Healthy Images of Manhood:
The HIM Approach

**What is HIM?**

Healthy Images of Manhood (HIM) is a health education and outreach program developed especially for the workplace and is endorsed by GBCHealth. HIM helps men understand the negative effects of gender norms and stereotypes on their health and the health of their families and encourages the adoption of healthier attitudes and behaviors.

HIM complements and strengthens workplace health programs, such as for HIV/AIDS, malaria, tuberculosis, domestic abuse, and reproductive health/family planning (RH/FP) by addressing unhealthy gender norms.

In developing HIM, the Extending Service Delivery Project (ESD) has incorporated proven best practices for teaching men new skills to manage their own health and promote the healthy behaviors of their families, friends, and co-workers. Participants increase their basic health knowledge and learn strategies for effective peer outreach and counseling. HIM is readily adaptable to the specific needs and resources of each workplace.

**Why choose HIM?**

HIM is designed to help companies get the most out of their investments in health. A key result for HIM programs is an increase in the use or impact of workplace health services and programs, and ultimately a more productive, healthier workforce.

Businesses recognize that the health of their employees is important to their productivity and profitability. Many companies have invested in workplace and community programs aimed at preventing and treating diseases like HIV/AIDS, malaria, and tuberculosis and stopping sexual harassment and violence.

While such programs often disseminate state-of-the-art information and promote behavior change, they rarely address the effect of culture, including norms and attitudes of men, which may undermine program success. Despite a desire to be caring partners, fathers, and husbands, many men are raised with expectations to be “real men.” Research shows that men express these expectations by having multiple sex partners, taking little responsibility for the health of their families, and controlling the behavior and decisions of women. Such behaviors undermine the health of the entire community.

**What kinds of health behaviors can HIM address?**

HIM programs can address a wide range of health issues facing companies, including:

- Low use of health services (HIV/AIDS, RH/FP, etc.) by employees and their dependents.
- Limited impact of company-sponsored outreach programs on health or other topics.
- Sexual harassment and coerced sex or physical aggression.
- High rates of illness and disease.

**Who is HIM for?**

The program is designed to reach men, but it can include both men and women. Although HIM can be used with any employees, it is well suited to work with existing programs and trained staff.
- Peer Health Educators, Community Home-Based Care volunteers, and other organized groups that conduct outreach.
- Clinic staff or Community Health Workers that work directly with company employees.
- Company educators and trainers that directly manage health programs or develop training on health, safety and environmental concerns.

How can companies implement HIM?
There are three steps for companies to develop a HIM program:

1. **Situational Analysis/ Program Design.** A team helps the company collect and analyze relevant health data, assess major health problems, and understand their link to male attitudes and behaviors. HIM is then tailored to respond to a company’s operations, specific workplace health concerns, and available skills and resources.

2. **HIM Implementation.** HIM uses interactive, participatory methodologies to train and support employees during the course of a year to:
   - Build their knowledge of key health issues.
   - Develop skills in discussing gender and its relation to personal health and behaviors.
   - Teach tools and techniques for influencing peers and spurring behavior change.

3. **Monitoring, Evaluation, & Scale-up.** A company project coordinator provides supportive supervision and mentoring to participants and manages a system to collect data on outreach activities and their impact. This data is shared with participants as part of an ongoing program to improve their skills, analyze the impact of their outreach, and expand the reach of their activities.

Where has HIM been implemented?
Unilever Tea Tanzania Ltd (UTTL) supports a workforce of 6,000 employees and 25,000 dependents in a region of Tanzania where the rate of HIV/AIDS is about 20%. UTTL has integrated HIM into its existing health education program to increase the effectiveness of its Peer Health Educators. The goal has been to increase employee use of the company's free HIV/AIDS and reproductive health services and change men’s behaviors. UTTL has seen increases in new enrollees, particularly men, in UTTL’s HIV Care and Treatment Center. Also there has been a drop in Sexually Transmitted Infections.

UTTL’s sister company, Unilever Tea Kenya, Ltd., has adopted HIM for its 350 peer educators to reach 70,000 employees and their dependents.

ESD is also working with the Central and East Africa office of Global Business Coalition on HIV/AIDS, TB and Malaria, the National Organization of Peer Educators and the Federation of Kenya Employers to replicate the HIM approach with companies in Kenya.

What makes HIM cost-effective for companies?
HIM responds to the practical demands on business to address diverse health issues through:

- **Capacity-building.** ESD develops the capacity of company employees to implement and scale up HIM. Local resources and training organizations are leveraged, as needed, in implementing HIM at the workplace.

- **Adaptability.** HIM is adaptable to the specific health issues and resources of each company. The most relevant best practices are adapted to fit the type of employee participant, level of education, available time and the capacity to implement.

- **Improved Return on Investment.** HIM helps companies achieve better outcomes from their health program investments. A focus on gender helps achieve desired outcomes – such as increased use of services, more effective peer outreach or health service delivery, and improved delivery of health information – leading ultimately to better health.

HIM was developed by the Extending Service Delivery (ESD), a five-year project funded by USAID, that helps address unmet need for family planning (FP) and increase the use of reproductive health and FP services in communities, especially among underserved populations. Pathfinder International manages ESD in partnership with Meridian Group International, Inc., IntraHealth, and Management Sciences for Health.

Meridian Group International, Inc., is the lead ESD organization on CSR and NGO-Corporate partnerships, including HIM. For more information on this work, please visit our website at www.esdproj.org or David Wofford at http://meridian-group.com.