

# Informed Decisions

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Recent Evidence Provides Programmatic  
Guidance for HIV Prevention among ESWs  
and Clients in Cambodia

September 12, 2008



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# Background

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- 100% CUP contributed to sharp decline in HIV prevalence among brothel-based sex workers and their clients
- Recent shift of SW out of brothels
- Transactional sex is increasingly occurring between men and their sweethearts and entertainment service workers (ESWs)
- These sexual encounters have a far lower rate of reported condom use than brothel-based sex
- A key challenge to sustain a reduced HIV prevalence in Cambodia will require scaled up interventions reaching ESWs and their clients

# Key Findings

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## Entertainment Service Workers (*Non Brothel-based*)

# Target Group Insights

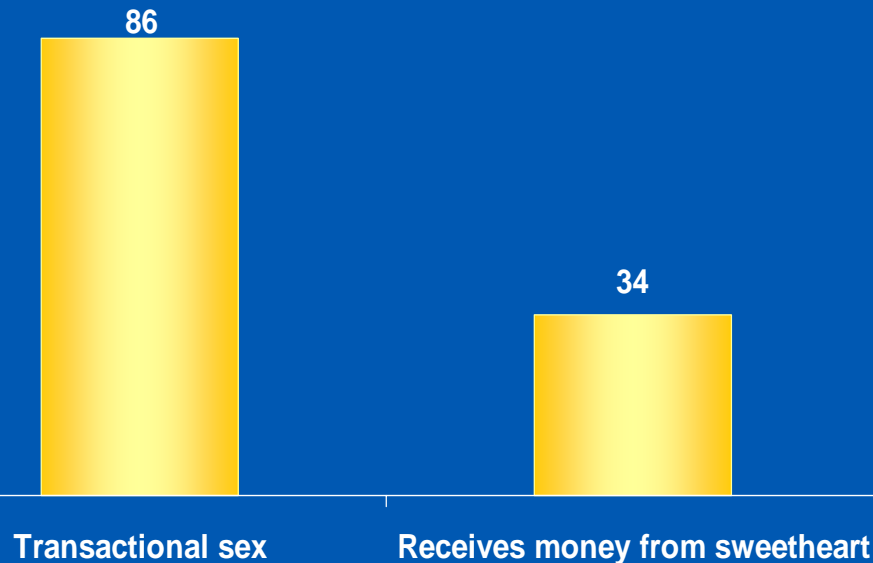
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- Non brothel-based ESWs work in a variety of establishments (beer gardens, karaoke bars, massage parlors, freelance, etc.)
- Not easily enumerated or reached through 100% CUP
- May not sell sex or may not self-identify as ‘sex worker’
- Lower uptake of STI services and very low uptake of VCCT services

# Sexual Behavior

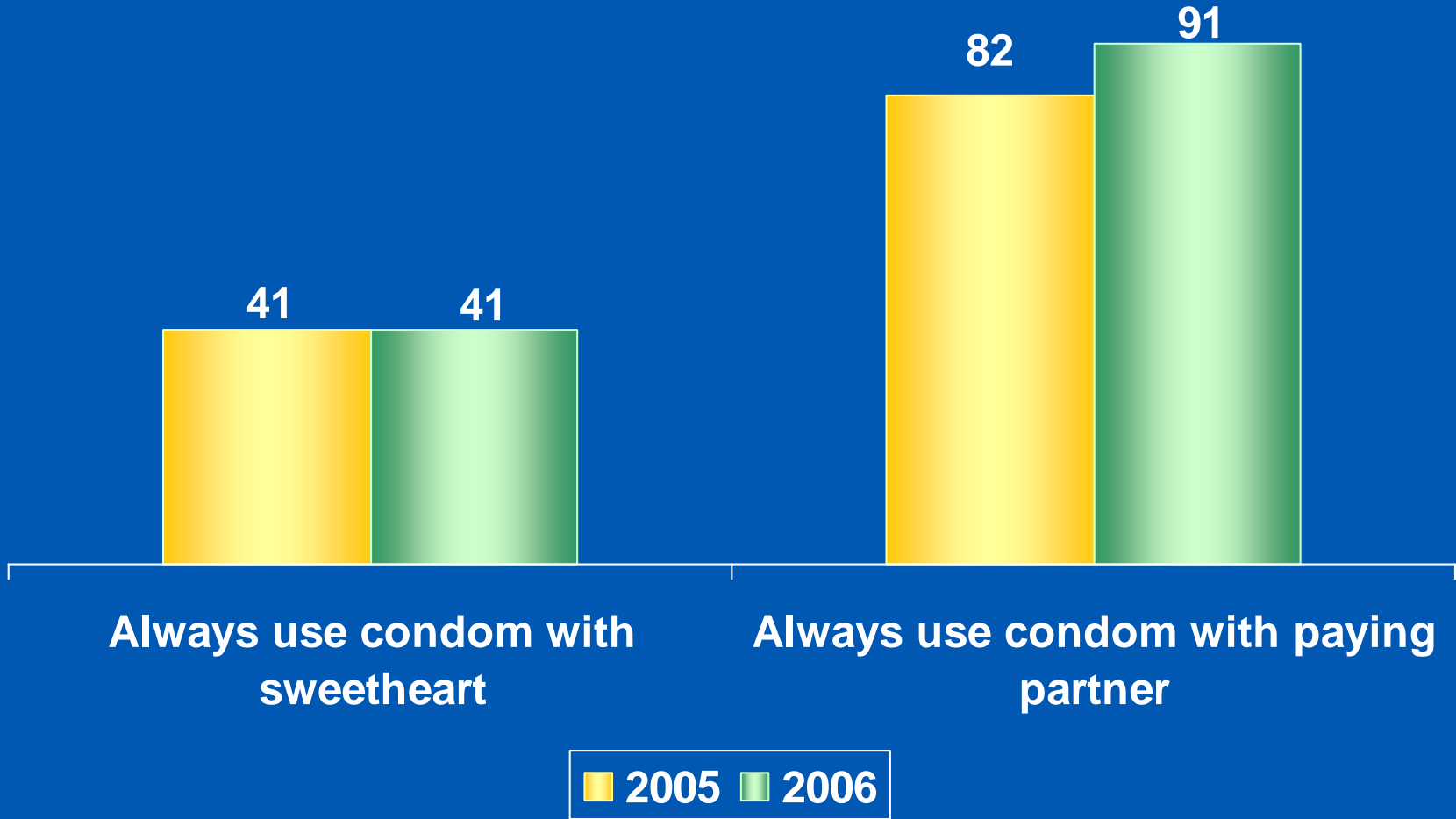
## *PSI's Targeted Behavioral Survey among Karaoke women in PP & SR*

Transactional sex with clients and sweethearts among Karaoke women



- Average of > 9 sexual partners in last 12 months
- 20% reported having more than one sweetheart
- Concurrent commercial and sweetheart relationships is a key risk factor for driving the HIV epidemic

# Consistent Condom Use



# Behavioral Determinants

## *Condom use with sweethearts*

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- Those who agreed that condoms are appropriate and necessary for use within sweetheart relationships were over **18** times more likely to report consistent condom use with sweethearts
- Believing a sweetheart has a “good” background and trusting him are persistent barriers to condom use

# Behavioral Determinants

## Condom use with sweethearts (Con't)

- Consistent condom users were more likely to:
  - Agree that asking sweetheart to use condoms does not imply suspicion that he has an STI or HIV
  - Perceive that their sweetheart would approve of using condoms with them

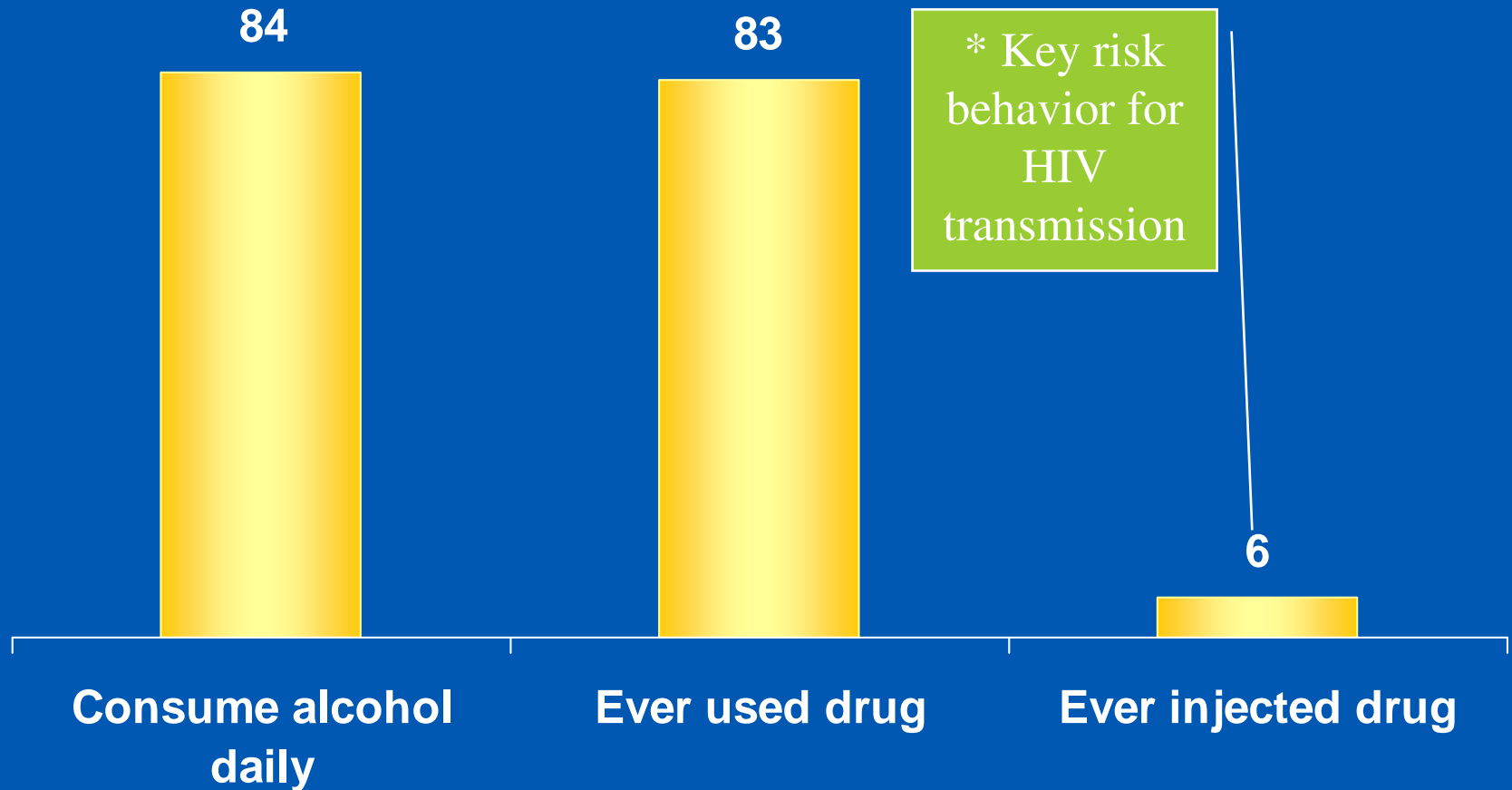


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# Drug and Alcohol Use



# Key Findings

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## High Risk Men *(Sexually Active Men with Sweetheart and Client of ESW)*

# Target Group Insights

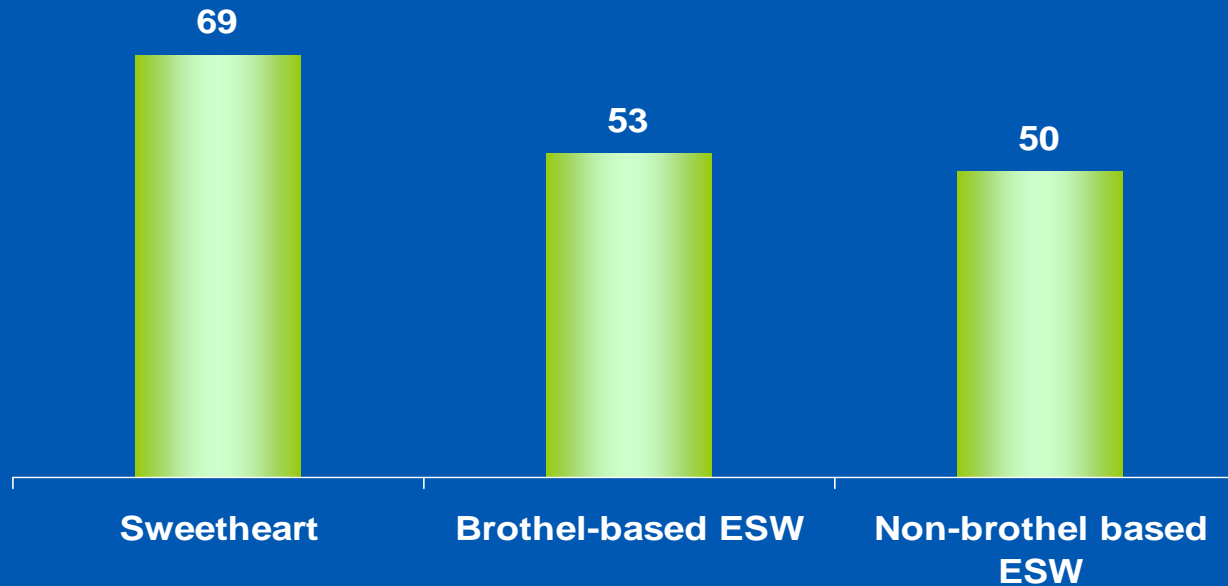
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- Within social group, strong peer pressure for seeking sex with ESWs
- Men often pool their money when they socialize which inhibits each individual from opting out of sex
- Men believe that they can distinguish “safe” from “unsafe” sex partners
- Younger men are reluctant to carry condoms
- Men are aware that making decisions about sex while drunk can lead to risky behavior – but they treat this as something outside of their control
- Men have conflicting values about masculinity

# Sexual Behavior

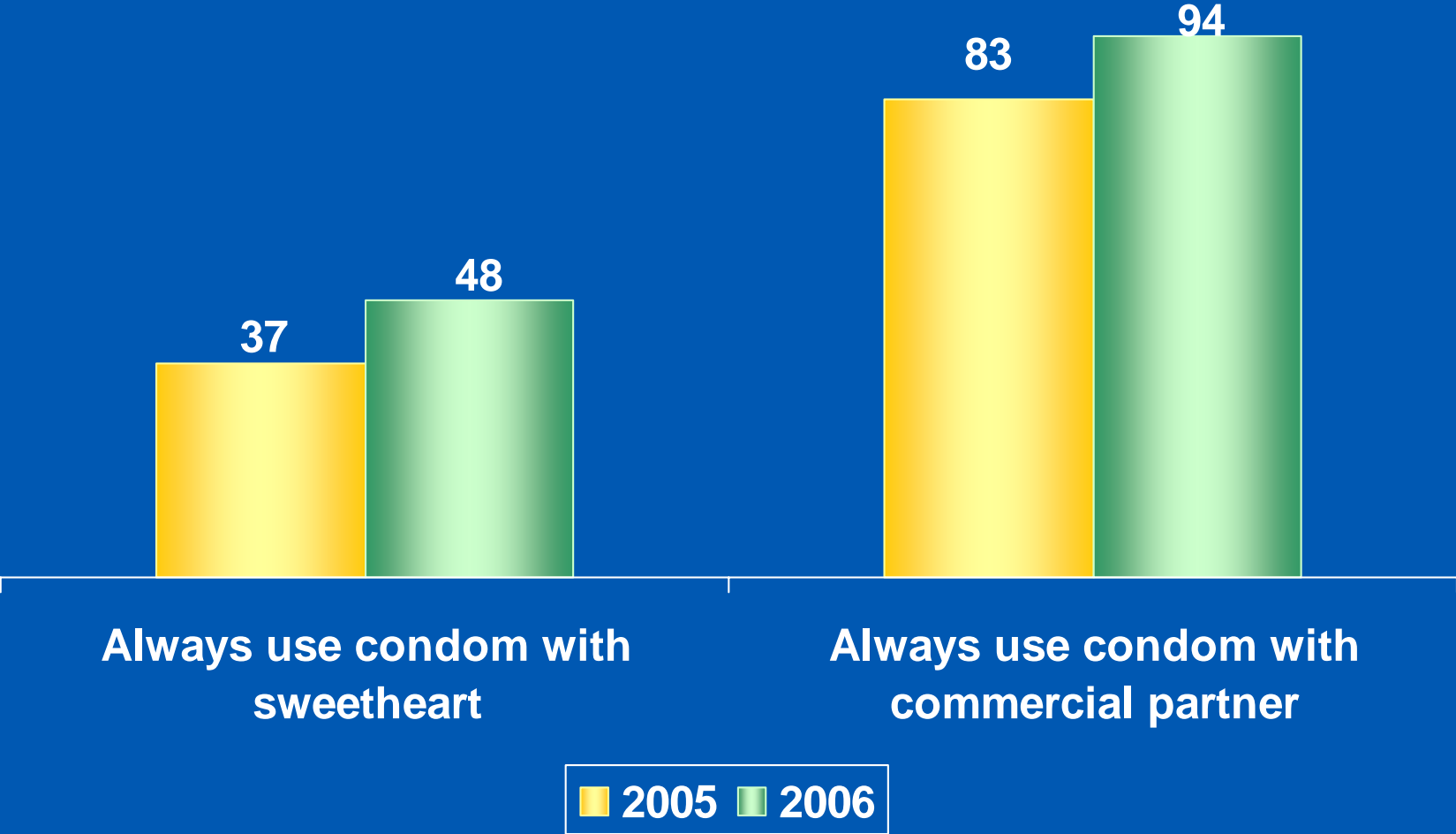
## *PSI's Targeted Behavioral Survey among Men Frequenting EE in PP*

High Risk Men's sexual activity by type of partner (last 12 months)



- Average of > 8 sexual partners in the last 12 months
- Concurrent commercial and sweetheart relationships are a key risk factor for driving the HIV epidemic

# Consistent Condom Use



# Behavioral Determinants

## *Condom use with sweethearts*

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- Those who agreed that condoms are appropriate and necessary for use within sweetheart relationships were over **20** times more likely to report consistent condom use with sweethearts
- Believing a sweetheart has a “good” background and trusting her are persistent barriers to condom use

# Behavioral Determinants

## Condom use with sweethearts (Con't)

- Consistent condom users were more likely to:
  - Report that they would not feel embarrassed to buy condoms
  - Perceive that condom use is normal in sweetheart relationships



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# Key Issues

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- Programmatic focus on ESW has over shadowed men's role in HIV transmission
- Men are less likely to use condoms when ESWs become their sweetheart
- Men reported high HIV risk perception, but do not take on much personal responsibility for transmission
- Men reported feeling embarrassed to purchase and carry condoms
- Strong group pressure is a barrier to acting on their own will to opt out of transactional sex

# Summary

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Among both High Risk Men and ESW:

- There is an overlap between “Sweetheart” and “Commercial” relationships.
- Consistent condom use in commercial sex is nearly universal, but consistent condom use with sweethearts is substantially lower, representing a considerable gap in condom use by partner type.

# Summary

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Key determinants of condom use with sweethearts among both High Risk Men and ESW:

- Condom use is appropriate and necessary in sweetheart relationships
- Believing in the need to use condoms despite knowing a sweetheart's background and trusting them

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# Thank You!