

## Providing a *Life Guard* against HIV



- MSI Uganda sells nearly 20 million *Life Guard* condoms each year, accounting for around 60% of the private market <sup>1</sup>
- more than 144 million *Life Guard* condoms sold to date, contributing significantly to the fight against HIV infection in Uganda
- as a strategic partner of the Ministry of Health (MoH), MSI Uganda aims to help distribute more than 225 million *Life Guard* condoms over the next five years.

### Uganda, key Statistics:

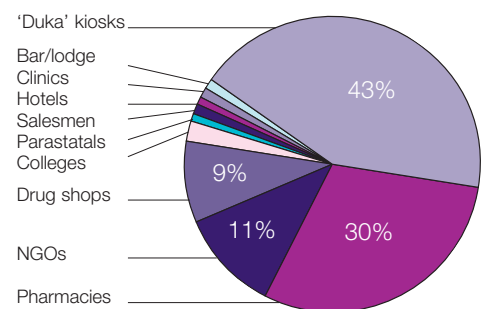
- population: 29 million
- population increase: 3.2% per year (2006), the world's 3rd highest growth rate
- HIV+ people: 1.1 million (2006)
- AIDS orphans: 2.2 million
- condoms: the only proven way to protect against HIV infection. Over 11 million condoms are used each month in Uganda.

MSI Uganda has worked in close partnership with the MoH for more than a decade to procure, distribute and promote Uganda's *Life Guard* condoms, making *Life Guard* the top selling condom brand in Uganda today.<sup>2</sup> Together the two agencies have run Uganda's *Life Guard* contraceptive social marketing (CSM) programme since its inception in 1997, with the generous support of the Federal Republic of Germany through KfW Entwicklungsbank.

### Targeted approach maximises impact

MSI Uganda uses social marketing techniques to ensure that *Life Guard* targets the groups at highest risk of contracting or spreading HIV and other sexually transmitted infections (STIs). These priority target groups include truck drivers, fishing communities and young women. *Life Guard* is strategically placed in a range of sales outlets commonly frequented, day or night, by each target group, ensuring that the brand is available when and where it is needed. Fishing communities, for example, are reached via general 'duka' kiosks, while married couples - the group with the fastest

growing rate of new infections – are reached through pharmacies and other traditional commercial outlets. The chart below shows the breadth of outlets which carry *Life Guard*.



Dedicated *Life Guard* outreach teams deliver behaviour change campaigns, mixing information with participatory activities aimed at promoting the correct and consistent use of condoms as part of a comprehensive ABC (Abstinence, Be faithful, use a Condom) approach. Working directly with communities, these *Life Guard* teams reach more than 1.4

1. AC Nielsen Uganda Retail Index November 2006 - March 2007.

2. ibid.

million people each year who are most at risk of HIV infection.

### Serving Uganda's National Strategic Plan

As the country's largest and most successful CSM organisation, MSI Uganda works closely with the MoH to ensure that CSM activities serve the priorities established in the country's National Strategic Plan (NSP) for HIV/AIDS 2007/8-2011/12. Over the coming five year period, MSI Uganda aims to help distribute over 225 million *Life Guard* condoms on behalf of the MoH.

Over the longer term, MSI Uganda aims to support the MoH's objective to improve forecasting and build a solid and lasting supply chain for all condoms. Such partnership, together with collaboration with other condom agencies, will help to build an effective, strategic defence against HIV long into the future.

### A reliable partner

As part of the MSI Global Partnership, MSI Uganda enjoys strong links with MSI's UK-based international procurement division which has over 10 years experience in the sector. Expert in condom forecasting and logistics, this division procures more than 50 million condoms each year for MSI's 20 social marketing brands in 17 countries, in full compliance with international quality standards.

In 2004, when there was a condom shortage in Uganda, MSI Uganda was contracted by the UK's Department for International Development (DFID) / MoH to procure an emergency supply of 20 million condoms. MSI Uganda did this in record time, with the support of a group of international donors led by DFID. Shortly afterwards, MSI Uganda began work with the MoH to develop *Life Guard Pink* - a condom brand specifically for the public sector. Using *Life Guard's* strong reputation, *Life Guard Pink* has helped to ensure faith in Uganda's public sector condoms, and has given the poorest user groups access to this quality brand.



*Life Guard Pink* is funded by the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria.

A consistent supply of reliable condoms and high quality safer sex information has fostered a strong sense of brand loyalty among *Life Guard* users over recent years and the programme is now key to Uganda's plans to limit the spread of HIV.

***"I have faith in Life Guard: I believe it is the most strong condom brand and also makes sex enjoyable. If Life Guard was not available, we would use 50 shillings polythene (thin, polythene bags used to carry light items.) People will die of HIV/AIDS and we would be finished. It will be a natural disaster."***  
**Abdul, Makindye, near Kampala**

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