                  There is a preference for wet sex in Cote d'Ivoire                  PSI/SFPS already has a presence in the contraceptive market                  The product is known among local suppliers                  The product has the potential to be popular/well-used                  Distribution can be coupled with existing network for condoms                  A possible synergy exists between the condom and this product</p>	<p><b>Threats</b>                  There are already exists strong competing brands                  Ignorance around the usage of water-based lubricants exists and among those who are familiar with the product, its use has not spread in Cote d'Ivoire                  Expensive                  The desired format does not correspond well with the buying power of the consumer (the</p>

<p>The product presentation is simple and has many positive attributes (a small quantity goes a long way, the tube open and closes easily, the design is nice).</p>	<p>price relative to quantity does not correspond well).</p>
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Women were identified as the primary purchasers of lubricant and main targets, however men are the main purchasers of condoms. Those who participated in the feasibility study said that they liked the non-offensive odor, sleek texture and transparent color of the product. The target groups preferred a transparent, 85 ml flip-top lidded container. (85 ml was considered to be “a reasonable quantity” by some respondents and the small size of the container allowed it to be stored easily and inconspicuously). The reservation price was set at 500 F (\$0.072), which is about 7% of the commercial price. Preferred distribution points were pharmacies, supermarkets and boutiques. The respondents felt that the pharmacy was the best place to buy the product. The study recommended that awareness around how to properly use the product and its strengths needed to be raised and could be coupled with condom campaigns.

At present, funding to purchase commodities is not available in Cote d’Ivoire; the project was not able to continue test marketing the product. It is anticipated that in the next year, lubricants will be launched.

**Laos**

In Laos, PSI is planning to launch lubricants as a brand extension to existing male condoms. The lubricant will initially be sold in a pack with two condoms. Once demand for the product is created, tubes of lubricants will be sold as stand-alone products.

This product will be called *Number One Deluxe Plus*. PSI/Laos has found a company in the Philippines that will be willing to sell a small quantity of lubricants (100,000 sachets) to pilot a project. A series of in-depth interviews are scheduled to target MSM. The Lao government does not recognize the existence of MSM and do not let organizations target them. PSI/Laos, however, plans to work through MSM networks and MSM communication agents to help raise awareness and extend outreach.

Provincial launches coincided with seasonal boat racing festivals in August and September. In October, a larger launch will take place with the Luang Festival. Due to government restrictions, the launches will not be high profile and the target group will not be overtly emphasized, though it is expected that work through MSM networks will have increased outreach to MSM.

**Myanmar**

As in Laos, PSI is planning to launch lubricants as a brand extension to existing male condoms. The lubricant will initially be sold in a pack with two condoms. Once demand for the product is created, tubes of lubricants will be sold as stand-alone products.

**Nigeria**

The Nigeria project is now on hold after reaching the point of selecting a manufacturer for 3 million lubricants. A summary of the CSW trial findings is included in Section E.

“What does formative research tell us about consumer desires, perceptions, needs, and existing behavior?”

**West and Central Africa**

PSI is studying the potential for lubricant marketing.

**D. Non-PSI lubricant marketing experience**

In addition to PSI’s lubricant programs, existing lubricant marketing includes:

- Non-PSI social marketing
- Commercial marketing
- Free distribution

Country/POP	Project	Product and Packaging	Target Groups	Reason/Marketing	Price	Impl/Donor
<b>Non-PSI social marketing experience</b>						
Philippines/2001	To launch		Youth?			DKT/DFID
Bombay, India/2001	To create and launch lubricant	1 million 200 ml branded sachets packaged in twos and upscale bottled brand	MSMs CSW Truckers	Response to need/ financial gain	Sachets @ 2 for 5 R. (\$0.10 US)/bottle @ higher price	DKT/
<b>Commercial marketing experiences</b>						
U.S.		Full range from samples to bottles, every flavor,	General population/ MSM, older women	Revenues/ Boost pleasure, address vaginal dryness	Varies widely, i.e., \$9 for a 35 ml bottle	

Country/POP	Project	Product and Packaging	Target Groups	Reason/ Marketing	Price	Impl/ Donor
<b>Free distribution</b>						
India/ 2000		New form of lubricant	MSM, Women partners of MSM			Mithrudu
Hong Kong/1990	Condom and lubricants—take kits to MSM frequented areas	Safe sex kits	MSM		Condoms and lubricant free of charge	AIDS Concern (HK NGO)/ HK AIDS Trust Fund
Papua New Guinea/ 1997-1999	Peer education and product distribution	10,000 single use sachets of Wet Stuff repackaged and branded <i>Swit Gris</i>	CSW Police	Acceptability expressed for lubrication and CSW health	Free of charge	PNG Institute of Medical Research / AusAID

## Non-PSI social marketing

Very little information was available on non-PSI social marketing projects.

### Philippines

With money from DFID, the Philippines DKT project will be introducing lubricants.

### Bombay, India

DKT in Bombay, India, will introduce lubricant products based on informal feedback received from other NGOs working with high-risk groups and as a way to generate revenue. The project is developing its own formulations and branding and package design. The strategy will consist of a basic brand packed in small sachets (of about 200 ml), selling for approximately 5 Rupees for two packs (about 10 US cents). The lubricant will have a very small margin with the goal of getting affordable lubricant out to various low-income high-risk groups (truckers, MSM, CSW, etc.). The sachets will be supplemented by an upmarket brand in a dispenser bottle, which will sell in larger cities targeting middle and high-income groups. Because of a very tight budget research and advertising and promotion will all be minimal. Other NGOs will be key to promotion efforts and helping to assess impact. The project will start by marketing 1 million sachets at very little financial risk, given the size of the Indian market.

## Commercial marketing

A large number of U.S. commercial lubricant companies offer to send free trials to encourage adoption. Commercial marketers also promote lubricants to be accessible to the general population for both improved sexual pleasure and “safer” sex (with the caveat

that the lubricant does not prevent HIV, but it does help to maintain the integrity of the condom). Astroglide markets itself as a way to “heighten pleasure and boost sensitivity.” Vagisil Intimate Moisturizer, popular for relieving vaginal dryness recently changed its name to Vagisil Intimate Lubricant to reflect its broadened market.

## **Free Distribution**

### **Hong Kong**

A Hong Kong project implemented by AIDS Concern, a local NGO, targeted MSM by making available sex kits (condoms and lubricant) free of charge. Initially, getting sites frequented by MSMs to distribute condoms and lubricant was difficult. Once convinced, other sites were reported to join in without difficulty.

### **Papua New Guinea**

The “Final Report to UNAIDS: Police and Sex Workers in Papua New Guinea” notes how lubricants were introduced after acceptability of the female condom demonstrated that couples appreciated a highly lubricated condom and consultation by sexual health specialists on the need for lubricants for sex workers. The Institute of Medical Research implements the program that procured 10,000 single use sachets of water-based lubricant Wet Stuff from Australia with AusAID funds. The lubricant was re-packaged and branded as “Swit Gris,” implying pleasure and slipperiness. CSW peer educators distribute the sachets free of charge.

Other free distribution programs were identified in Jamaica, India, South Africa, and Chad.

## ***E. What does formative research tell us about consumer desires, perceptions, needs, and existing behavior?***

Consumer practices do not necessarily account for consumer desires and vice versa, however here are some generalizations related to sex and lubrication.

- “Dry” sex, dry, abrasive vagina is desirable for intercourse
  - Many central and southern African countries, and Haiti, Saudi Arabia and Costa Rica
  - “Wet” sex is embarrassing
  - “Loose, slippery” vaginas are evidence of infidelity (Civic et al, 1996, and Hyena, 2002)
- Female Genital Mutilation
  - Reduced sexual pleasure may impair woman’s ability to lubricate
- Young women
  - Not fully mature and are physiologically at greater risk as the receptive partner
- Commercial sex work
  - Lubricant important to CSWs and often used

- Many homemade and oil-based types of “lubricant” used are inappropriate and put condom at risk for tearing
- As sex is work, ability to lubricate may be affected
- Anal sex
  - Higher HIV vulnerability (10.3 times higher adjusted per-act risk than vaginal sex<sup>12</sup>) resulting from friction and lack of lubrication
  - There is a desire for an affordable, acceptable and appropriate lubricant for MSM
  - High percent of heterosexual anal intercourse around the world (Asia, Latin America, Caribbean, U.S.)
- Inappropriate lubrication practices
  - Widely studied and demonstrated that oil-based lubrication damages the integrity of and protection provided by condoms (causing slippage)
- Product qualities
  - Ranging from free of smell and taste to non-offensive odor (strawberry or vanilla)
  - Clear, transparent liquid preferred
- Purchasers/Users
  - Some countries women; others men
  - One who purchases condom may not be one who purchases lubricant
  - Many are intimidated by making use of lubricants because of lack of information

### **Lubricant perceptions from the Nigeria CSW lubricant trial study**

Four different cities in Nigeria CSWs were asked to try ForPlay (8.5ml. tube with twist off cap) lubricant with their customers. Of the customers, 45% reacted positively to trying the lubricant and all customers agreed to try it. Almost all the CSWs found the lubricant easy to apply and only 10% encountered any problems. Of the 10% with problems encountered the problems cited were: That when the lubricant dries it is too gummy; clients did not release on time; it’s too watery; it burst the condom; it dried during sex; problems opening the lubricant; the tube of lubricant drained away; and the container was too hard.

CSWs estimated that one half of a tube of lubricant lasted for between 2 and 7 rounds of sex. In justifying the lubricant to clients, most (37%) CSWs explained that the lubricant would keep the condom from breaking. About 20% said that it increases sensitivity and another 20% said it reduces friction. More than 91% said the lubricant met these three expectations (preventing breakage, increasing sensitivity and reducing friction). Most liked the product, with 7% saying they disliked that the tube had no replaceable cap. Most clients (40%) made no comment about the lubricant and 33% said they liked it. CSWs felt they had the most to gain from the lubricant and liked it because it made sex easy. 92% of CSWs felt they should pay for the lubricant and 100% said they would use lubricant if available. Acceptable pricing ranged from N5 to N10; with very little preference for the same price for lubricants bundled with condoms. Almost 37% of

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<sup>12</sup> D. Halperin, 2002.

CSWs felt they would need a tube per day, with about 20% needing two per day. Preference was to purchase lubricant from the chemist or pharmacy because that is where condoms are sold.

## **F. Target groups: Mass market, CSW, MSM, youth, prisoners, etc.**

### **Mass market**

Benefits to targeting the mass market are:

- Large impact;
- General public probably needs to use lubricant (women – many factors can mean not sufficient lubrication and with use of condoms men do not contribute to the lubrication needed);
- Should microbicides be brought to market, the energy and expense creating a market for lubricants would be in place;
- Association with lubricant use not stigmatized by marketing focused only on CSWs and MSM; and
- The volume of lubricant purchased could mean greater discounts.

Some difficulties of making lubricants for a mass market are:

- Obtaining and maintaining adequate supply (funding issues);
- Packaging type may need to be different for targeted groups; and
- Creating demand through mass media and inability to meet demand and/or poor distribution

### **Commercial sex workers and men who have sex with men (MSM)**

There are clear reasons to target CSWs and MSM, as identified in most every PSI lubricant project:

- High-risk groups get to the heart of a high volume of HIV transmission – most epidemiologically relevant;
- Projects with limited lubricant supply can maximize impact on HIV transmission;
- These groups are likely to find commercial lubricant, if available, unaffordable; and
- CSWs have their “outreach” by introducing lubricants to clients.

Other groups to consider targeting include:

### **Youth**

Among this group are found inappropriate practices (using oil-based lubricants, if any), young women are at increased risk for HIV given they are still developing, and instilling a preference for “wet” sex (where “dry” sex is an issue) at this age (if sexually active).

### **Prisoners**

In most countries, among prisoners there is a higher rate of HIV/AIDS infection in prison systems than that of the general population. While condoms may be distributed free of

charge, lubricants are less likely to be. If social marketing projects already have accounts with prisons systems for condoms, the case could be made to introduce lubricants. UNAIDS has issued a statement that it is “vital that condoms, together with lubricant, should be readily available to prisoners.”<sup>13</sup>

### **“Pimps”**

The Romania project reports that CSWs are difficult to reach because of the control of pimps. A business case could be made with pimps in the value of condoms and lubricant.

### **Female partners of MSM**

As MSM are already being targeted for anal sex, it would be relevant to target them for the benefits of lubricant in vaginal sex.

### **Truckers and police**

Cote d’Ivoire and Papua New Guinea include these populations for lubricant use adoption.

## ***G. Product issues: different types, costs, manufacturers, product differences***

### **Types of over the counter lubricants**

#### **Water-based lubricants**

Generally, PSI procures water-based lubricants because they are both safe when used with latex condoms and inexpensive. Water-based condom lubricants are largely made up of de-ionized water into which glycerin, polymers and antibacterial agents are added. Other additives can be safely included in novelty lubricants. Most of these additives enhance taste, smell, or well-being properties (Aloe, Vitamin E). Water-based lubricants can become sticky and after time may need to be reactivated with water. It is not usually necessary to apply more lubricant. The shelf life of water-based lubricants is three to five years. Liquid Silk water-based lubricant, known for not getting sticky as it dries, contains no glycerin but some silicone.<sup>14</sup> Lubricants would ideally not contain glycerin/sugar as this has been known to cause irritation and yeast infections. This should be taken into consideration when considering flavored lubricants because they will contain sugar.

Of note, is that of 22 water-based lubricants studied, three: ViAmor, Vagisil Intimate Lubricant and Astroglide, demonstrated anti-HIV qualities by being non-irritating (i.e., not detergents like N-9); highly effective against both HIV-infected leukocytes (white blood cells) suspended in seminal fluid and active against cell-free HIV, under *in vitro* conditions (in a test tube). These lubricants cannot be publicly promoted for their anti-HIV qualities, however, when procuring lubricants it may be sensible to first consider

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<sup>13</sup> UNAIDS.

<sup>14</sup> Liquid Silk website

one of these brands.<sup>15</sup> As Astroglide is one of the best selling brands of lubricant in the U.S. it seems reasonable to expect that if it were behaving like lubricants with N-9 this would generally be known.

FHI's 1998 "Reasons to Have Confidence in Condoms" states that water-based lubricants may increase slippage but the protective effort against breakage outweighs the risk of increased slipping.

Water based lubes are the most simple lubricants to clean up as they simply need a rinse with water; most are non-staining as well.

Water-based cream and gel lubricants are also available and might be considered for MSM populations.

### **Silicone-based lubricants**

Silicone-based lubricants are safe for use with latex condoms, do not require repeat applications and do not get sticky. They have a longer shelf life than water-based lubricants. Silicone-based lubricants however, are often more expensive than oil or water-based lubricants, usually making it more difficult to market.

### **Oil-based and petroleum-based lubricants**

As mentioned, oil-based lubricants are safe only with plastic condoms, such as female condoms, and are not safe with latex condoms. Oil-based lubricants include a variety of cosmetic and food products.

#### **Safe with All Condoms**

Aloe-9<sup>®</sup>  
AquaLube<sup>®</sup>  
AstroGlide<sup>®</sup>  
deLube<sup>®</sup>  
ForPlay<sup>®</sup>  
glycerin  
Gynol II<sup>®</sup>  
H-R<sup>®</sup> lubricating jelly  
K-Y<sup>®</sup> Jelly  
PrePair<sup>®</sup>  
silicone lubricant  
Touch<sup>®</sup> Personal Lubricant  
Vagisil Intimate Lubricant<sup>®</sup>  
ViAmor<sup>®</sup>  
water and saliva  
Wet<sup>®</sup>

#### **Unsafe with Latex Condoms**

baby oil  
cold creams  
Cornhuskers<sup>®</sup> lubricant  
edible oils (olive, peanut, corn, sunflower)  
head and body lotions  
massage oils  
mineral oil  
petroleum jelly (any petroleum-based products)  
shortening  
suntan oil and lotions  
Bag Balm<sup>®</sup>  
whipped cream  
certain vaginal yeast infection medications

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<sup>15</sup> Baron, S. 2001.

## Manufacturers

Despite a few small lubricant programs scattered throughout the PSI portfolio, only three lubricant procurements have come through PSI Washington since 2001.<sup>16</sup> Of those three, two are new procurements in the early stages.

The procurement of 100,000 10ml pillow-packs of lubricant for Romania marked PSI Washington's most recent venture into the commodity. The procurement which included 60,000 10ml pillow-packs of branded, flavored lubricant and 40,000 10ml pillow-packs of branded, plain lubricant, totaled \$18,913.64. Current procurements include 3 million 10ml pillow-packs for Nigeria and 100,000 bottles/tubes of 40ml and 60 ml for Côte d'Ivoire.

Manufacturers will often provide a quantity of free samples with purchases to be used in marketing and this is a negotiating point.

Unlike condom manufacturers and pharmaceutical companies, independent lubricant manufacturers are generally small companies with little, if any experience working with social marketing organizations. Often times, they are unable to work under the same financial conditions placed upon larger vendors.

Some condom manufacturers however, do produce their own lubricants. These manufacturers are well versed with humanitarian agencies and social marketing organizations, including PSI. Nonetheless, they have do have limited expertise with lubricant production and packaging.

Where there are no companies producing lubricants another consideration to importing lubricants would be to have lubricant locally produced. Lubricant ingredients are widely found and inexpensive. Lead researcher Samuel Baron of the University of Texas Medical School remarks that the compounds are so inexpensive that they would be "perfect for marketing in developing countries."<sup>17</sup>

<b>Known manufacturers of water-based condom lubricant made without N-9:</b>	<b>Condom manufacturers that produce lubricant:</b>
Westridge Laboratories (ID)	Hankook
Trigg Laboratories (WET)	Unidus
Trimensa	Innolatex
Davryan Lubricants (Probe)	Condomi Erfurt
Biofilm (Astroglide)	Ansell/Suretex
Combe, NY (Vagisil Intimate Lubricant)	Durex (Durex Sensilube)
WomenFirst Healthcare Inc. (ViAmor)	

<sup>16</sup> Romania SA00-00069, Nigeria 0249-LUB-2033-133-004, Cote d'Ivoire TBD

<sup>17</sup> Baron, S et al. Practical Prevention of Vaginal and Rectal Transmission of HIV by Adapting the Oral Defense: Use of Condom Lubricants. *AIDS Research and Human Retroviruses*. Vol. 17; No. 11; 997-1002. 2001.

**Manufacturing information from Biofilm**

Biofilm is a manufacturer solely of Astroglide lubricant in California. Regarding the integrity of lubricants, it reports that the shelf life of the product is 4.5 years and probably longer. Regarding stability the product is durable and can even be slightly heated, with no issues with extreme heat or cold, although room temperature is recommended. Astroglide has moved from pillow packs for sampling to 3cc foils of 1 application. Tubes provide approximately 2 applications. Bottled lubricant is sold in clear bottles in boxes. (Astroglide entered into an agreement to bundle its lubricant with Durex, however Durex was not reciprocating the bundling. No other disadvantage was reported about bundling. Astroglide will be coming out with its own condom brand next year.) Astroglide has nonprofit pricing and has sent PSI pricing and materials. Contact person is Kathy Geddes (Kathy@biofilm.com).

**Costs of lubricants**

PSI programs have imported lubricants to date, with the possible exception of Central America. Of note is that lubricants may be less expensive if obtained locally..

**Chart: Manufacturers and Costs of Lubricants**

The following represents the quoted prices for lubricant procured through PSI Washington in the last two years:

Lubricant Suppliers:	Westridge Lab.	Trimensa	Suretex/ Ansell	Trigg Lab.	Condomi Erfurt	Davryan Lab.	Inno-latex	Unidus
<b>Romania April 2001/ Selected Westridge Laboratories</b>								
10ml branded, pillow-packs, 60,000 Flavored,	\$0.16	declined to bid						
10ml branded, pillow-packs, 40,000 Plain	\$0.14	declined to bid						
<b>Nigeria June 2002/ Selected Trigg Laboratories</b>								
10ml branded, pillow-packs, 3,000,000 plain	\$0.125		size not avail.	\$0.13	no response	declined to bid		
<b>Cote d'Ivoire 2002/ TBD</b>								
2 oz. branded tube with flip top cap	\$1.40						Pricing Not Avail.	
2 oz. branded bottle with flip top cap		\$0.997		\$1.40				
50ml branded tube with flip cap top			\$0.485					

Lubricant Suppliers:	Westridge Lab.	Trimensa	Suretex/ Ansell	Trigg Lab.	Condomi Erfurt	Davryan Lab.	Inno-latex	Unidus
50ml unbranded tube with flip cap top					\$0.52			
60ml branded tube with flip top cap								\$1.20

**New developments**

- Seema Pharmaceuticals, Mumbai, is developing a new water-based lubricant with an insertion-based technology (anal insertion based on suppository technology).
- A heavily lubricated spiral condom specifically created for anal sex.

***H. Packaging issues: pillow packs, bottles***

To date, PSI Washington has only procured 10ml pillow-packs with twist open tops. These pillow-packs are intended for one-time, single use purposes. The most recent lubricant requisition for Cote d’Ivoire is for larger, multi-application tubes. Although the procurement department has only received requests for these two packaging types, it is important to note that lubricant can be packaged in a variety of different containers with different caps and tops. Formative research will identify packaging that will best suit the populations they wish to target. The following packaging qualities might be considered:

- **Single use pillow-packs or foils**
  - More affordable day to day
  - Good for providing samples
  - Can be nicely bundled with condoms
  - Small and discreet
- **Tubes and bottles**
  - Cheaper per use
  - Good for high volume use

**Variety of available packaging**

*Container Type:* Single-use pillow-packs or foils, tubes, bottles

*Container Size:* (differ between manufacturers, numbers rounded) 10ml, 25ml, 59ml, 70ml, 100ml, 140ml, 200ml, 240ml, 281ml, 300ml, and 518ml

*Container Color:* clear, clear/colored, non-colored/opaque, colored/opaque, or colored/non-opaque

*Tops and Lids:* single-use tops, flip-tops, screw caps, twist-tops, pumps

*Single-use pillow-packs and foils*



*Tubes*



*Bottles*



**PSI lubricants (pictures of packaging requested)**

*ForPlay*

*Love Plus Pleasure*

*Cote d'Ivoire (focus group selected 85ml – largest of four choices; ID bottle pictured above)*

*Rain*

*Number one Deluxe Plus*

**Packaging information**

The Cote d'Ivoire study identified desired packaging information as:

- The manufacturing methods;
- The name of the manufacturer;
- How to use the product;
- Manufactured and expiration dates;
- Possible side effects;
- Price; and
- Sales points.

In addition, packaging should include disclaimers about preventing HIV and other STIs.

### ***I. Positioning issues: Bundle with condom or not, share brand name or not***

The main position issues (with variations along continuums of each of these) are whether to position the lubricant as:

- A health product—improving the safety in safer sex--versus strictly enhancing sexual pleasure;
- Linking the lubricant by brand name to and/or bundling with an existing condom versus marketing the lubricant as an independent product to be used with any condom; and
- Positioning the lubricant as something to be used by high-risk groups (CSWs and MSM) versus the general public.

Other options include marketing multiple varieties of packaged lubricant, each with different positioning.

Lubricants cannot be positioned to prevent transmission of HIV and should always be promoted as a supplement to condom use.

PSI programs have attempted to position lubes in a number of ways, including the following strategies:

#### ***Bundling with condoms (male and female)***

PSI/Bolivia gave free samples of ForPlay in a bundle package with its female condom product, Reality. And, as mentioned above, PSI/Asia plans on selling lubricant in a pack with two condoms, packaging the lubricant in the same dimensions as a condom. Many of PSI's programs are finding that there is inadequate funding to build equity in new, stand-alone brand names for lubricant. PSI/Romania is experiencing the difficulties of selling lubricant as a stand-alone product. Bundling with condoms allows a program to use existing funds for a flagship condom brand to promote the brand extension. This also allows for movement of large quantities of lubricant through existing condom distribution systems with minimum added burden. By co-packaging condoms with lubricants, the perception of lubricant as an AIDS-prevention product and not merely that of a financial luxury, is reinforced. If the lubricant is not bundled, marketing efforts will need to emphasize that the lubricant needs to be used with condoms and while the lubricant does not contain Nonoxynol-9, using lubricant alone should be avoided.<sup>18</sup>

In Laos and Myanmar, PSI markets condoms in 3-packs and is considering removing one of the condoms and inserting a 6 cc sachet of lubricant in the same dimension of the condom, thereby introducing the 2 + 1 pack as a brand extension of the existing brand.

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<sup>18</sup> Although nonoxynol-9 (N-9) fights HIV, it does not inhibit virus replication. In addition, N-9 use results in genital irritation, actually causing the outer most epithelial layer of cells to be shed from the vagina or rectum. This damage provides a more direct route for HIV into the blood stream (Baron, S. 2001).

### ***Targeting CSWs***

PSI/Cote d'Ivoire is planning on doing extensive outreach and focusing BCC and IEC campaigns to increase lubricant use among CSWs.

### ***A Pleasurable Product that Makes Safe Sex More Sexy***

Positioning lubricants is tricky; marketing it as a pleasure product, as is commonly done, does not highlight its health benefits. At the same time, it is important to stress that lubricant must be used with a condom in order to strengthen "safety" in safe sex.

Other positioning possibilities:

### ***The right alternative to using homemade and oil-based lubrication with condoms***

This position focuses on messages against oil-based and homemade lubrications (petroleum jelly, hand lotion, or mineral/vegetable oils).

### ***A product that reduces the pain experienced by women***

This is in contrast to a lubricant that is promoted as making sex more pleasurable for women as in some cultures pleasure for women is not the goal.

### ***A product integral to condom use***

Not a luxury product...

### **Sharing or linking the brand name with condom**

Sharing the brand name with the condom is the plan in Romania, Laos, Myanmar, yet it is too soon to make any conclusions about the benefits or harm. There does not seem to be any actual negative repercussions to this and costs have been saved, as well as benefiting from the goodwill and existing retail and consumer markets of the condom. The risks could include implying that the condom was substandard and that people would not see the lubricant as something that should be used with any condom brand. Also, if a female condom is marketed under a very different brand name than the male condom, it might be wise to choose an altogether different name for the lubricant.

## ***J. Why should we market lubes (and why not), what can we expect as a result, how to measure "impact"***

The reasons to market lubricants are of worth in and of themselves and increasingly so in combination. Lubricants can:

- Increase the acceptability and use of condoms (with lubricant condom is less noticeable to both partners and sex is more comfortable for women);
- Help to ensure the integrity of the condom thereby improving HIV/AIDS (and pregnancy and other STIs) transmission prevention; and
- Be used as a product to tie to BCC that addresses the widespread traditional harmful practice of preparation for and act of "dry" sex.

Reasons not to market lubricants primarily surround cost:

- Effort and cost to develop market in certain countries;
- Cost of subsidizing the lubricant so that it may be affordable;
- Difficulty finding donors to fund lubricant marketing and/or time spent convincing donors; and
- Inability to sustain a program after investing in/creating a demand.

The possible results of successfully marketing lubricants include they:

- Increase confidence in and sales of condom;
- With BCC, they help to act on changed perceptions of “dry” sex;
- Reduce number of condoms broken;
- Reduce practice of using oil-based lubricants;
- Reduce transmission of HIV and other STIs; and
- Increase pleasure.

The projects reviewed in this report did not have any measures to account for impact other than impact on any revenues affecting the sustainability of a program (Bolivia).

Measuring impact could be assessed through research of self-reporting on:

- Reduced condom breakage;
- Reduced condom slippage (former oil-based lubricant users);
- Reduced lesions;
- Improved sexual pleasure (decreased pain for women; increased sensitivity for men and women);
- Reduced practice of preparing for “dry” sex;
- Reduced practice of engaging in “dry” sex; and
- Increased condom use.

Research could also follow any correlations between lubricant sales and increases in condom sales. Anecdotal information from partnering NGOs may also help to assess impact.

### ***K. Lubricant social marketing research issues***

Areas for more research and follow-up include:

- Monitoring and reporting sales activity compared with marketing efforts
- Consumer research (affordability, preferences in formulation, packaging)
- Impact data (User reporting on practices; feedback from partner NGOs)
- Packaging (single use foil versus plastic pillow pack)
- Potential donors

### ***L. Donor Interest in Funding Lubricants***

Donors do not appear to have lubricants as a funding priority; however, donor literature refers to condoms and lubricant use as going hand in hand.

“Condoms must be used for vaginal and anal inter-course for HIV prevention. Condoms with lubrication (slippery liquid or gel) already on them are less likely to tear during handling or use. If the condom is not lubricated enough, a ‘water-based’ lubricant, such as silicone or glycerin, should be added. If such lubricants are not available, saliva can be used. Lubricants made from oil or petroleum (cooking oil or shortening, mineral or baby oil, petroleum jellies such as Vaseline, most lotions) should never be used because they can damage the condom. A well-lubricated condom is absolutely essential for protection during anal intercourse.”  
(UNICEF)

Should PSI choose to continue to pursue lubricant social marketing, as the foremost condom social marketer it is positioned to advocate and inform donors on the value of funding lubricant social marketing. Condom social marketing programs’ existing marketing and distribution channels are already conducive to lubricant marketing and program research could easily accommodate questions on lubricant use and begin to create the missing information on effectiveness.

Donors that have actively funded lubricant marketing include AusAID and DFID (about to in the Philippines), and USAID in Central America. The USAID donation of lubricants in Bolivia was an effort to distribute extra lubricant with N-9. UNICEF is also known to support lubricant distribution. UNAIDS, while not funding lubricants, has made statements as to their importance in conjunction with condoms.

Some donors (foundations, UNIFEM) may be interested in women’s issues and harmful traditional practices as much as they are HIV prevention and may be interested in funding lubricant marketing. The lubricant would be the product to associate with the necessary behavior change.

To improve funding possibilities, some recommendations are to:

- Collect and synthesize impact data;
- Include lubricant expenses as a given in condom social marketing budgets presented to donors; and
- Nurture any contacts within donor agencies to look at the advantages of lubricants and their potential for paving the way for the future market of microbicides.

### ***Random notes***

- Where lubricant is considered to be too messy, market it with a couple of baby wipes
- Lubricant market in South Asia and Brazil thought to be wide open

## **Attachment 1: Dry sex practices and condom use**

### Dry sex and vaginal drying: Harmful practices?

The use of herbs and other substances to dry and tighten the vagina for sexual intercourse is known as "dry sex." Dry sex practices have been identified in South Africa, Senegal, Zaire, Cameroon, Malawi, Zambia, Kenya, Zimbabwe, Nigeria, Saudi Arabia, Indonesia, Malaysia, Haiti, and Costa Rica (Kun, 1998; Hull, 2001). Rates of practice often are high: for example, in Zimbabwe, 80 percent of commercial sex workers interviewed, 93 percent of health clinic attendees, and 80 percent of nurses had used a drying agent at least once (Civic, 1996).

Dry sex preparation can entail inserting herbal leaves or powders, commercial products (for example, toothpaste, antiseptics, or soap), ground stones, or cloth into the vagina either on a regular basis or before sexual intercourse. These substances may or may not be left in the vagina during intercourse (Sandala, 1995; Sayagues, 1998).

Women engage in these practices for many reasons, not always directly related to sexual intercourse. However, the common theme among practicing cultures is that dry sex practices create a vagina that is dry, tight, and heated--all desirable qualities for men in many countries. Wives express the need to please their husbands with dry sex in order to keep them from leaving and/or to minimize their number of girlfriends. Focus groups with men indicate this may often be the reality (Van de Wijgert, 1999). Sex workers aim to please their clients with dry sex. Some women report that the experience of dry sex is pleasurable for women as well; others report the opposite (Civic, 1998; Sandala, 1995). Men sometimes report mixed feelings about the pleasures of dry sex--but may express a dislike of vaginal fluids that keeps them from considering other options (Ray, 1996).

### **Cultural Beliefs**

Cultural beliefs about the vagina and reproductive health play a role in dry sex practices. Within the Shona culture, for example, female vaginal fluids are considered unclean, and their removal often is seen as important to creating a clean environment for fertilization. By douching or using dry sex agents, women also believe they are also strengthening the body, preventing reproductive disease, and toning pelvic muscles (Runganga, 1995). In addition to drying out the vagina for sexual, hygienic, or artistic reasons, agents may be used to specifically prevent and treat sexually transmitted diseases and vaginal infections, itching, and discharge. Older sex workers in Nigeria use ground tobacco leaves for this purpose (Dallabetta, 1995).

In addition to the physical effects, many women believe drying agents act as an aphrodisiac that causes their partners to think about them often, and cause attraction (Sayagues, 1998; Civic, 1998). In some places, men also use aphrodisiacs in the form of

similar herbs and commercial products. These may either be taken by mouth or applied directly to the penis (Ray, 1996).

### **The implications of dry sex practices on reproductive health programs**

Dry sex practices have implications for reproductive health programs. For example, dry sex practices can affect condom use, as dryness of the vagina may lead to condom breakage. (In an effort to prevent breakage, couples sometimes use Vaseline as a lubricant, but Vaseline also can cause condom breakage.) Also, individuals practicing dry sex may believe that they need to have skin-to-skin, condom-free sex (Civic, 1997; Sandala, 1995; Baleta, 1998). Some programs in Africa are considering the increased promotion of spermicides, given their potential to protect against disease and prevent pregnancy. It may be difficult to promote spermicide use (or, ultimately, microbicide use) where dry sex is the norm, however (Dallabetta, 1995; Baleta, 1998; Kun, 1998).

Various programming approaches must be considered in conjunction with sound knowledge of local dry sex issues. Women and their partners should be educated about the potential risks of certain drying agents and products. If local drying agents are found to be especially dangerous, less problematic local alternatives may need to be promoted (for instance, cold water may be viewed as an acceptable drying agent in Zimbabwe) (Civic, 1996). The health risks of douching also should be considered (PATH/*Outlook*, 1997). Since information on dry sex often is passed down through traditional channels, community-based interventions may be useful in changing beliefs and practices (Sandala, 1995). Programs must work to develop sensitive approaches that incorporate culturally specific sexual values as well as healthy behaviors. Male community members, as well as females, should be involved these efforts. (For more information about gender issues and men's involvement in reproductive health, see RHO's Gender and Sexual Health and Men and Reproductive Health sections).

Taken from PATH RHO website, 2002

***Attachment 2: Ansell consumer lubricant questions and use instruction material***