

What is CARISMA II?



Introduction

In the Caribbean, an estimated 230,000 men, women and children live with HIV.¹ With an HIV prevalence rate second only to sub-Saharan Africa, AIDS is the leading cause of death among adults aged 15 to 44 in the region. Substantial socio-economic disparities compound the HIV epidemic as the highest-risk populations confront significant barriers of access to health information, products and services.

Since CARISMA's inception in 2005, partner programmes in the countries we work in have targeted high-risk zones and populations with their condom social marketing and behaviour change communication campaigns. By making condoms more readily available, and by providing the necessary health information and social support to enable consistent condom use, CARISMA has already helped make HIV prevention a reality for previously underserved communities.

Successes from CARISMA phase I

During Phase I, CARISMA partners in Jamaica, Haiti, the Eastern Caribbean, Belize and the Dominican Republic conducted an unprecedented range of studies of condom access, including condom affordability, availability, quality of condom outlets, and equity of access to condoms. Not only has this research helped to respond to outstanding logistical and distribution challenges, but it has also enabled participating social marketing organisations (SMOs) to effectively target gaps in the condom market.

As a result, CARISMA's partners across the region have successfully opened thousands of new condom outlets in high-risk zones, including: brothels, hotels, rum shops, discotheques and late-night bars. In the Eastern Caribbean, condom sales agents worked in close coordination with behaviour change communication agents to ensure that condoms are demanded by, and sold to,

high-risk populations. In the Dominican Republic alone, 50 million condoms have been sold under CARISMA through networks of local NGOs. In Haiti, CARISMA's partner has increased national condom coverage by 20% in just two years.

Plans and activities for CARISMA II

Now in its second phase, CARISMA II has a broadened scope encompassing sexual and reproductive health more widely. The programme aims to reduce HIV and STI rates by increasing preventative behaviours through social marketing approaches, and by improving the availability and affordability of contraceptives in hard to reach areas.

The total market approach

A key component of CARISMA's success to date, the Total Market Approach; will be continued during phase II of the project. This approach, which demands a harmonisation of effort across the condom market – NGOs, private

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sector, public sector and social marketing organisations – ensures increased efficiency, effectiveness and expansion of access while preventing duplication of effort. Each CARISMA partner shares the objective of growing the total condom market by increasing public demand and expanding access into previously underserved communities.

Regional activities

The second phase of CARISMA will also include a number of regional activities designed to ensure regional cohesion, the sharing of good practice, and the capture of regional trends.

- **Regional research:** Following the success of the regional research series in phase I (see www.carisma.org for more details), the second phase of CARISMA will also include a series of regional research studies. Research areas will include: Dynamics of the Total Condom Market; Mapping HIV Work in the Caribbean; and a series of Best Practice Studies analyzing, documenting and sharing examples of innovative social marketing approaches from across the region.
- **A Best Practice Exchange Programme,** providing SMOs involved in CARISMA II with

the opportunity to meet and engage in two-way learning with other SMOs, NGOs, companies or public sector agents working in social marketing, HIV and sexual and reproductive health, or marketing.

- **A Knowledge Sharing strategy** to enable participating SMOs and other stakeholders to share information on activities; platforms for sharing knowledge (such as the CARISMA website www.carisma.org); and opportunities to exchange knowledge between individuals and organisations.

Where we work

- Belize
- Haiti
- Dominican Republic
- Surinam
- Jamaica
- East Caribbean including Antigua and Barbuda; Barbados; Dominica; Granada; St Kitts and Nevis; St Maarten; St Lucia; St Vincent and the Grenadines; Trinidad and Tobago

CARISMA II Objectives

The overall objective of the second phase of CARISMA is to improve the status of sexual and reproductive health in general and to reduce the STI and HIV infection rates in selected countries of the Caribbean region.

The specific program objectives are:

1. To improve the supply of affordable high quality contraceptives.
2. To increase knowledge, attitudes and behaviour (KAP) with regard to effective prevention.

The program is also designed to contribute specifically to 3 Millennium Development Goals: to combat HIV & AIDS, to empower women, to reduce child mortality and to improve maternal health (Millennium Development Goals 3-6).

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ⁱ UNAIDS, 2008 report on the global AIDS epidemic, accessed 4 August 2009, http://www.unaids.org/en/KnowledgeCentre/HIVData/GlobalReport/2008/2008_Global_report.asp