

Model for MSM sexual health interventions

Introduction

The Naz Foundation International (NFI) has developed a model for the implementation and scaling up of interventions for men-who-have-sex-with-men¹ (MSM), their partners and families, to prevent HIV transmission and other sexually transmitted infections, and improve the general health and welfare of this population. The model has a number of key features and processes and utilises a number of key tools. These are described below, and a summary of the model appears at the end of this paper.

Key features of the model

1. An intimate knowledge of MSM issues and needs

This is gained from:

- a. A range of studies and needs assessments that NFI has undertaken and documented over the years²
- b. Technical assistance to develop and mentor community based MSM HIV interventions (since 1996, some 70 such MSM HIV projects have been assisted or developed in South Asia)
- c. Ongoing monitoring and evaluation from existing community based initiatives,
- d. Ongoing development of new research partnerships to address specific concerns.

2. A clearly defined community development strategy

This includes the development of country and/or state-level community based organisations (CBOs) addressing MSM HIV issues, needs and concerns, which in turn develop district-level activities within their country or state, with ongoing support and mentoring from NFI.

3. A strong advocacy, policy and ongoing support strategy

The model includes a strong component of upstream advocacy and policy development, to help create a positive political, social, legal and policy environment for the work to be sufficiently well resourced and enabled. NFI also provides a range of ongoing support activities to MSM intervention programmes.

Key processes

1. Country/state MSM CBO programme development

Using the NFI developed framework and tools, NFI provides training and support to develop new or existing MSM country/state organisations to undertake needs assessments and develop MSM led CBO programmes.

2. Scaling-up across a country/state – support for local MSM CBO programme development

Building on established Country/State level MSM CBO programmes, NFI provides support and training for these CBOs to develop locally based MSM led CBO programmes across their states.

¹ Men who have sex with men' (or MSM) is an inclusive, public health term to define the sexual behaviour of males having sex with other males, and does not refer to an identifiable community or gender identification. Within this context it is understood that the word 'man'/'men' is socially constructed; as well, within the framework of male-to-male sex, there are a range of masculinities along with diverse sexual, gender and transgender identities, communities and networks.

² See NFI website www.nfi.net

3. Upstream advocacy and policy development and ongoing support

A range of upstream advocacy and policy development work is undertaken to create the necessary political, social, legal and policy environment for the resourcing and enabling of state and district level MSM CBOs services to take place.

NFI also provides a range of ancillary support services to the MSM CBO programmes, which includes regular training events, provision of a monitoring and evaluation service, help in developing intervention resources and organisational development support.

Key Tools

NFI has developed a broad range of comprehensive tools for MSM CBO development that includes:

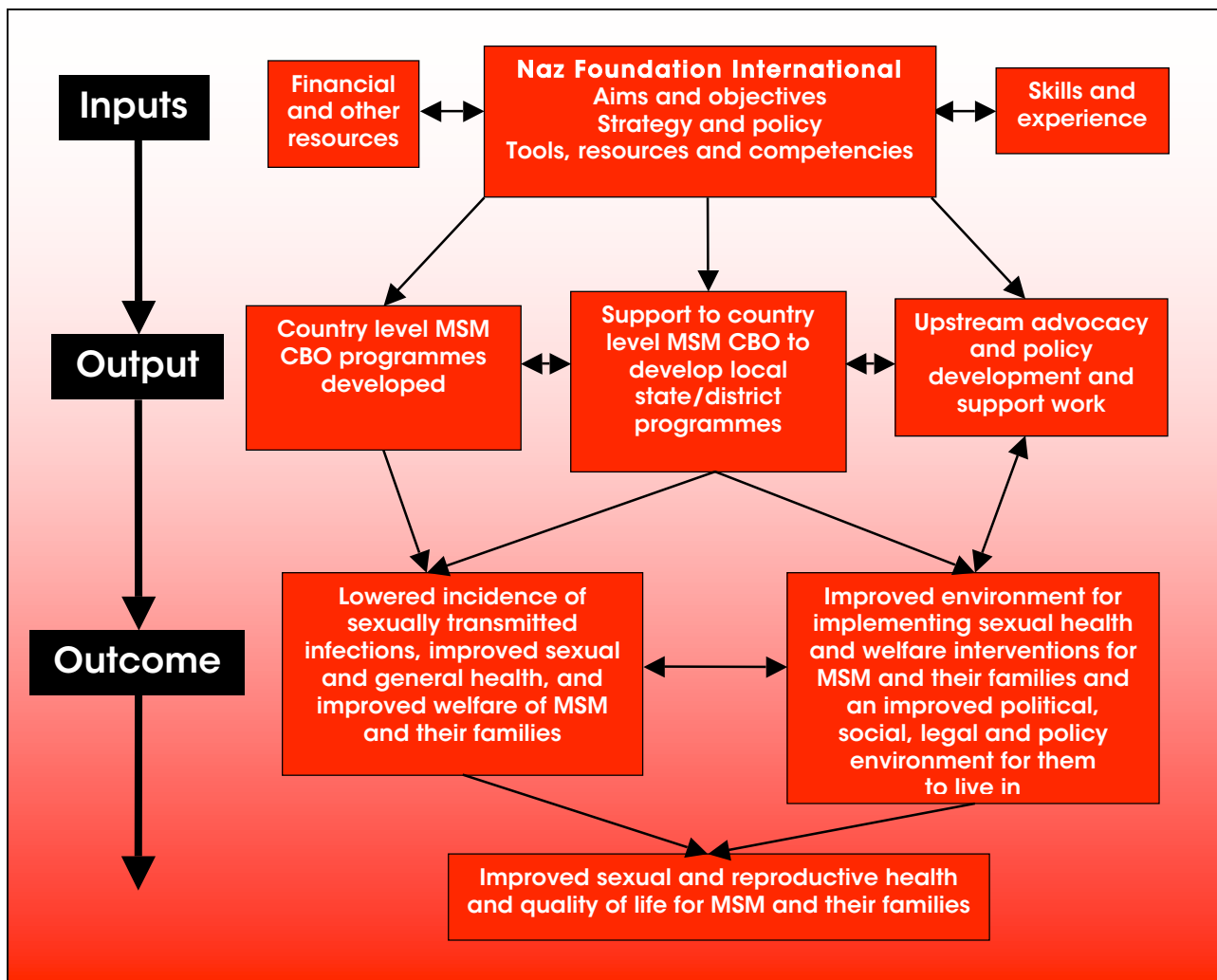
- Training manuals, guidelines and handbooks specific to the needs of MSM led CBO programmes,
- A monitoring and evaluation system,
- Model behaviour change communication resources for MSM CBO programmes,
- An enhanced and computerised version of the monitoring and evaluation system,
- Multiple languages of the NFI MSM CBO development tool-kit,
- Anal sexually transmitted infection algorithm,
- Advocacy tool-kit.

What NFI offers

- Tested methodology for developing new MSM community-based organisations and scaling up coverage
- Access to a range of documentation and tool-kits
- A management and monitoring system appropriate to the needs of MSM CBOs
- On-going technical support and mentoring of MSM CBOs
- Support for advocacy and policy development
- A skilled and experienced technical assistance team
- A range of BCC materials in different languages
- Over a decade of working experience with MSM networks, groups and organisations in South Asia and elsewhere
- Resource and research documentation on MSM and sexual health issues
- Linking mechanisms to country specific, regional and international networks for skills and information exchange.
- Mentoring of projects along with ongoing technical assistance to ensure quality assurance in terms of management, financial responsibility and service provision

Model Summary

A summary of the model, in terms of inputs, outputs and outcomes, processes and activities is described in the figure below:



In South Asia, the Naz Foundation International country partners are

Afghanistan: Under development
 Bangladesh: Bandhu Social Welfare Society
 India: India Naz Foundation International
 Nepal: Blue Diamond Society
 Pakistan: Under development
 Sri Lanka: Companions on a Journey