

# Findings on PEPFAR Prevention Funding from Congressionally Mandated Reports

April 2007

Two congressionally mandated studies have been conducted on PEPFAR; one by the Government Accountability Office (GAO) and the other by the National Institute of Medicine (IOM). **Both studies found that the earmark requiring that one-third of all U.S. global HIV prevention funding be spent on abstinence-until-marriage programs is undermining global efforts to prevent 7 million new HIV infections by 2008.**

## Government Accountability Office

The goal of the GAO report was to examine the effects of the abstinence-until-marriage earmark on PEPFAR prevention programs. GAO officials interviewed a range of U.S. government officials, recipients of PEPFAR funding, and other key informants in 20 countries, including the 15 PEPFAR focus countries and five others receiving a minimum of \$10 million annually in PEPFAR funding.

## Institute of Medicine

The goal of the IOM's evaluation was to determine whether PEPFAR is meeting its own targets for prevention, treatment, and care. Beginning in February 2005, IOM conducted on-the-ground analysis of PEPFAR programs in all 15 focus countries.

### Shared Findings

Finding	GAO	IOM
<b>Earmark Undermines Integration of Prevention Programs</b>	The abstinence-until-marriage requirement "can undermine the integration of prevention programs by forcing [country teams] to isolate funding for AB activities." This "limits some country teams' ability to shift program focus to meet changing prevention needs."	"The earmark has greatly limited the ability of Country Teams to develop and implement comprehensive prevention programs that are well integrated with each other and with counseling and testing, care, and treatment programs and that target those populations at greatest risk."
<b>OGAC's Prevention Guidance is Unclear</b>	Two-thirds of the countries reported "elements of the guidance were ambiguous and confusing, leading to difficulties in its interpretation and implementation."	Despite existing program guidance, "confusion and frustration in the field caused by the abstinence-until-marriage allocation have persisted."
<b>Earmark Limits Ability to Respond to Local Needs</b>	"17 of 20 PEPFAR teams...reported that the spending requirement presents challenges [in responding] to local epidemiology and cultural and social norms."	The earmark has "limited PEPFAR's ability to tailor its activities in each country to the local epidemic and to coordinate with...the countries' national plans."

### Findings Specific to GAO

- Some countries are exempted from the earmark, but countries not exempted have had to increase funding for AB programs and cut funding to other prevention activities to ensure that PEPFAR meets the earmark at the global level.
- OGAC requires abstinence-until-marriage programs without requiring companion efforts to promote safer sex and spends more on AB programs than required by law.

### Findings Specific to IOM

- "The ABC debate has . . . obscure[d] the importance of other behaviors that put people at high risk of contracting HIV/AIDS, such as alcohol use and violence toward women."
- IOM was "unable to find evidence for the position that abstinence can stand alone or that 33 percent is the appropriate allocation for such activities even within integrated programs."