



Helping you live better

SOCIAL MARKETING COMPANY



## SMC in the process of restructuring



SMC is in an important phase of transition. The company has now grown to the point where it is recovering all of its non-program related costs including commodity and operating costs. Simultaneously, the company's program operations have expanded considerably and are becoming more complex with multi-donor funding, multiple partnerships with local NGOs and an increasing fund size. SMC's manufacturing operations are also becoming more challenging with upcoming increase in the production capacity of ORS, new manufacturing intervention into an electrolyte drink and future plans for further expansion into newer areas.

The current organizational structure of SMC, based on a single unit entity, needs to be modified in order to effectively manage the increasingly diverse and complex operations and therefore SMC commissioned a study in 2012 which proposed a new organizational set up based on the formation of separate entities for the nonprofit and for-profit operations. The SMC Management and Board felt that the recommendations had merit and in FY 2014, the company contracted an independent CA firm to initiate discussion and implement the necessary steps related to the restructuring process. During the quarter, the firm started their work as per the ToR given to them by the Management.



## Working for a greener and healthier Bangladesh

Being encouraged by the Company Chairman Mr. Muhammed Ali and Board Directors, the CSR Committee at SMC has been working to make a positive contribution to the wider community and the environment in which it operates. In our environment where trees are diminishing to make room for urban expansion, it has taken up a tree plantation project on a limited scale and hopes to contribute steadily in the coming days to build a greener Bangladesh. As part of the initiative, it has planted saplings in Narsingdi Eidgah and surrounding areas and also in Banani field at Road # 1, Block I in Dhaka during June this year.



SMC also believes in supporting organizations and enthusiastic young activists, who are striving to make Bangladesh healthier. In June this year, the Company donated 600 sachets of ORSsaline-N to Women Care Bangladesh that provides healthcare to female garment workers. Led by young university students, the organization subsequently arranged a health camp at Impress Printing, Kamarpara, Turag in Uttara and delivered 500 sachets of ORSsaline-N along with other healthcare products to 165 female garment workers.

## Xtreme hits the market



SMC's new condom brand Xtreme has been launched at the beginning of June, 2014. It is a high-priced premium condom brand being promoted with the payoff line 'Insane Pleasure.' The new brand comes in two variants and targets urban male of 25-40 years, who are ready to pay a premium price for an extremely pleasurable experience.

The launching ceremony was held at SMC Head Office. SMC Managing Director Mr. Ashfaq Rahman unveiled the new condom brand and announced its official launch by cutting a cake in presence of Deputy Managing Director Md. Ali Reza Khan, Head of Marketing Mr. Mahbubur Rahman and other high officials.

## Joya winged sanitary napkin launched



In the context of a growing market for winged sanitary napkins, SMC recently launched a Wings version of Joya sanitary napkin. The brand entered the market in September 2013 in belted version and has been a big hit. Joya is primarily targeted at young girls and women from middle to low income groups, who are either non-users or irregular users of sanitary napkins.

Within a very short span of time since launch, the brand has built a high quality perception and is truly believed to provide value for money for the consumers. The newly launched winged sanitary napkin brings additional benefits to users in terms of convenience of use and extra comfort. It is very reasonably priced at Tk. 60 for a pack of 8 pieces.

## U&ME Facebook page crosses 50,000 likes!



The Facebook page of SMC's popular condom brand U&ME has crossed 50,000 likes just within three months of opening. An amazing achievement indeed, which clearly reflects the growing popularity of the page among urban adults who fall within 45 years age bracket.

Several efforts were instrumental in hitting this number. Placing ads with compelling messages, interesting wall posts linked with TVCs running on TV channels, launch of a very popular TVC on the brand through Facebook, advertisement optimization – all made the page and its contents go viral to ultimately land this number of likes. The Marketing department is now targeting to achieve another 50 thousand likes in the next two months. Visit [www.facebook.com/uandmebd](http://www.facebook.com/uandmebd) to view the Facebook page.

## Early sales days - stories that seem unbelievable now!

We frequently see these statistics: 84% of the retail pharmacy outlets in Bangladesh have at least one SMC branded pill, 82% have at least one SMC condom, etc.

Such impressive numbers seem to have become part of the expected performance these days but that was not the case in the early days of the project, when things were much tougher. The mid-70s, when SMC had first started as the Family Planning Social Marketing Project, our society was not fully prepared to accept Family Planning and contraceptive methods as easily as they do now. Condoms and oral contraceptive pills were considered as taboo products. Former Senior Sales Manager Mr. IUM Ashfaque tells the Voice team in an interview, retailers in the 70s were very shy! Some would say, "Brother, my young son works with me in the outlet. How can I sell these products to customers in front of him?" Others would utter, "Nauzubillah! You are spoiling our society." He kept on going, when I visited Mitford, retailers would comment "You have lost your character in this life and you are going to suffer in hell." Mr. Mukul Talukder, Area Sales Manager (Chittagong), who



has been with the company for about 30 years, recalls while taking us through the memory lane, shopkeepers would pull down the shutters at the sight of SMC sales team. Some would say, "By showing up in the morning with these bad products, you have ruined my business luck for the rest of the day."

Things have gradually changed and we have a lot to thank our sales team of early days for the superb work they did then in desensitizing the private markets and persuading them to stock SMC pills and condoms, thus making the products widely accessible to all. The persistence and hard work of our sales force with very limited resources, and the creativity and innovative approach taken by the then



marketing team to help create demand were instrumental in creating an enabling environment, the benefit of which we are enjoying now in the society with a successful family planning program.

The 'SMC' name has become synonymous with trust and quality over the years. Retail outlets, health providers and NGOs offer SMC brands and customers buy them in full faith and enthusiasm. SMC's contributions to the national health and family planning program have increased impressively representing 30.4% of all contraceptive use nationally. SMC now accounts for 60% of condom use, 38% of pill use, and 20% of injectable use nationally. We have come a long way because of the contribution and sacrifices of many people who had directly and indirectly supported our efforts in the early sales days.



## SOMA-JECT TV commercial goes on air

To revitalize the demand for SOMA-JECT injectables, SMC developed a new TVC with the payoff line "Amader Astha SOMA-JECT". In a combination of 40-second and 20-second cut down versions, 2,196 spots of this TVC have been aired on four major satellite channels during April-June 2014. The TV campaign is expected to have significant impact on the sales and awareness of SOMA-JECT.

Injectable is considered the second most popular contraceptive method among couples of reproductive age. In 1998 SMC introduced SOMA-JECT to the market initially through graduate doctors and medical service providers. Currently, this product is being administered through both graduate and non-graduate health service providers under SMC's network of 6,000 strong Blue Star outlets.

## SMC launches media campaign to promote clean cook stoves



During the quarter, SMC produced and launched a TVC to promote use of Clean Cook Stoves (CCS) and reduce health hazards caused by using the 'three-stoned' traditional stoves that emit smoke and cause severe indoor air pollution (IAP), mostly in rural and sub-urban areas. The TVC went on air during May-June 2014.

Built on a well-crafted story, the TVC delivered the core message by using an analogy between hazardous health effects of IAP and the dangerous consequence of a snake's bite. The objective was to shape an attitude among people that completely rejects the idea of living in a polluted environment as no one would ever choose to live with a snake and bear the consequence of living with it.



A Mozambican shopkeeper transfers an electronic voucher from a client's mobile phone. The vendor will provide the client with a free water purification kit, and then will receive an immediate credit from PSI/Mozambique, via the Movercado system.

# Technology bridging private sector and social marketing

PSI/Mozambique has developed a mobile phone-based ecosystem, called Movercado, to make use of technology in improving communication with customers and better linking private sector partners in its social marketing distribution network. To gain a clear understanding on how the ecosystem works, Dr. AZM Zahidur Rahman, Mr. Motahar Hossain and Mr. Dana Ward from SMC's Program division travelled to Mozambique in Southern Africa in May this year.

The travelling team from Bangladesh saw how Movercado can help evaluate and manage interpersonal communication programs, and how it can increase the coverage of social marketing products through private sector shops and drug sellers. Through its advanced algorithms, and using inexpensive mobile phones, the system is able to communicate simply and effectively with both consumers and private sector vendors. It can monitor quality, send e-vouchers, and make e-payments for products and services. PSI and SMC are together planning to bring Movercado to Bangladesh. Having a rapidly expanding private sector, dense population and high cell phone penetration, Bangladesh can be an ideal country to benefit from this ecosystem.



## Sales skills training held

As part of developing Human Resource and improving employee skills, SMC organized a high-quality sales training program for its sales force in the month of April. This two-day long training program, held in Dhaka, Bogra and Khulna, was titled "Development of Selling and Communication Skills" and was facilitated by Md. Akbar Hassan from Briddhi, a well-reputed Industrial & Marketing Consultant.

The training was designed at improving the sales and communication skills of SMC sales force and enabling them to improve their overall productivity. SMC believes that in a competitive market environment, communication skill is one of the key determinants of a successful sales call.

### Feedback from a few trainees

*"I have learned a lot about building customer relationships and key sales steps. I believe I can bring better business results with my enriched knowledge."*

Md. Abdullah Al Mamun,  
Dhaka East Area Office.

*"The most important thing I have learned from this training is how to make a sale that brings both me and the customer to a WIN-WIN situation and opens up opportunity for future sales."*

Mohammad Ashfaquul Islam,  
Mymensingh Area Office.

## WELCOME TO AGE 50!



10 health and fitness tips for anyone turning 50 in 2014 (and those who are already in their 50s)

1. Sleep well, all night, every night
2. Expand your checkup checklist
3. Men, get your prostates checked
4. Get your vitamins, preferably from food
5. Eat right, avoid disease
6. Start moving - and don't stop
7. Get in shape now, live longer
8. Boost your exercise intensity
9. Exercise your brain too
10. Brush and floss, now more than ever

Live a healthier life. Live long 😊

Adviser: Ashfaq Rahman, Editor: Shaila Purvin, Graphics Design and Layout: Md. Monzur Quader Amin, Coordination: Tashdique Mannan  
Acknowledgement: All Departments for providing information; Address: SMC Tower, 33, Banani C/A, Dhaka-1213, [www.smc-bd.org](http://www.smc-bd.org)