Men who have Sex with Men (MSM) – Update for ICAAP, Bali, 2009

Pakistan

SUMMARY OF SITUATION
The following and additional data and citations can be found at www.aidsdatahub.org

HIV Prevalence
- Overall HIV prevalence is 0.9% among male sex workers (MSWs) and 6.4% among transgenders (TGs) (IBBS, 2008).
- 3.1% of MSWs in Karachi and 27% TGs in Larkana are HIV positive (IBBS, 2008).

Selected Behaviors & Knowledge
- 24% of MSWs and 19.7% TGs reported always using condom with paid clients in the past month (IBBS, 2008).
- 6.4% of MSWs and 4.6% of TGs had sex with IDUs in past 6 months (IBBS, 2008).
- High level of sexual abuse and violence reported by TGs.

National Response
- Male-to-male sex is illegal in Pakistan.
- Epidemiological-behavioral data and HIV prevention strategies on MSM is really of two sub-populations: male and transgender sex workers.
- Delivery of HIV prevention services among MSWs and TGs is a priority area in National HIV/AIDS Strategic Framework.
- The service delivery coverage figures from the World Bank supported Government programme are still low i.e. 8.5% of MSWs and 18.3% of TGs. However, the analysis over the past five years shows an upward trend (IBBS, 2008).
- The Naz Foundation International – an international NGO focusing on MSM in South Asia – has submitted a Global Fund Round 9 sub-regional proposal on MSM for six countries, including Pakistan.

RECOMMENDED RESPONSES
Contact the UNAIDS Pakistan office for more information at tawilo@unaids.org

- Decriminalize male-to-male sex and remove other laws impeding effective HIV prevention.
- There is urgent need to rapidly scale up comprehensive programmes to prevent sexual transmission of HIV among TGs and MSWs.
- Populations of MSM, who have not been accessed so far, need to be included in the next round of Second Generation Surveillance and, based on the findings, tailored service delivery programmes should be initiated.
- Develop capacity of the community-based organizations to provide advocacy and peer-based programs.
- Scale up MSM-friendly VCT and sexual health services.
- Expand care, treatment and support facilities for HIV-positive MSM.
- Address stigma and discrimination toward PLHIV in MSM communities.
- Involve MSM communities in prevention, treatment, care and support programmes.

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The Regional Picture

REPORT ON THE COMMISSION OF AIDS IN ASIA

The Commission on AIDS in Asia used the Asian Epidemic Model (AEM) to construct a picture of how the regional HIV epidemic in different sub-populations has developed over the years, and how it is likely to grow in the future if prevention stays the same.

The regional projection shows that Asia is on the brink of a large increase in new infections among MSM if risk behavior stays at current levels of low condom use with many concurrent male partners.

AEM is a computer model that simulates the spread of HIV within and between important at-risk populations and their partners. Key inputs are levels of HIV (prevalence), and the most important HIV-related risk behaviors of each sub-population and their sizes. The regional projection was made by adding up results of AEMs for countries in Asia.

IF INTERVENTION COVERAGE INTENSIFIES SO THAT CONDOM USE INCREASES TO 80% BY 2012

The main risky behaviors for MSM are the frequency of unprotected anal sex contacts with regular and commercial male partners, and unprotected vaginal sex with commercial and regular female partners. The probability of HIV being transmitted during anal sex between a HIV+ man and another man or transgender is much higher than during vaginal sex with a woman.

However if high coverage with effective interventions raises condom use in anal sex among men to 80% levels over the next few years, then the growing epidemic among MSM can be controlled as shown in the model on the left.

KEY MSM SESSIONS AT ICAAP

8 Aug. 08.00 Forum: From 200 to 0: Responding Effectively to HIV Among MSM in Asia and the Pacific
10 Aug. 16.00 Satellite: MSM and HIV in Asia and the Pacific – Cross-Cutting Issues
11 Aug. 16.00 Symposium: Overcoming legal barriers to comprehensive prevention among men who have sex with men (MSM) and transgender (TG) persons in Asia and the Pacific
18.00 Satellite: MSM HIV Infection in Developed East and South-East Asia
18.00 Satellite: Gender Variance and Male-Male Sexualities Across the Global South
12 Aug. 11.30 Launch: The Pacific Sexual Diversity Network Strategic Plan
14.00 Symposium: Addressing Legal Barriers and Criminalization of Risk Populations

Session details and all of the MSM Country Snapshots are available at www.msmasia.org

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