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Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> October, 2011

## **ARTICLE FOR RELEASE**

### **False Sense of Trust**

Much data in PNG shows that there is less use of condoms with a regular or married partners compared to its use when having sex in a higher-risk situation with a casual or transactional partner, where money, goods, gifts, services, or other things are exchanged for sex.

A new NRI report, released today, illustrates these differences and stresses the importance of why condoms must be used more consistently by those with more than one concurrent sex partner.

The report finds that most petroleum development workers that were interviewed were not using condoms with those whom they considered to be their regular or steady partners, while most used condoms with those that were their more casual or transactional sex partners.

Behavioural Surveillance Specialist Dr Holly Buchanan said that this was a false sense of security “considering that over a quarter (29.6%) of workers in the study had married more than once, and that 14.2% were in polygamous marriages and a quarter (24.5%) of the workers had two or more regular partners, and as only 14.4% had used a condom all the time with these regular partners in the last three months.

She said, “there is a false sense of security in the context of HIV when the most given reason for not using a condom with a regular partner is trust.”

The report identifies that although most workers (67.6%) reported using condoms when engaging in sex with casual sex partners, 41.1% had one or more non-regular partners in the last year and only 45.6% had used a condom all the time in the past three months.

The lack of overall consistent use of condoms by those with non-regular or casual partners would make them more vulnerable to HIV and other sexually transmitted Infections.

Dr Buchanan said that the report which captured the views of Oil Search Limited workers identified that many “weigh out the risks well when considering condom use with different types of partners, perhaps in a manner similar to how they consider safety issues and protection in their daily work environment as there is higher condom use with higher risk partners.”

The report stated that the most given reasons for not using a condom at last sex with non-regular or casual partners in the last year was also trust (34.6%) and lack of availability (15.4%).

Dr Buchanan said that it was important that those with more than one sex partners who were not using condoms as a preventative measure all the time, especially across a range of sexual networks, should weigh better their risks and not have a false sense of security for their own protection from HIV transmission”.

**ENDS//**  
**WC: 440**