

# Sexual health interventions: strategies

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# Features of effective interventions to change individual behaviour:

- Theoretical models used in developing interventions
- Provision of basic, accurate information through clear, unambiguous messages
- Use of behavioural skills training, including self-efficacy
- Targeting and tailoring, making use of needs assessment or formative research

# [ Individuals vs structure/context ]

individuals "engage"  
in risk behaviour

context/ environment  
influences vulnerability

assumption of  
individual autonomy  
/ agency

individual agency is  
constrained / shaped  
by 'structures'

proxy causes of ill-  
health

fundamental causes of  
ill-health

# [ Changing the context ]

- Changing **broader determinants** of disease in order to **enable individual behaviour change**
  - gender norms and inequalities
  - poverty
  - strong social prohibitions (underpinned by law and policy)
  - other power inequalities
  - mobility and migration
- Often require massive multi-sectoral collaboration

# Addressing intimate partner violence in South Africa

- Economic development initiatives (micro credit schemes)
  - women's social, economic and political empowerment as key components of comprehensive HIV/AIDS strategy
  - strategic entry point for addressing HIV, gender inequality and poverty
- Domestic violence act as result of intervention
  - strategic use of edutainment Soul City
  - media advocacy to change public opinion

# Looking back at success stories of improvements in sexual health

- **Sex worker success stories** show contribution of changes to context
- **Thailand 100% condom programme** – multi-sectoral collaboration - government policy initiative
- **Sonagachi** – community mobilisation – how can we replicate? sex workers ran the intervention (are ‘not’ beneficiaries)

# Evidence base ... and rights of the 'beneficiaries'

- not one general approach works everywhere
- no single component is likely to work anywhere
- comprehensive multi-level, multi-partner behavioural interventions needed
  - take account of social context in which we target individual behaviour
  - attempt to modify social norms to facilitate uptake and support maintenance of behaviour change
  - tackle structural factors contributing to risky sexual behaviours
- and be guided by rights-based approaches!