

Social Marketing Activities in Vietnam AN IMPRESSIVE BEGINNING

by MEcon. LÊ SĨ TRÍ

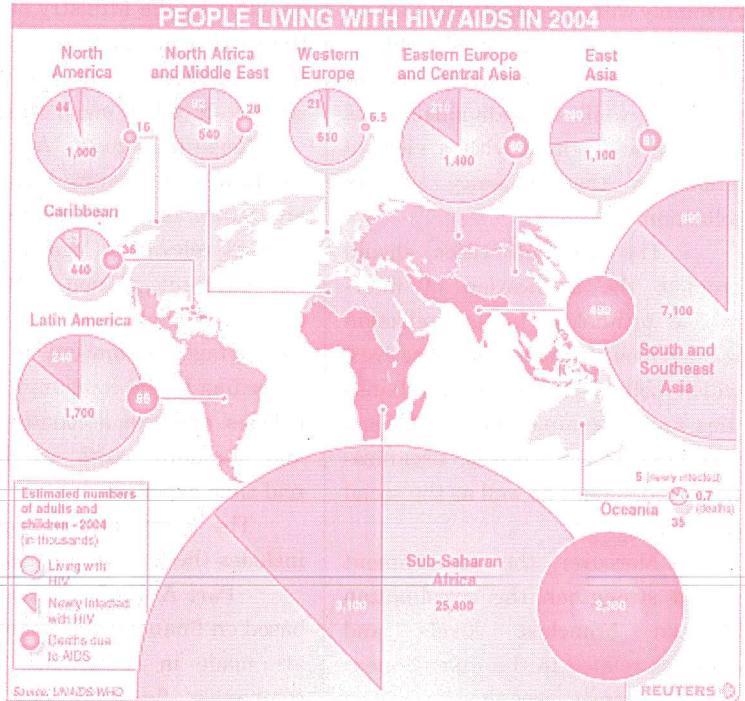
1. An Overview of Social Marketing Activities in Vietnam

Vietnamese social marketing activities have taken shape since 1993 in the Social Marketing Project within the framework agreement between the Vietnam's Committee for foreign NGO affair, on behalf of the government of Vietnam and the DKT International (the US). According to the agreement, DKT pledges to finance programs and projects involved in: social marketing of contraceptives for family planning, and social marketing of condoms for HIV/AIDS prevention. These programs and projects are performed in partnership with Vietnam's National Committee for Population and Family Planning (presently Vietnam Committee for Population, Family and Children). The products for social marketing include Trust condoms manufactured upon international standards and OK condoms upon Vietnamese standards. In addition, the Choice-brand contraceptives are used for social marketing. These products are used for preventing HIV/AIDS and family planning. All products sold in social marketing channels are given price supports from 50 to 70%.

Vietnam has strongly supported social marketing activities by providing the project with a certain amount of locally-made OK condoms. Moreover, in the cooperation with Vietnam Committee for Population, Family and Children, DKT has conducted social marketing of New Choice contraceptives, initially in four big cities of Hà Nội, Hải Phòng, Huế, and HCMC and another province of Đồng Tháp, later it will expand its sales across the country.

2. DKT International Operations in Vietnam

DKT International is one of the world's leading organizations for social marketing. Its head office is located in Washington DC., the US. As a U.S based non-profit, humanitarian organization, DKT implements programs on social marketing of contraceptive products for family planning and HIV/AIDS prevention. In cooperation with the Population Service International (PSI), DKT operates in more than 40 countries in Asia, Africa, Middle East, and South America. In Vietnam, given green light by Vietnam Government, DKT has started a social marketing of products for contraceptive and HIV-AID prevention since 1993. This is also a part of the national programs for HIV-AIDS prevention and the



national program for population and family planning. In 1996, based on real interests brought by the program, Vietnam government granted the license No. 019/UB/GP to DKT for establishing its rep office at No.8, Tràng Thi Str., Hà Nội.

3. Activities of the DKT International President

Philip D. Harvey, President of DKT International, is the founder and former president of Population Service International-PSI, one of pioneers in international social marketing. Mr. Harvey participated in the first discussion on contraceptive social marketing (CSM) in India in the 1960s and later built and operated the PSI programs in Kenya, Colombia, Sri Lanka and Bangladesh. He has written a lot of articles on contraceptive social marketing. His career is performed from the feeding program in Bihar, India to social marketing programs for young American. Often facing and overcoming gaps between social and trading fields, he has found a new way: using the advantages of the market economy to solve complicated social problems. He is the president of several family planning organizations and launched some non-profit organizations including DKT, Tyagi Association, Tyagi Fund after his intimate friend, D.K.Tyagi, passed away. [1].

4. History of the Name DKT

DKT International is named to commemorate Dhamendra Kumar Tyagi. He died of cancer in New Delhi, India, on October 31, 1969 while he was the assistant of the Indian Committee for Family Planning. He was then 41 years old and left huge contributions in the national efforts to curb its population growth rate. He himself assumed the main responsibility for designing and disseminating a social communication program to provide information and knowledge about family planning for hundreds of millions of Indian people. He started his career from 1960 when modern contraceptive products were wholly unknown in Indian rural areas. His attractive, simple messages and presentations have removed obstacles in old-style communication and increased the public understanding about planned reproduction. As an Indian intimately attached to his native village Uttar Pradesh, he found improper fundamentals between targets of the family planning and traditional wills of the Indian rural people. He implemented a great deal of work to bridge this gap [1].

5. Results of Social Marketing in Vietnam

The purpose of DKT International in Vietnam is to establish social marketing projects for contraceptive products and HIV/AIDS prevention. The programs aim at making simple medical products and techniques available everywhere to help everybody do necessary work to prevent a certain disease or from falling in unwanted situation. The aim of social marketing in Vietnam is to expand and supplement the two traditional distribution channels of medical products, that is, public institutions which provide free or cheap medical products and services and the private trading sector which is larger but selling products at the market price. The practicality of the DKT's social marketing program in Vietnam depends on the belief that there remains a gap between products freely distributed by the public sector and those sold in the market. The products, for example, which are provided freely or for cheap price at public health stations or hospitals, are not extensively distributed across the country, so they are not accessible to the people. Similarly, private trading networks such as drugstores or private small clinics are distributed on larger scale in the community, but they are beyond the people's reach due to high prices. The DKT's social marketing programs provide services between these distribution channels. Applying techniques of

trade marketing, principles of business administration and operating on large scale, the program has made available products for contraceptive and HIV/AIDS prevention in the Vietnamese market at an acceptable price rate. From the project beginning in Vietnam in 1993 until the end of 2005, DKT Vietnam distributed products via social marketing activities with the sales of 450,717,896 condoms and 22,993,900 oral contraceptive packs. This helped protect 6,149,600 couples from unwanted reproduction as well as prevent 1,397,636 cases of abortion, 6,765 cases of maternal deaths, 118, 687 cases of infant death and 32,001 cases of HIV/AIDS infection. [2]

These social benefits are calculated with CYP index - Couple Years of Protection. This is a basic index to evaluate contraceptive social marketing activities. One CYP means to supply enough contraceptive products to protect a couple from reproduction within a year. Therefore, the sale of 100 condoms or 14 oral contraceptive packs is equivalent to one CYP. The evaluation of CYP and efficiency of prevention from cases of abortion, maternal death and infant death comes from the research project of Alan Guttmacher Institution (AGI). Its results determine that the supply of contraceptive products to 10,000 CYP (or 1 million condoms or 140,000 contraceptive packs) will help prevent 193 cases of infant death and 11 cases of maternal death in reproduction, and every 4.4 CYP will help prevent one case of abortion. The CYP index is at the same time the connection between the sale of condoms and the efficiency of HIV/AIDS prevention, resulting from the research project of Family Health International (FHI) with the calculation method named AVERT. Its results indicate the consumption of 1 million condoms for 10,000 CYP will help prevent around

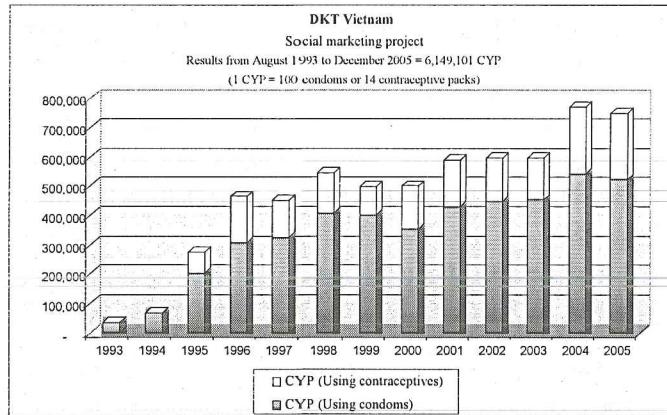
Table 1: CYP results and efficiency of abortion and HIV prevention from 1993 to 2005

Year	CYP (Using condoms)	CYP (Using con- traceptives)	Condoms	Contra- ceptives	Year	Number of cases pre- vented from abortion	Number of cases pre- vented from HIV infection
1993	35,652	-	3,565,224	-	1993	8,103	253
1994	69,130		6,913,008		1994	15,711	491
1995	203,954	71,530	20,395,368	1,001,425	1995	62,610	1,448
1996	307,502	157,221	30,750,192	2,201,100	1996	105,619	2,183
1997	325,945	126,104	32,594,472	1,765,450	1997	102,738	2,314
1998	409,724	136,539	40,972,392	1,911,550	1998	124,151	2,909
1999	401,817	98,607	40,181,688	1,380,500	1999	113,733	2,853
2000	354,946	146,542	35,494,632	2,051,592	2000	113,975	2,520
2001	431,191	158,139	43,119,144	2,213,950	2001	133,939	3,061
2002	448,098	150,156	44,809,776	2,102,183	2002	135,967	3,181
2003	454,303	142,632	45,430,284	1,996,850	2003	135,667	3,226
2004	541,582	228,786	54,158,156	3,203,000	2004	175,083	3,845
2005	523,336	226,164	52,333,560	3,166,300	2005	170,341	3,716
Total	4,507,179	1,642,421	450,717,896	22,993,900	Total	1,397,636	32,001

100 cases (exactly 111 cases) of infection for each percent of HIV-AIDS infected population (preventing 100 cases for 1%; 200 cases for 2%; 300 cases for 3% of HIV infected population, etc.). These above calculated infection cases are based on HIV/AIDS primary infection. If mentioning the HIV/AIDS secondary infection, the cases of primary infection must increase by 70%. For example, the population has an HIV-AIDS infection rate of 1%, one million condoms help prevent 100 cases of HIV primary infection or 170 cases of secondary infection [3].

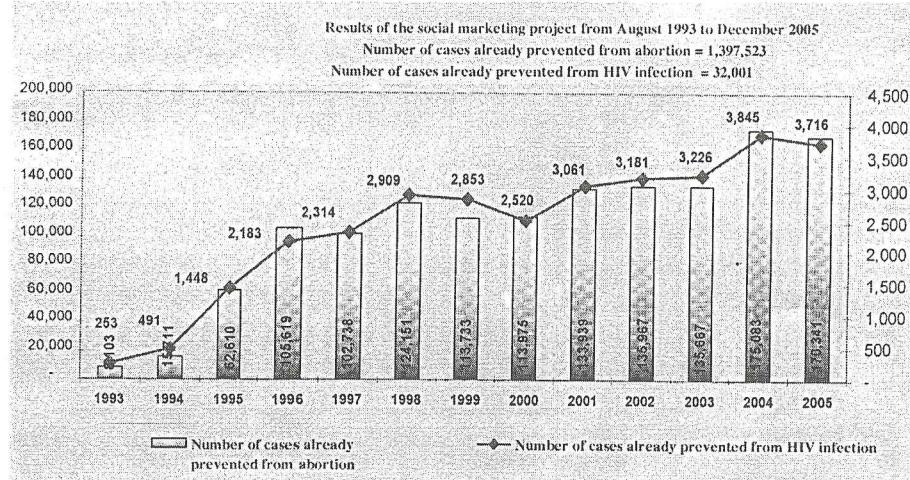
The results of social marketing conducted by DKT International in Vietnam from 1993 to late 2005 are indicated in Table 1 and Figures 1; 2.

Figure 1: CYP results from August 1993 to December 2005.



Source: DKT International /Vietnam, 2005 [2]

Figure 2: Performance in preventing abortion and HIV infection



Source: DKT International / Vietnam, 2005 [2].

Table 1 and Figures 1; 2 indicate the CYP results from 1993 to 2005 include 4,507,179 CYP using condoms and 1,642,421 CYP using oral contraceptives, totally 6,149,600

CYP. By using the above results of evaluation, the social marketing activities have brought real benefits as follows:

The number of cases prevented from abortion: 6,149,600 CYP : 4.4 = 1,397,636 cases

Similarly, based on sales and evaluation method, we can figure out the following numbers:

The number of cases prevented from maternal death:

$$\frac{6,149,600 \times 11}{10,000} \approx 6,765 \text{ cases}$$

* The number of cases prevented from infant death:

$$\frac{6,149,600 \times 193}{10,000} \approx 118,678 \text{ cases}$$

Vietnam currently has a population of around 80 million and 300,000 officially announced cases of HIV/AIDS infection. Therefore, its HIV-AIDS infection rate reaches 0.375%. We know that every one million condoms used for 10,000 CYP with an HIV infection rate of 1% helps prevent 111 cases of primary infection and $111 + (111 \times 70\%)$ secondary infection. Therefore, we can calculate:

* The number of cases prevented from HIV secondary infection:

$$\frac{4,507,179 \times 111 \times 0.375}{10,000} \times 17 \approx 32,000 \text{ cases}$$

6. Conclusion

These above results of evaluation reveal the social marketing activities have brought great social benefits in population and family planning as well as HIV-AIDS prevention in Vietnam in the 1993 - 2005 period. Specific indicators prove this: the number of cases prevented from abortion: 1,397,636; cases prevented from maternal death: 6,765 ca; cases prevented from infant death: 118,678 cases; cases prevented from HIV secondary infection: 32,000 cases.

The above results are the encouraging start in Vietnam's social marketing activities, which should be studied and multiplied in many socio-economic areas in the coming time ■

REFERENCE

1. DKT International/Vietnam, *Country Program Summary*, 1993.
2. DKT International/Vietnam, *Performance from 1993 to 2005, 2006*.
3. Philip D. Harvey, *Let Every Child Be Wanted – How Social Marketing Is Revolutionizing Contraceptive Use Around the World*, Auburn House, London UK, 1999.
4. Vũ Công Tuấn, *Project Management*, HCMC Publisher, 1999.