



Risks | Responsibilities

Male Sexual Health and HIV in Asia
and the Pacific-International Consultation

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COUNTRY : P.R. CHINA

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MSM are formally organised

- Social groups : **Yes** Some local CBO are beginning organise community building activities, like rainbow kite flying on Pride.
- NGO/CBO : **Yes** Some MSM groups are registered as an NGO or a private enterprise. There still exist many institutional legal barriers for NGO registration. Without legal status, many groups cannot directly receive funding. There is no national MSM organization.
- Networks : **Yes** There exist several competing MSM networks. These networks are not defined by geography, but rather from funding channels, fiscal sponsors and the level of relationship with the local health authorities.

MSM are in-formally organised : Yes Some groups are form around internet organized outings, parties and film festivals.

- MSM specifically captured in the **National HIV Surveillance System** : **Yes**

Specific surveillance for MSM is limited. China has approximately 15 MSM dedicated surveillance stations nationwide.

- **National HIV prevalence** among MSM : 1-3 %

(widely agreed to be under-reported by the MSM community), no national government led HIV prevalence study among MSM has been conducted in China. Some local health officials and both independent and academic led studies have been done around China showing a range of prevalence. Some local studies have shown prevalence over 5 %.

This includes **behaviour surveillance** : **No**

- Surveillance **Report date** : **No national survey**

‘MSM and HIV’ - related research available, ongoing or planned : **Yes**

If “YES”: Research published : **Yes**

1. Multiple studies have been done by health, academic and CBOs usually focusing on prevalence rate, condom use, meeting places and marital status

KEY INFORMATION GAPS that hinder establishing and/or scaling up 'MSM and HIV' - specific programmes and interventions :

- 1. Attitudes** Most MSM do not believe their individual behavior might lead to becoming infected
- 2. MSM identify** Fail to link MSM individual and community identity to HIV prevention
- 3. Too Much Research** Some CBOs believe too much focus on research rather than supporting direct interventions

Demographic data available on males who have sex with males: **Yes**, According to government estimates, China has 5-10 million gay men, widely believed to an underestimate.

MSM - specific budget [lines] in the National HIV Plan : No

Unknown amount of funding earmarked for MSM-specific HIV/AIDS prevention and care activities.

GFATM : Funds specifically earmarked for 'MSM and HIV' : Yes

CCM has MSM – specific representation : No

Describe : Current Civil CCM represent is from an MSM organization

Other international donor and/or multilateral institutions funds specifically earmarked for 'MSM and HIV' : Yes

FHI, USAID, DFID, Ford Foundation, Red Cross(s), Futures Group, Gates Foundation (forthcoming)

Donor coordination in supporting 'MSM and HIV' – specific programmes and interventions (donors themselves and donors with government).

None with Donors, however UN Theme Group on HIV/AIDS in China has convened a bi-monthly Working Group on MSM and HIV/AIDS.

There is an **operational National Strategic Plan on HIV** : No.

There are '**MSM and HIV**' - **specific interventions** in the National HIV Plan : No

It calls for prevention; information and support services; peer outreach and STI services for high risk populations. In 2004, the Ministry of Health issued "Guidelines for High Risk Group Interventions" in which MSM were identified as a high risk group. These interventions are primarily led by local health departments. The majority of local AIDS Action plans also fail identify MSM as a high risk group.

These programmes reach **sub-populations of MSM** (trans gendered, etc) : No

- **Male-to-male sex is legal** : Yes
- **MSM – specific HIV programmes face problems with law enforcement** : Yes
Public Security often shut down non-HIV related MSM community activities such as film festivals. These shut downs are highly publicized and discourage MSM groups from hosting or conducting HIV-related activities for fear of arousing the attention of the local police.
- **Obstacles [not related to information gaps]** that hinder establishing and/or scaling up of ‘MSM and HIV’ – specific programmes and interventions : Yes

1. **Stigma** Describe (including solutions) : Increase involvement of MSM in national and local MSM-related HIV activities.
2. **Resources** Describe (including solutions) : Increase advocacy for limited national resources dedicated to MSM-specific HIV prevention activities.
3. **Strategy** Describe (including solutions) : MSM CBOs need to identify their individual strategies vis-à-vis local health authorities and each other.

‘MSM and HIV’ - specific interventions in the National HIV Plan : No

- HIV transmission prevention: MSM are not specifically mentioned in HIV transmission prevention programmes, but rather are included in high risk group interventions such as peer education programmes and condom promotion campaigns.
- Information & communication: Many MSM CBOs have corresponding websites, but their HIV/STI sections are limited; very few IEC materials for MSM and HIV/AIDS.
- Peer outreach: Little support for peer education capacity building from national government
- Targeted condom distribution; including lubricants: Some local health department led programmes offer condoms for MSM, but water-based lubricants distribution are still largely led by INGO programmes.

‘MSM and HIV’ - specific interventions in the National HIV Plan : *Continued*

- Access to treatment: MSM are not specifically mentioned in treatment programmes. China’s National “4 Frees, 1 Care” policy provides free treatment for all people living with HIV and AIDS.
- STI Services : No, but some local health department specially target MSM for STI services
- Enabling environment: No, but same sex is not illegal. To date, activities addressing the vulnerabilities of MSM, such as enabling and supportive environments; community engagement and MSM community capacity building, are not supported in government led interventions.
- Community engagement and empowerment :No, MSM community engagement and empowerment initiatives. High Risk interventions into the MSM community are linked to public health programmes, not social engagement. MSM CBOs only seen as an entry point for local HIV/STI prevention programmes.

‘MSM and HIV’ - specific interventions in the National HIV Plan : *Continued*

- [MSM] NGO/CBO HIV competencies strengthening : No NGO capacity building. Numerous legal and structural barriers exists which make independent NGO registration and engagement more difficult.
- [MSM] NGO/CBO other competencies strengthening : No
- Support services : No

‘MSM and HIV’ - specific interventions in the National HIV Plan : No

- CBO : Yes Organized and run
- NGO : Yes Organized and run, many leaders are non-MSM
- INGO : Yes Support activities, usually through local MSM-run CBOs
- Local government : Yes View MSM CBO as entry point for VCT services, condom promotion and study subjects. Usually no funding is channel to MSM CBO
- National government : No Previous efforts by the national government to directly fund MSM organizations for HIV prevention activities failed because of MSM community infighting.

‘MSM and HIV’ are part of the country’s scaling up towards universal access to prevention, treatment, care and support initiative : Yes

Roadmap and Targets are yet to be defined.

Additional Information and/or Comments :

- . Secondary Transmission and Care: Few MSM CBOs are currently engaged in prevention of secondary transmission among MSM or their wives, and providing care for MSM living with HIV and AIDS
- “Money Boys” and transgender have only recently been mentioned by MSM community groups as targets for intervention, still rare