



# TECHNICAL BRIEF

THE MANOFF GROUP

## HIV/AIDS

### Behavior change for effective prevention, care, and treatment

The Manoff Group has applied its innovative behavior-centered approach to many aspects of the HIV/AIDS pandemic, tailoring activities to each context. Our prevention work results in reduced infection risk, and we are achieving sustainable improvements in practices related to the care and treatment of people living with HIV/AIDS.

#### Targeted Prevention Strategies

The Manoff Group's prevention approach focuses on behavior change activities that reduce high-risk behaviors and infection rates in vulnerable populations. Our prevention work encompasses five main areas:

##### 1. Reducing risk for adolescents

The Manoff Group recognizes adolescents are a particularly vulnerable, diverse group with changing needs. Our strategies for youth include: Safe School Contracts in Uganda designed to prevent intergenerational sex, and "Cool Parent Guides" in Malawi and Uganda to help parents discuss the facts of HIV/AIDS with their younger adolescent children.

##### 2. Promoting condom use

Dual protection strategies emphasize the benefits of condoms for pregnancy and HIV/AIDS prevention. Formative research reveals the benefits that will resonate with target groups. For adolescents, pregnancy prevention may be the most compelling motivator, while police officers, for example, are concerned about preventing HIV/AIDS transmission. The Manoff Group has tailored messages to promote condom use among high-risk groups such as *boda boda* drivers in Uganda, police in El Salvador, and adolescents in Uganda.

##### 3. Comprehensive PMTCT

We have developed special expertise in Prevention of Mother-to-Child Transmission (PMTCT), which encompasses family planning, administration of Nevirapine, and proper young

child feeding practices. Our approach for HIV-positive women includes targeted counseling and appropriate family planning. For HIV-infected pregnant women, prevention activities start before birth with proper pregnancy and delivery care. These strategies are outlined in a discussion paper produced under the CHANGE project: "A Behavior Change Perspective on Integrating PMTCT and Safe Motherhood Programs."

We have also promoted counseling on optimal breastfeeding practices and developed counseling materials for healthcare providers to use with mothers to minimize transmission risk. In addition, we have developed tools to support counseling of HIV-infected mothers who choose early breastfeeding cessation.

*We developed "Cool Parent Guides" to help parents discuss the facts of HIV/AIDS with their children.*

##### 4. Injection safety

Our prevention work also includes reducing medical transmission of HIV and other blood-borne diseases through promoting safe injection practices. In Malawi and Zambia, we are working with healthcare providers and communities to promote appropriate injection and medical waste practices, including using community dramas to encourage people to avoid unnecessary injections and obtain necessary ones, and to report medical waste in their communities.

## 5. Awareness and advocacy

Effective prevention begins with knowledge. Through discussions, socio-dramas, and reminder materials for police in El Salvador, we have worked to increase awareness of the facts of HIV/AIDS and prevention strategies. We also advocated for increased access to testing and trained counselors in support of this effort. In Ghana, we developed and implemented a communications campaign aimed at men to increase awareness of and prevent risky behavior. In Uganda, we organized a national tribute concert in honor of Philly Lutaaya, a well-known musician and the first prominent Ugandan to give a human face to HIV/AIDS.

### Care of HIV-affected Individuals

The Manoff Group has worked to enhance the lives of People Living with HIV/AIDS (PLWHA), their families, and community members through improved nutrition and health practices and through activities to reduce stigma and discrimination. We have worked to improve the nutritional status of HIV-affected individuals, including drafting national guidelines for nutritional care and support for infants and children living with HIV/AIDS in Rwanda and behavior change activities to improve sanitation practices and hygiene behaviors among families with PLWHA in Uganda.

*VCT activities include training on how to discuss test results with a partner.*

PLWHA suffer from discrimination often based on incorrect assumptions. The Manoff Group participated in the development of a stigma reduction toolkit that is now in use worldwide: “Understanding and Challenging HIV Stigma: Toolkit for Action.”

Fears and uncertainties surrounding disclosure can prevent PLWHA from receiving the support and care they need. Our behavior change activities to encourage Voluntary Counseling and Testing (VCT)

have included training on how to discuss test results with a partner. We have also conducted research to help parents and children overcome obstacles to disclosure in a variety of situations. In addition, we have trained medical professionals on proper client-provider interaction and disclosure.

### Key Practices for Effective Treatment

As Anti-Retroviral Therapy (ART) programs scale up worldwide, there is increased concern about treatment adherence. Even when these life-saving drugs are available, significant barriers remain to daily lifelong adherence. The Manoff Group’s formative research and experience in Behavior-Centered Programming<sup>sm</sup> and social marketing are ideal for addressing these barriers, which include stigma, health care, drug access, and management of side effects. In addition, a widespread barrier to long-term adherence is feeling better, as this often causes HIV-infected individuals to stop treatment.

Remembering to do something and how to do it is a common barrier to adhering to medical regimens. As a result, we have gained specific expertise in the development of targeted reminder materials on a variety of topics—including iron tablets, child nutrition, and child health danger signs—to help individuals follow medical instructions.

### Projects and Partners Worldwide

Our global HIV/AIDS work has involved a wide range of partners and has been largely funded by USAID under the President’s Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR). Relevant country projects (and our contracting partners) include UPHOLD in Uganda (JSI); Medical Injection Safety Project in Zambia (Chemonics); Making Medical Injections Safer in Mozambique (JSI); and the Ghana Sustainable Change Project (AED). Global projects include SCMS (Partnership for Supply Chain Management, Inc.); BASICS (Partnership for Child Health Care, Inc.); CHANGE (AED); and the Hygiene Improvement Project (AED).

### About The Manoff Group, Inc.

The Manoff Group, Inc. creates and applies innovative strategies to improve behaviors that enhance and save lives. We were pioneers in integrating behavior change into programs, and a leader in action research, strategic communications, skills-based training, and capacity building. For 40 years, our work with individuals, families, communities, and partner institutions has achieved lasting change.

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