

**ILO/USDOL HIV/AIDS WORKPLACE EDUCATION
PROGRAMME - CHINA**

Formative Assessment China: Summary Report

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BCC Formative Assessment China: Summary Report

The China USDOL project conducted formative research in pilot enterprises from September to November 2007. The purpose was to provide input for a communication strategy to reduce risk behaviors and HIV stigma and discrimination among rural migrant workers. The research examines worker beliefs, values and attitudes related to HIV, people with HIV and risk behaviors that lead to HIV transmission. The research complements baseline quantitative research, which measured HIV knowledge levels, attitudes and practices among 3090 workers in each of the target sectors. In addition to approximately 105 interviews conducted with managers and workers in enterprises, the report draws on additional research conducted by Remin University on male commercial sex behavior in China.

This report is an overall summary of reports prepared for each industry sector and is meant to provide input for development of the program's overarching communication strategy.

The research focuses on several core questions:

1. What are the various segments among targeted workers and what are the key values, aspirations, hopes and concerns of these segments?
2. What are the underlying reasons that can account for pervasive stigma and discrimination of people with HIV?
3. What are the factors that give rise to risk behaviors among various segments of the workers targeted in the survey? What factors and potential messages can be used to promote safer behaviors among these individuals?
4. What are the factors that determine whether individuals engage in preventative behaviors, particular condom usage, and uptake of health services for testing and counseling, and treatment of sexually transmitted infections?



An additional task of the formative research was to obtain practical information related to establishing behavior change programs in targeted sectors and enterprises. This information focused on:

- Most frequently used communication channels in and outside the workplace
- Available health service and health benefits for workers

This information will be used to determine how to best deliver prevention information and service referrals to the target groups.

1. Research Overview

Research was conducted in 13 partner enterprises in three provinces, Guangdong, Anhui and Yunnan and in five sectors: electronics, textiles, steel, mining and construction. Please refer to annex 1 for enterprises joined this assesment.

Project sectors were selected to meet government priorities to increase coverage of AIDS programs for rural migrants. Site selection also took into account local HIV prevalence, rates for sexually transmitted infections (STIs) and HIV and behavioral patterns of the migrant workforce. While the primary targets of the USDOL project are lower income male migrants, the textile sector has been included to develop tools and approaches addressing the vulnerabilities of younger female migrants.

2. Segmentation of Respondents

Project baseline research, conducted from July to September 07 shows a range of factors that influence HIV related knowledge, attitudes and behaviors of rural migrant workers.

2.1 Migrants vs. non- migrants

Most of the sectors of the survey and the project are made up of primarily migrant workers, who can be described as rural residents working temporarily in urban areas or industrial zones. Such migrants make up the bulk of first line manufacturing and production labor in target areas. Their HIV knowledge levels tend to be lower and risk behaviors higher compared to non-migrants.

2.2 Gender

The textile sector is made up of primarily young female workers while the other sectors are comprised of mainly male workers. The electronic sector is split fairly evenly between men and women. Baseline research shows that knowledge on HIV and prevention was significantly lower among female workers, particular fist line workers, compared to men working in other sectors. Stigma was also higher among female workers.

2.3 Economic Status and Education

Economic status, position in the company and HIV knowledge and risk behavior are tended to correlate closely. First line workers had less education, made less money, had less HIV knowledge and tended to engage in risk behaviors more often. There were also differences across sectors and provinces, with Guangdong based electronic sector workers earning significantly more than workers in steel, mining and construction sectors in Yunnan and Anhui. Some exceptions included lower

economic status workers in Kunming and Anning cities in Yunnan, who had been exposed the greater number of government programs compared to workers in other areas..

2.4 Province

Baseline research shows significant variation in knowledge and stigma levels between provinces, particularly between Yunnan where HIV programs are more advanced and Anhui, where programs are fewer and there has been little mass media coverage on AIDS.

2.5 State, privately owned, foreign or joint venture companies

Workers in state-owned enterprises tend to be older and less mobile than those in non-state enterprises, with the exception of short-term contract labor, which is increasing utilized in these companies. Health benefits and services tend to be more developed in state owned than privately owned companies. State owned companies often invested in clinics and hospitals for both employees and community members. State owned companies also tended to possess large-scale communication infrastructure such as newspapers, television and radio stations reaching both workers and community members. Joint venture and multinational companies tend to have less health care infrastructure but possess more developed training departments, internal communication systems and social, health and well being programs.

2.5.1 Textiles

Female-based factory workers, lower educated, Guangdong based, with low knowledge, increasing risk behaviors and high levels of stigma. Comprehensive HIV education should be combined with life skills and reproductive health training.

2.5.2 Construction, Steel, Mining, Employment Agencies

Primarily lower educated, lower income migrant workers, mixed levels of knowledge with frequent misperceptions and significant stigma. Lower levels of knowledge levels and stigma need to be addressed among construction workers in Anhui and high degrees of risk behavior among miners and informal workers in employment agencies should also be taken into account. Condom usage in commercial and casual sex should be a priority in each of these sectors.

2.5.3 Electronics Sector

Mid level educated men and women with higher levels of disposable income, higher levels of knowledge but considerable misperceptions and stigma. Risk behaviors related more to condom use in casual rather than commercial sex. As with all sectors, adequate knowledge on sexually transmitted infections is needed.

The above variations suggest the possibility of linking various sectors into core groups for the purpose of assessing formative research results and for developing a communication strategy for the project. The communications strategy will include identification of core messages and communications channels for each major segment.

3. Key Findings from Formative Research

3.1 General Conditions

Living conditions varied significantly across sector and provinces. Higher educated migrant workers, such as those in the electronics sector, enjoyed better quality living conditions such as high quality factory housing, two to four sharing a large room, with in house facilities for laundry, exercise, internet and reading. For lower income workers in the construction, mining, and informal workers in employment agencies, housing was much more problematic. On construction sites in Anhui workers tended to live 8-10 people in small dorm rooms, while lower level workers in Yunnan had limited access to dormitories and often were forced to seek rented rooms costing up to 40-50% of their monthly salaries.

Respondents described working conditions in all of the target companies as either sufficient or good. Anhui construction workers noted superior conditions in both the primary stated owned companies and in the sub contracted companies. Workers in the steel sector, all working for state owned Kungang Group, noted that salaries varied from subsidiary to subsidiary in the group but that the company offered job security, with the exception of short-term laborers. Workers in electronics and textile sectors in Guangdong noted reasonable working hours and salary levels and overall supportive working environments.

“Right from the start I felt the welfare here was good, ten times better than what I expected” (Electronics, Guangdong).

“We earn more than in the past. Before it was 10 or 20 (rmb) a day and now it doubles or triples. And we work less now.”(Construction, Anhui)

3.2 Access to health benefits and services varied by sector

Workers in state owned enterprises noted full outpatient and inpatient benefits provided by companies through affiliated hospitals and clinics. Guangdong based workers generally had access to company based clinics for first aid and minor illnesses and insurance coverage for hospitalization or access to services in appointed hospitals. Many workers in Guangdong based companies, who has access to health insurance, seemed to misunderstand benefits and reimbursement procedures. In contrast, Anhui based construction workers generally had access only to rural based insurance coverage through a central government program and relied on their own resources for daily illnesses. These construction workers noted they would return to their home villages if they encountered a serious illness that might require hospitalization.

3.3 Social Networks - “Hometown Fellows”

For lower level income migrant workers in all sectors, the most important social network consisted of what is referred to as “hometown fellows”. People from the same hometown often formed a network in a company or localized area that provided a safety net and a channel for socializing.

“Many of us here were introduced to Shenzhen by hometown fellows. There are lots of us here, even in BAK.” (Electronics, Guangdong)

“Most of the workers here were introduced by their hometown fellows. This is a network they can rely on.” (Textiles, Guangdong)

“Mostly we spend time with our hometown fellows. If there is a company movie or something to do we will go with our hometown fellows.” (Construction, Anhui)

For some labor-intensive sectors such as textiles and mining, the work unit serves as an important social network. A work unit generally includes a particular mine or construction site or a particular production line or shift in a manufacturing company. Workers noted a strong affinity with people in their work units despite the fact that they did not necessarily socialize with them outside the workplace.

In one company several workers described a rising trend of Christianity in their company and described the pervasive influence of their coworkers in shaping their personal beliefs. Several workers noted how they could not resist the pressure from their coworkers to become Christians.

“I can see a big difference with the Christians. They actually look better.” (Guangdong, Textiles)

“It feels good to be a Christian and even if I don’t believe it, I listen to them. I feel it is becoming a habit and I cannot stay away from them.” (Guangdong, Textiles)

Among clerk level employees and younger technical staff where educational levers were higher, classmates were also noted as an important social network. Usually younger, more affluent workers, both migrant and non-migrant, maintained contact with their classmates in areas where they worked.

There was often a major social gap in some companies between permanent workers and sub contract laborers. Most enterprises, public and private, use a mix of both types of workers particularly in mining, construction and steel sectors. In Yunxi mining company, the bulk of mine operations were sold to subsidiary companies, which are often linked to the management of the main company. These private companies, which are literally referred to as “Boss” companies, tend to employ short term laborers from minority groups who are poorer, less educated and often do not communicate well in Mandarin. Similarly, in Kungang Steel and in Anhui construction, the bulk of labor has been shifted to subcontract companies and there is little social interaction between the two types of workers both within and outside the workplace.

Practically all migrants workers surveyed noted feeling a sense of alienation from the communities where they lived, explaining that they never expected or hoped to become a part of the receiving communities. Despite having often spent many years in a receiving area, migrants almost always expressed an intention to return to their rural villages. They often described their villages in an idyllic fashion as places where they “belonged”, where they could build a “quality life” based on farming or a small business. Having a piece of land and owning a house were also described as a defining feature of this ideal rural life.

“East or West Home is the Best” (Textiles, Guangdong)

“I just want to go home one day. My rural life, rural wife, a farming life. ...that is what I want” (Electronics, Guangdong)

3.4 Reason for Migration, Goals and Concerns

The formative research examined details on life goals, aspirations and reasons for migrating to other provinces. Respondents were often unable to immediately describe their goals and hopes for the future, often pointing out they had no future plans and living from day to day. This was likely due to both linguistic and cultural differences. The notion that an individual could have internal hopes and plans for the future was alien to most, particularly poorer migrants who lacked the education and resources to set out broad reaching long-term plans.

Interestingly, respondent did reveal hopes and plans for the future through the course of the interviews. Immediate plans often related to working and living conditions. In Guangdong, younger migrants were aware that other job opportunities were available in other companies and in other provinces and they often considered seeking out better paying jobs with improved working conditions. In state-owned companies, shorter-term contract laborers in steel and mining as well as project based construction workers were often heavily focused on seeking out their next job opportunity.

Women, in particular, often described their concerns about providing food, housing, education and covering medical costs for their families.

“I have no long term plans. I just want to feed my family and be happy” (Textiles, Guangdong)

“My wife, child and I are living in a ten square meters house. It has stable power but barely any water. My hope is that we can have a large house. This is everyone’s dream.”(Mining, Yunnan)

Longer-term plans often linked to hopes for financial security. Older male workers often noted their plans to return to go home, build a house and start a business.

“The most important thing is to make money so that when we return, we can open our own business”(Textiles, Guangdong)

For both female and male workers in all sectors, longer term plans often related to hopes that children would have a better life, such as a higher education, a stable job and higher level position.

“My hope is that my child can be like you (the interviewer) he can collect information, write on paper, not stand on the factory floor all day” (Textiles, Guangdong)

“I just want to make money for my child’s education so she can have a better life” (Electronics, Guangdong)

“I came here to work and pay for my son’s university. Once he is finished, I will quit and go back to farming.”(Construction, Guangdong)

Younger workers in the electronic and textiles sector in Guangdong also expressed hope to improve their education and get non-factory floor jobs in the future.

“I want to learn how to use a computer so that I can get off the factory floor and be a clerk” (Textiles, Guangdong)

“For most of us we just want to make money and go home. For those with vocational school training, they may have hopes to be a boss one day”(Electronics, Guangdong)

Workers of all economic positions and in all sectors expressed similar concerns, mainly financial security, family well being, health and safety.

“My biggest concern in health. Health is my base. You don’t worry about money when you have a healthy body.”(Construction, Anhui)

“I worry about my family. My son is in college and I want him to do well. My parents are getting old and cannot do farming.” (Construction, Anhui)

“I worry about my safety. On the construction site, one has to worry about it every minute” (Construction, Anhui)

3.5 HIV Knowledge and Awareness of Services

Most workers felt that HIV was far from them and did not feel at risk for infection. If people did express concern about possible transmission, focus was usually on blood donation, hospital care, shaking hands, mosquito bites or workplace accidents.

“Most people know that sex and blood can transmit but feel it is far away from them.”(Textiles, Guangdong)

“I heard there are people in Shenzhen who donated blood and were infected so I never donate.” (Electronics, Guangdong)

“You should be careful. Hand shaking can pass it and mosquitoes can too.”(Electronics, Guangdong)

“I worry about blood in the hospital. When I gave birth I was so weak and the doctors persuaded me to take blood but I refused.” (Electronics, Guangdong).

“We all know that unsanitary sex can transmit HIV but we can do a pre check to make sure everything is okay”. (Electronics, Guangdong)

Knowledge of voluntary, testing and counseling (VCT) was practically non existent and almost all respondents did not know what the abbreviation VCT meant. While respondents were aware of HIV testing, they were not aware of issues of volunteerism, confidentiality and counseling. When workers were told that these services existed in all district level Centers for Disease Control facilities and were free, they responded that they did not trust free services.

“I have never heard of free testing but if I did I would not trust it” (Electronics, Guangdong)

“If something is free, we can be sure there is some sort of trickery involved. (Steel, Yunnan)

“If there was a free test I would not go but if my friends insisted on going, I would perhaps go along. I would not want people to talk about me if I did not go”. (Electronics, Guangdong)

As far as STI knowledge, workers were aware of STIs but lacked understanding of signs and symptoms. Most respondents were unaware that STIs may have minor or no symptoms and did not know that STIs could have long-term health consequences for the carriers, their spouses and unborn children. Some workers said they knew of friends and colleagues who had experienced STIs and sought treatment for them. Male and female workers alike were aware of the various STI treatment services available including abundant small-scale private clinics, large hospitals and direct drug dispersion at pharmacies. Most were aware that treatment in small-scale clinics was of poor quality and potentially expensive and understood that large-scale hospitals offered better, cheaper treatment. However, when workers talked about specific cases of a “friend” or “colleague” with an STI, they noted that the most common channel for treatment was self-treatment in pharmacies or small-scale clinics, usually for reasons of convenience and anonymity.

“We pay a great deal of attention to hygiene. We wash first and we do a pre-check to make sure all is safe.” (Steel, Yunnan)

“We all know that the small clinics do not provide good quality treatment but what people actually do when they have an infection is not clear.”(Steel, Yunnan)

Awareness of care and support services was nearly non-existent. While some had heard of the “Four Frees and One Care Program”, most doubted that it was accessible to them as lower level migrant workers. The common assumption was that government programs were not effective, were not really free and often existed in name rather than in practice. As with VCT, workers express suspicion about any free services.

3.6 HIV Stigma and Discrimination

HIV stigma was pervasive in all sectors, geographic locations and among both men and women. Most workers said that they would show sympathy for people with HIV or AIDS but would not want to be near them. The general sense is that one would show care and at the same time stay far away.

“I would not discriminate against them but I would not accompany him to the doctor. Generally you should get away.”(Electronics, Guangdong)

“If people around get HIV/AIDS ignore them, don’t be too close to them, don’t go to their, don’t talk to them, ignore them, otherwise it would bring danger to you.”(Electronics, Guangdong)

“I would not look down on them but I would not work with them.” (Textiles, Guangdong)

“If my dorm mate is positive he or she should move.”(Construction, Anhui)

“I think we would have to be very careful. We should not eat with them or socialize with them. All their personal items should be sterilized for protection.”(Steel, Guangdong)

Workers with more advanced understanding on HIV still showed reluctance to maintain a friendship with an HIV positive person. Even in cases when understanding was high on non-transmission routes, people said they could not care for a person who was infected through “illicit” behaviors such as sex or drug use. They would only care for those who were infected in an “acceptable” way such as through blood transfusion.

This suggests that stigma may have deeper roots than factual misunderstanding on transmission and linked to underlying negative attitudes about sexuality and drug use. Respondents often noted a distinction between “clean” and “dirty” sex, which was defined as casual or commercial sex. There was a common assumption that anyone infected through sex must have engaged in illicit behaviors.

“We would sympathize with those infected accidentally, say through blood transfusion, but we would look down on and stay far away from those infected through dirty sex.” (Steel, Yunnan).

“If a conservative person gets it, treat it. If a promiscuous person gets it, the leader should let him go.” (Construction, Anhui)

On the issue of rights to work for people with HIV, many respondents said they thought it would be normal and necessary for management to remove a person with HIV, noting that it was for the “common good”.

“It is dangerous and the company would not retain you. It has to be that way.” (Electronics, Guangdong)

“Factories fired people for Hep B, they should do the same for HIV. We think it is normal.” (Electronics, Guangdong)

3.7 Communication Channels

Workers ages said that they watched TV regularly, although this was somewhat less the case female factory workers in the textile sector. Older people noted that they also read newspapers while young people said they surfed and played games on the Internet. Workers of all economic levels said they had and used mobile phones.

As far as information on HIV, workers said they had gotten most of the information from television, public signboards and newspapers.

Workers also identified a range of communication channels with their companies and these varied somewhat between sectors. Large state owned companies – Yunxi Mining and Kungang Steel, had television and radio stations, company newspapers, hospital, clinics, bulletin boards and training centers. Guangdong based electronics and textile companies lacked the community-based infrastructure but tended to have more sophisticated, well staffed training programs, newsletters, intranet sites, daily safety briefings and sophisticated health and safety programs. Anhui construction companies lacked communication infrastructure but relied heavily on daily safety and technical briefings to communicate with workers.

Trade unions engaged primarily in sporting and entertainment activities and offer strong potential for strategic communication. In larger state own companies trade union structures are extensive and reach down to first line workers organized into committees in individual work units.

3.8 Entertainment Practices and Risk Behaviors

Entertainment practices varied significantly across gender lines, sectors and geographic areas. Female workers in Guangdong often noted that they had little free time and frequently described being lonely in their initial settling in periods, particularly if they did not have family or “hometown fel-

lows” in their area. Some young women noted that they found a boyfriend to keep from feeling lonely and relied heavily on their male partners to help them adjust to their new environments.

For the most part, women in both the textiles and electronic sectors in Guangdong engaged in steady monogamous relationships with male partners but relationship often did not last more than a few months. All respondents noted that they had never heard of any women in their workplaces selling sex in their free time to gain extra money, noting reasonable pay and long work hours as preventative factors.

Men and women in Guangdong frequently described a shift in sexual and social values among younger workers. They explained that it was not uncommon for young people to engage in casual sex.

“It is normal having sex these days before marriage. It is like getting on the bus before buying a ticket.” (Electronics, Guangdong)

“Young girls and boys change partners frequently, live together and there are many pregnancies.” (Electronics, Guangdong)

“Many people live together. We get together if we feel good. It is no big deal.”(Electronics, Guangdong)

Men in the electronics sector in Guangdong often noted that it was common for their colleagues to go to entertainment areas such as karaoke bars in surrounding areas but few admitted to having commercial sex themselves.

“Visiting sex workers..... it is no big deal. After all we have decent income and we don’t lack the money. (Electronics, Guangdong)

“It has nothing to do with income but with personality. Some guys just like it.”(Electronics, Guangdong)

Men in the steel and mining sectors in Yunnan and construction sector in Anhui also noted that men sometimes visited entertainment establishments near their workplaces in living areas. These lower income workers explained the tendency was to utilize the services of low cost hair salons or freelance sex workers. Drinking was often associated with commercial sex.

“It is mostly the unmarried men. They go out in gangs, get drunk and then go to sex workers. They next day they brag about the hot and beautiful women.” (Construction, Anhui)

3.9 On Condom Use

“I think for sure people use condoms when they go to sex workers. For other types of sex I am not so sure” (Electronics Guangdong)

“For free condoms, I would not take them. Free stuff is lousy.” (Textiles, Guangdong)

“If the hometown fellows visit sex workers together, they will not use condoms. That is not fun.” (Construction, Anhui)

“It is not fun with condoms. If you are to find a woman, must find a good one with a healthy body.” (Electronics, Guangdong)

“I go to sex workers. I go out with my hometown fellow, drink and have sex, but use a condom. It is okay. It is like washing your feet with your socks on”. (Electronics, Guangdong)

3.10 Gender Relations, Values and Risk Behavior of Male Workers

In addition to data collected within companies, the project collaborated with Chinese sociologist, Pan Suiming, from Remin University, to examine the underlying social factors, which influence risk behavior. Particular focus was placed on gender conceptions and sexual practices of men. The research draws on two sources: a nationwide quantitative sex survey conducted by Remin University and in-depth qualitative research with entertainment establishment owners, female sex workers and male clients of female sex workers.

4. Several Key Findings are Relevant to AIDS Programming

4.1 Pervasive Influence of Peers and Colleagues

Qualitative research with nearly 200 clients of female sex workers parallels with formative research conducted in pilot enterprises. The research shows that for rural migrant workers, the major factor determining whether an individual will or will not engage in risk behaviors are the influence of peer networks. For migrant workers the dominant influence on behavior were “hometown fellows” or individuals sharing the same place of origin,

The most influential force on individual behavior is not public opinion or the broader community but smaller circles of relationships --- friends, colleagues, and family. For urban workers the circle is made up of friends, neighbors and colleagues whereas for rural migrant workers the circle is mainly comprised of “hometown fellows”.

For both urban and rural workers, men face social pressure within their immediate group of peers to demonstrate their masculinity by drinking large amounts of alcohol. Relationships with peers can often best be fostered and maintained through drinking rituals. Men who are able to demonstrate their loyalty to their peers through drinking are said to have a “talent” and are seen as true men and loyal friends and colleagues. The ability to remain cognizant when drinking is less important than the mere ability to just keep drinking until all in the group are ready to stop.

On occasions, and in some peer circles, drinking sessions can spill over into entertainment venues, where commercial sex is available. When a group decides to engage in commercial sex, all are

expected to join in. A man who can easily take advantage of the services of a sex worker is often said to have a “talent” for sex in a way he would for drinking. Drinking and commercial sex are considered expressions of loyalty which can support both friendship and working relationships.

Not all drinking and commercial sex behavior is egalitarian in nature. Within the workplace, managers and supervisors often may informally require workers to engage in excessive drinking and workers will find it difficult to refuse. As between peers, the pressure is to demonstrate both manhood and loyalty. At times drinking sessions with colleagues may lead to commercial sex where similar social pressures apply. Refusing to drink or engage in the services of sex workers would often be viewed as a sign of disloyalty from a subordinate staff to their superior.

4.2 Factors Influencing Casual and Commercial Sex Behaviors among Men

Men often described sexual fulfillment as a fundamental right they enjoyed as men. Formative research in companies, sociological research and even key themes emerging through interactive discussions in training activities for the project, reveal a consistent male view of sexuality, that men have a deeply rooted belief that they have an undeniable biological need for sexual fulfillment and a fundamental right to fulfill that need. Engaging in casual or commercial sex was often described as a reasonable and sometimes necessary outlet to meet that need. Men often did not recognize any potential conflict with their obligations as husbands and fathers.

“I have got to take care of my needs. It does not hurt anything. Don’t you go to public restrooms if nature calls you when you are on the street?”

“Me with hookers. It does not hurt my wife. I don’t love them. I won’t marry them. My wife has no reason to be mad at me.”

“Hookers are not your dates. It is just screwing around. Does not mean anything. Why would she (his girlfriend) be mad at me.?”

This is not to say that all men engage have multiple sex partners or engage in commercial sex. Remin University national sex survey reveals that on average 9% of Chinese men engage in commercial sex but that higher proportions of men in urban areas do so, as high as 22% in urban areas. According to Pan, the main factors that influence whether are not men engage in casual or commercial sex is the influence of their peers and colleagues. For commercial sex, the availability, proximity and affordability of commercial sex services are also important factors.

Male respondents who engaged in extramarital and commercial sex frequently exhibited a conceptual separation between their family lives, their extramarital “girlfriends” and their activities with sex workers. They felt that whatever sex or emotional relationships they engaged in outside the household would not affect the household as long as they kept the balance in tact.

One respondent explained it aptly.

“This is what is great about being a guy. You can put your marriage in your brain, love in your chest and leave the sex in your penis.”

Men also explained that it was absolutely necessary to maintain a separation between these various compartments of their social and sexual behavior. In the past, it was generally acceptable for men to have concubines, maids and sex workers but it was considered reprehensible for men to upset the hierarchy. Similarly modern day respondents described an essential need to maintain a separation between the world of the household and the realm of pleasure.

“Playing around is playing around. It is different in and outside the house. When it is done, it is done.”

It is okay as long as you do not get in too deep. If you got tangled up in emotions you would be in trouble.”

“We believe that sleeping with hookers is no big deal. It is just like karaoke or ball games. After we are done playing, it is over. But we believe it is wrong to let it mess up your family.”

Respondents therefore describe a natural order in their social and sexual relationships that must be maintained. Going too far with a girlfriend would not only potentially damage family harmony; it would also damage a man’s reputation among his peers, colleagues as well as disrupt family harmony.

Men frequently described that having extramarital relationships and utilizing the services of sex workers was normal and acceptable as long as one did not go too far and disrupt the balance between family life, life with friend and colleagues and life with “girlfriends” and sex partners.

4.3 STD Prevention Strategies

Lower income clients of sex workers often said that they relied on pre-sex examinations of their casual and commercial sex partners to check for sexually transmitted infections, including visual examinations, smelling and touching the genitals. Clients often said they asked sex workers to wash before sex to reduce risk. Several men also noted that they washed themselves both before and after sex as a prevention measure.

Quantitative research shows that these behaviors do not, however, serve as a barrier or replacement for condom use. Surveys show that individuals who engage in pre-sex “inspections” and washing are more likely to use condoms than those men who do not. These behaviors are more reflective of an overall approach to safety that includes condom use rather than serves as replacement for them.

4.4 Why Some Clients Refuse to Use Condoms?

Qualitative research reveals that there are fundamental factors that serve as barriers to condom use. Lower income men and rural migrant workers who often consider “flesh to flesh” sex as the only kind of sex. They see condoms as a barrier to “real” sex and consider commercial sex with condoms as paying for a service that they do not receive.

Similarly working class men generally do not consider non-penetrative sex as real sex either. Both working class men and the lower status sex workers who they visit deem oral sex and licking eccentric. Therefore it appears that common approaches which encourage non vaginal/anal sex as a preventative measure may not resonate with working class men.

Peer dynamics and condom availability were often cited as reason why men would or would not use condom in various situations.

5. Recommendation for Communication Strategy

Utilize the voice of migrants - all research points to the powerful voice of hometown peers in shaping behavior. Given the strong authority attributed to the peer group, program messages should utilize the voice of hometown fellows when promoting desired behaviors. The term “hometown fellow” is gender neutral and is relevant to migrant workers in a range of economic, geographic and cultural backgrounds.

Increase knowledge on local STI/HIV prevalence rates - given that risk perception for HIV is low for both HIV and STIs, it is important to provide local level prevalence rates to workers. Interviews with both clients and sex workers revealed that local conditions were far more influential on risk perception than other more vague and distant factors such as disease trends or national and provincial prevalence rates. This information is generally available from the China CDC.

Link HIV education and condom promotion to the life goals and aspirations of various segments of the migrant workforce - younger workers to earn money, build a solid health family, advances in careers and for older workers to maintain stability and harmony with community and with family. Subtle distinctions in messaging for men and woman should be addressed - for women a primary focus on welfare of children and for men the strong emphasis on respect and reputation in the community and workplace.

For men emphasize family stability and harmony in communications - given that working class men and rural migrant workers are more concerned with family stability than issues of loyalty or morality, its is important to demonstrate that preventing STIs and HIV can help individuals to avoid physical, economic and social consequences. Preventing STIs and HIV can help to maintain the balance and harmony in a man’s life.

Provide improved communication on STI symptoms and treatment for men and women. Given that many male workers, who are also clients of sex workers, were intent on maintaining the separation (and order) between their family life and their extra marital activities, the benefits of appropriate STI treatment should be emphasized. For women, special information on the asymptomatic nature of certain types of STIs and the long-term health consequences must be delivered. This is particularly important for younger female migrants who place great importance on plans to have a child.

Messages on HIV stigma should address both the misperceptions about casual transmission as well as more fundamental issues associated with perceived illegitimate behaviors. Messages should emphasize the need to care for others rather than judge, that HIV can affect all kinds of people, that living a productive and healthy life both within and outside the workplace is possible and a fundamental right of all workers.

Messages on testing and counseling should first stress the benefits of testing for accessing services



and maintaining a healthy and productive life. They should be linked to a description of the care and treatment services that are available from the government and local community organizations. Messages should also emphasize the importance of seeking out services that ensure confidentiality and offer counseling. VCT services offered by the government should be promoted as quality and legitimate services despite the fact that they are free.

Utilize communication channels within the workplace and in the community. Within the workplace a range of channels exist with some variation between sectors and companies. Across the board there are clear opportunities to integrate prevention education and behavior change communication into recruitment trainings for new employees, routine safety briefings, special skills training programs and general health campaigns. Trade unions offer an untapped but solid network for communication, particularly in state own companies. Outside the workplace, television, mobile phone text messages, partnerships with local health care providers and Internet and gaming cafes offer strong potential for reinforcing program messages delivered within the workplace.

In conclusion the broad recommendations above should be utilized to develop an overarching communication strategy that will support the creation of a unified campaign that can be modified at the level of industrial sectors and individual enterprises. At all levels the distinct concerns and needs of men and women should be addressed.

Annex 1: Participating Enterprises

1. Tianhui Siloconeol Company Ltd
2. Shenzhen Samsung Kejian Mobile Communication Technology Co., Ltd.
3. Shenzhen Saige Samsung Co., Ltd. & code
4. Shenzhen Bak Battery Co., Ltd.
5. Guangzhou Tilian Li Electronics Science & Technology Co., Ltd.
6. Yili Anda (Guangzhou) Electronics Technology Co., Ltd.
7. Meijia Science & Technology Co., Ltd.
8. Dongguang Yucheng shoes manufactory
9. Kunming Steel Group
10. Yunnan Tin Group
11. Employment Market in Kunming
12. Anhui geological prospecting team
13. The 3rd construction & engineering Group