



Risks | **Responsibilities**
Male Sexual Health and HIV in Asia
and the Pacific-International Consultation
New Delhi, India, 23-26 September 2006

COUNTRY : Lao PDR

Prepared by : The Centre for HIV/AIDS/STI & UNAIDS Lao PDR

Designation :

Date : July 17, 2006

Annexe(s) : -

MSM are formally organised

- Social groups : No
- Organisations : No
- NGOs : No
- CBOs : No
- Networks : No
- Other : No

MSM are in-formally organised : No. However, there are MSM working as volunteers for the Lao Youth Prevention Programme (LYAP), the Burnet Institute and the Population Services International (PSI)

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

If “YES”: Research published : No (the reports are available but there is no official distribution)

1. Burnet Institute (2004) Study of Young Men’s Sexual Behaviour, Vientiane, August-November 2004.
2. Population Services International PSI (2005) Knowledge, Attitudes and Practices Related to HIV/AIDS and STI among Transgender and their Partners in Lao PDR.

[add slides if needed] [attach summaries if possible]

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

1. Lack of information on MSM lifestyle and their situation and role in the Lao society.
2. Lack of information on behaviour and practices among MSM with regards to sexuality and HIV vulnerability.
3. Lack of information on HIV prevalence among MSM.

Demographic data available on males who have sex with males : No

MSM - specific budget [lines] in the National HIV Plan : Yes

If “YES” : USD 475,000 (1,8 % of total HIV budget); Actual implementation :
N/A

MSM/MSW are a component of the National Strategic and Action Plan on HIV/AIDS/STI in Lao PDR 2006-2010. Implementation has recently started, no information available about funds used this far.

GFATM : Yes Funds specifically earmarked for ‘MSM and HIV’ : No

If “YES” : CCM has MSM – specific representation : No

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

If "YES" List :

Describe : A total of 48,000 USD has already been pledged for MSM/MSW activities for 2006-2010. The funding gap is 430,200 USD. No breakthrough available about of the organizations that have pledged funds.

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

Describe : No specific coordination mechanism existing yet.

There is an **operational National Strategic Plan on HIV** : Yes If “YES” :

There are ‘**MSM and HIV**’ - **specific interventions** in the National HIV Plan : Yes

If “YES” : Coverage : 100% 1% (indicate with “**x**” on scale)

 MSM usage : 100% 1% (indicate with “**x**” on scale)

It is difficult to answer to this question, because there is no baseline information of the number of MSM in Lao PDR.

These programmes reach **sub-populations of MSM** (trans gendered, etc) : Y/N

If “YES” : Coverage : 100% 1% (indicate with “**x**” on scale)

 MSM usage : 100% 1% (indicate with “**x**” on scale)

It is difficult to answer to this question, because there is no baseline information of the number of MSM in Lao PDR.

Male-to-male sex is legal : The Lao Law does not mention male-to-male sex. Recently, two drop-in centres have been opened for MSM, which indicates the Government's support for HIV and STI prevention on MSM.

MSM – specific HIV programmes face **problems with law enforcement** : No

Obstacles [not related to information gaps] that hinder establishing and/or scaling up of 'MSM and HIV' – specific programmes and interventions : Yes. The ones presented below were identified during the In-Country Preparatory Meeting.

- Denial of the existence and needs of MSM people, and some stigma and discrimination on them within the Lao society
- Lack of user friendly VCT, STI and other services for MSM
- Different sub-categories of MSM with different needs for prevention and services
- Many MSM hide their preferences and behavior and they are not responsive for messages targeting MSM
- High risk behaviour and low awareness on HIV/AIDS/STI among some MSM

Obstacles (continues)

- **Poverty, as well as difficulties to find employment, increase MSM people's vulnerability to sex work and HIV**
- **Laos has opened up, which increases foreign influence to the Lao society**
- **There are limited funds for HIV related work among MSM and little agencies involved**
- **Networks of MSM in Lao PDR are still weak**

'MSM and HIV' - specific interventions in the National HIV Plan : Yes

If "YES" :

- HIV transmission prevention : Yes

The National Strategic and Action Plan on HIV/AIDS/STI 2006-2010 presents that the *essential elements* for MSM/MSW, in prioritized provinces and districts are:

- Creating an enabling environment
- Awareness raising
- BCI
- Condom promotion/Providing lubricants
- STI services
- VCT
- Capacity building

- Information & communication : Yes, see above
- Peer outreach : Yes, see above
- Targeted condom distribution; including lubricants : Yes, see above

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

If “YES” :

- Access to treatment : Yes (Care and support has mentioned in separate component, which can be accessed by all people who needed)

- STI Services : Yes, see above

- Enabling environment : Yes, see above

- Community engagement and empowerment : Yes. The Strategy suggests to *‘establish pilot projects in key locations with full participation of the target population’*.

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

If “YES” :

- [MSM] NGO/CBO HIV competencies strengthening : Yes
- [MSM] NGO/CBO other competencies strengthening : Not clear define
- Support services : Not clear define
- Other : Yes. The Strategy suggests the following:
 - Conducting quantitative and qualitative studies on MSM/MSW
 - Increasing awareness among decision makers
 - Reducing discrimination
 - Reviewing the National HIV/AIDS/STI Policy as regards to MSM and kathoey people
 - Establishing pilot projects
 - Expanding prevention and care activities

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

If “YES” :These interventions are run by :

- CBO : No
- NGO : No
- INGO : Yes Describe : PSI (research, MSM drop-in centres),
Burnet Institute (research, peer education)
- Local government : Yes Describe : The Provincial HIV/AIDS authorities are
involved in the above mentioned activities
- National government : Yes Describe : The Lao Youth AIDS
Prevention Programme LYAP (under the Buddhist Association) is involved in
peer education among MSM and kathoey people.
- Other : No

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

The National Strategic and Action Plan on HIV/AIDS/STI 2006-2010 presents the *essential elements* for MSM/MSW, in prioritized provinces (*see slide 13*)

Additional Information and/or Comments :

▪ .

▪ .

▪ .