

# Harm Reduction: Challenges and Opportunities

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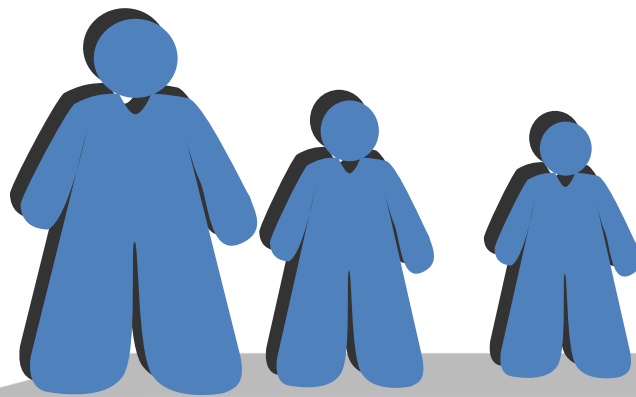
***Bangkok ,Thailand***

# Outline

1. Drug use and HIV epidemic situation in AP region
2. HIV and drug-related health issues
3. Harm reduction program
  - Principle and implication
  - Progress and achievement
  - Policy and institutional barriers and gaps
  - The way forward: structural intervention

# Drug use in Asia and Pacific region -- Changing pattern and trend

Opioid Users

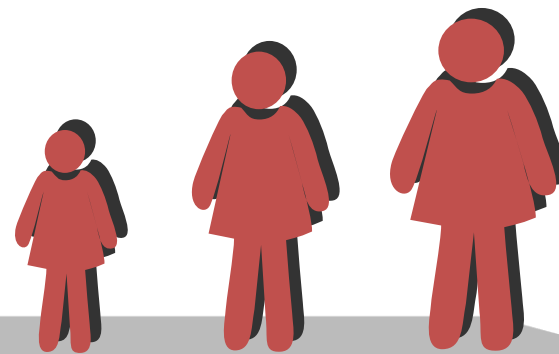


2007

2010

2017

Meth and other ATS users



2007

2010

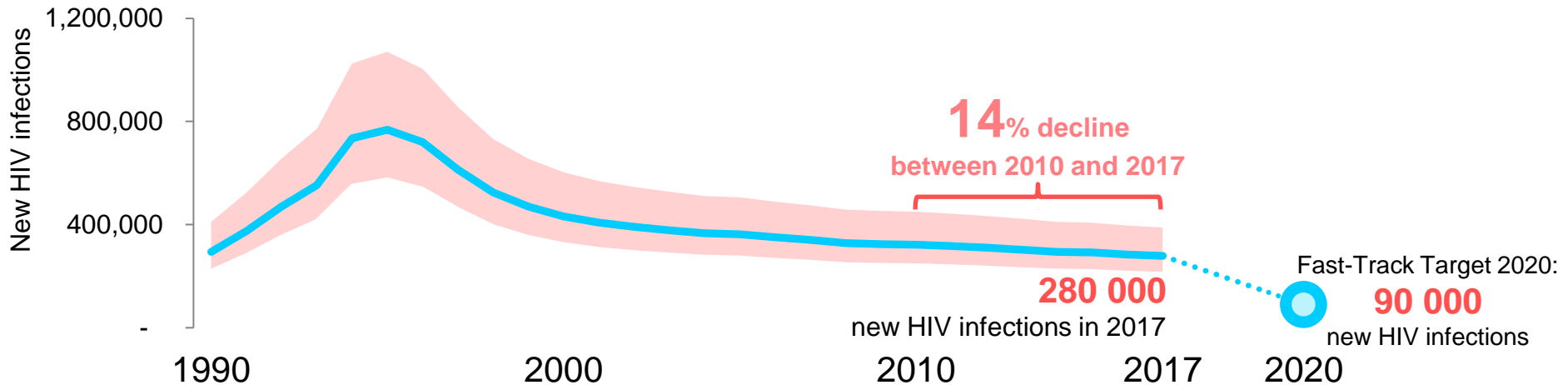
2017

# Despite earlier achievements, the decline in new HIV infections has stalled during the past 7 years.

## Global



## Asia and the Pacific



— New HIV infections    ● 2020 Fast-Track target\*



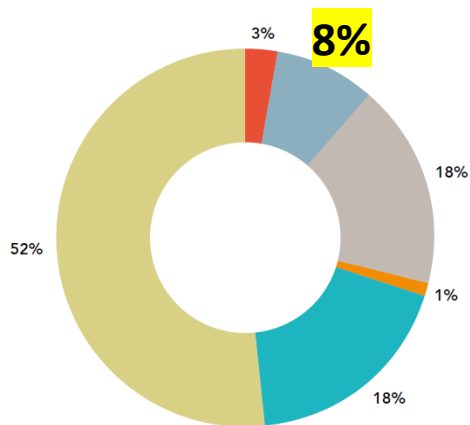
\*The 2020 target is equivalent to a 75% reduction since 2010.

# HIV epidemic situation

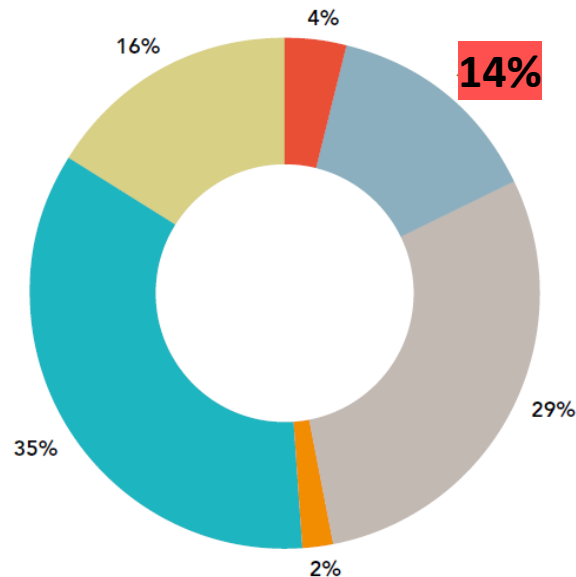
Approximately **130,000** people who inject drugs became newly infected with HIV in 2017.

## Distribution of new HIV infection, by population group, global and by region, 2017

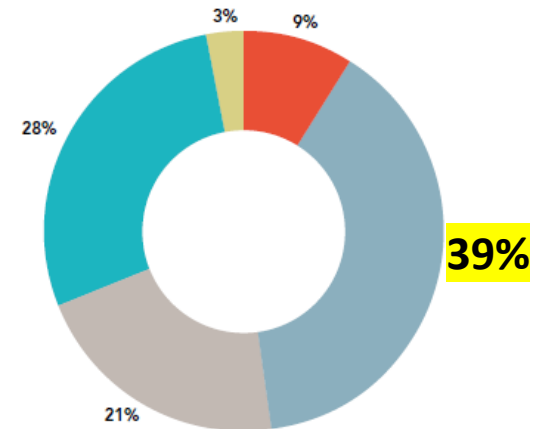
**Global**



**Asia and Pacific**



**Eastern Europe and Central Asia**



- Sex workers
- People who inject drugs
- Gay men and other men who have sex with men
- Transgender women\*
- Clients of sex workers and other sexual partners of key populations
- Rest of population†

\* Data are only available from Asia and the Pacific, Caribbean and Latin America. With rare exceptions, reported data are from transwomen who sell sex, but size estimates are increasingly all transgender women.

† Individuals in this category did not report any HIV-related risk behaviour.

Source: UNAIDS special analysis, 2018.

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4. UNAIDS 2020/2030 goal

# HIV and Drug-use Related Health Issues

## --HIV/AIDS transmission

Opium and ATS injecting use:

**Blood transmission**

Sharing needles, syringes and equipment

Unsafe injection



Meth and other stimulants use:

**Sexual transmission**

“Chemsex”: Unprotected sex, multi sex partners, cognitive and mental disorder

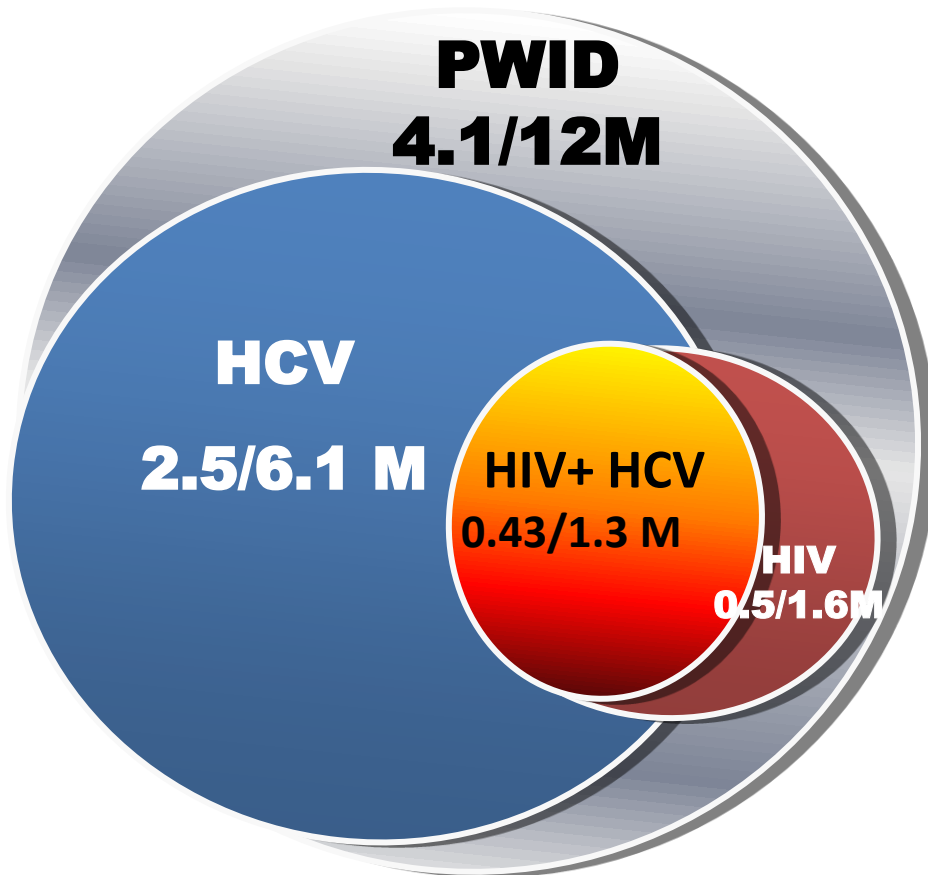


# HIV and Drug-use Related Health Issues

## -- Other communicable diseases

*Percentage:*

*AP regionally / Globally*



### Co-infection

- HCV
- HBV
- TB
- STI diseases



# Double disease burden of HIV and HCV among PWID in Asia and the Pacific

Globally...



**1/3**

of all people who inject drugs  
are living in

**Asia and the Pacific**

In Asia and the Pacific...



**1/8**

of all people who inject drugs  
are

**living with HIV**

In Asia and the Pacific...



**1/10**

of all people living with HIV  
are

**people who inject  
drugs**

Among PWID living with HIV...



**9/10** are

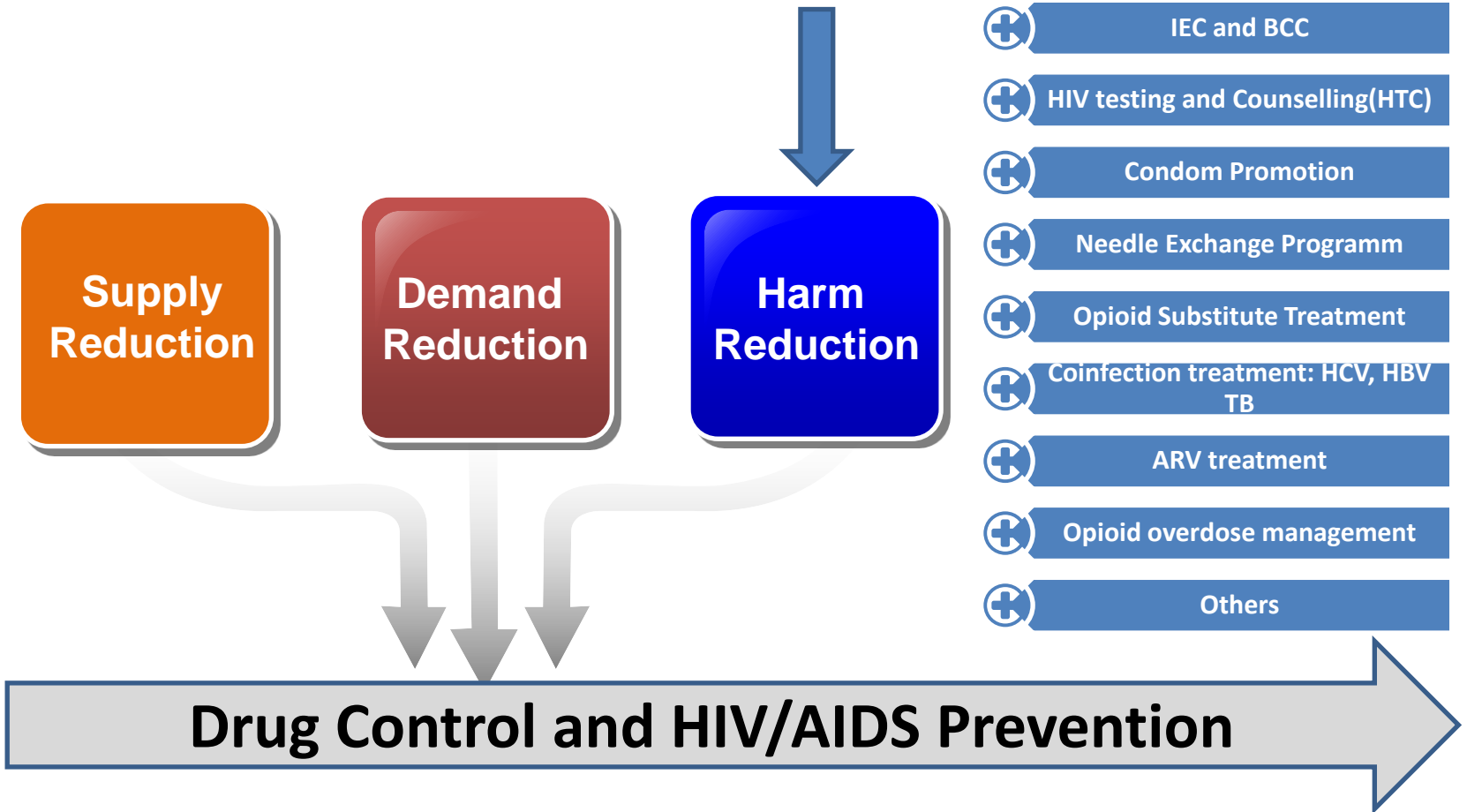
**co-infected with  
Hepatitis C**

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# Harm Reduction

Public health-approach, Human rights-based



# WHO/UNAIDS: Harm Reduction

- All people from key populations who inject drugs should have access to sterile injecting equipment through **needle and syringe programmes (NSP)**.
- All people from key populations who are dependent on opioids should be offered and have access to **opioid substitution therapy(OST)**.
- All people from key populations with harmful alcohol or other substance use should have access to **evidence-based interventions**, including brief psychosocial interventions involving assessment, specific feedback and advice.
- People likely to witness an opioid overdose should have access to naloxone and be instructed in its use for **emergency management** of suspected opioid overdose

**Action**

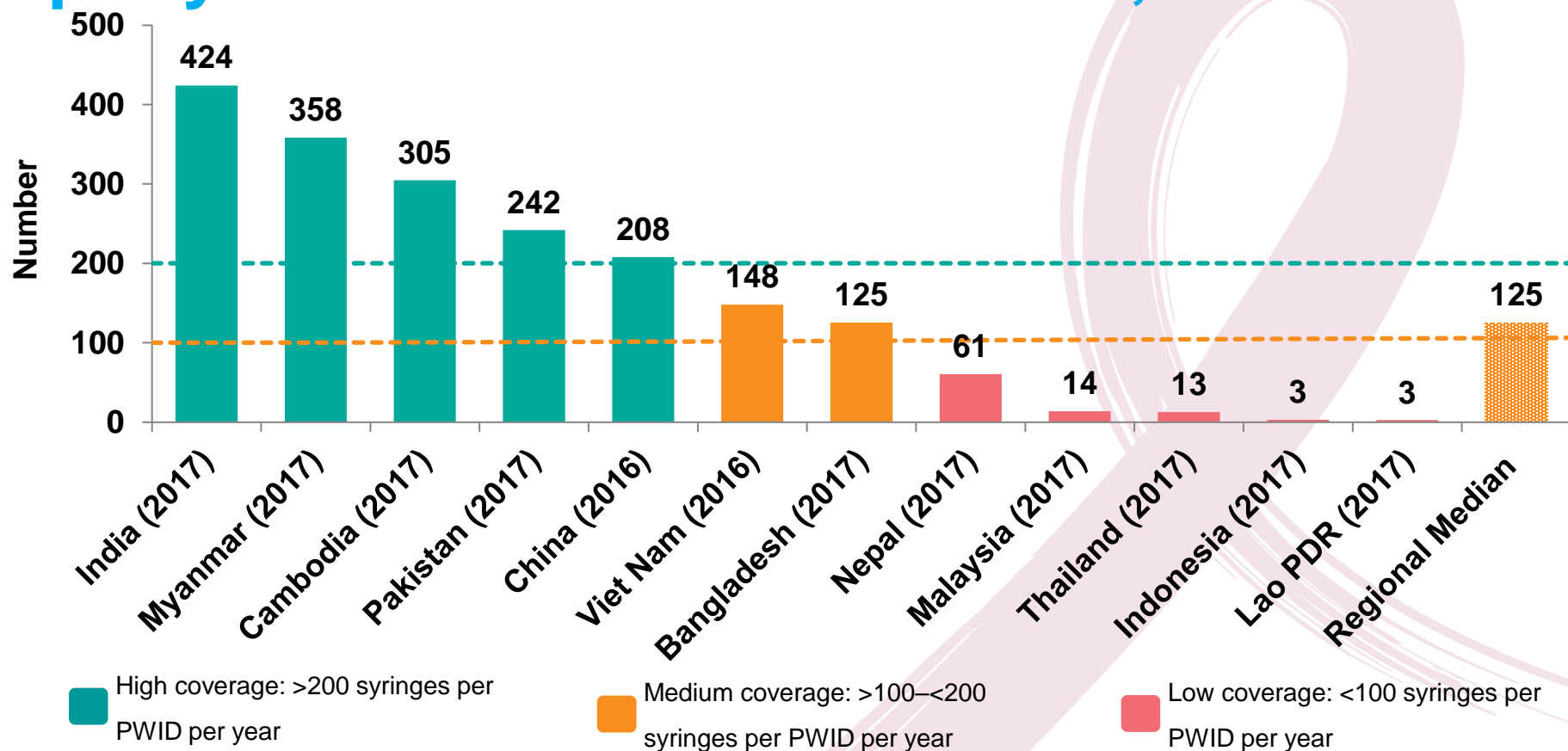
**Increase access and expand coverage of HR program**

**Improve comprehensive prevention services**

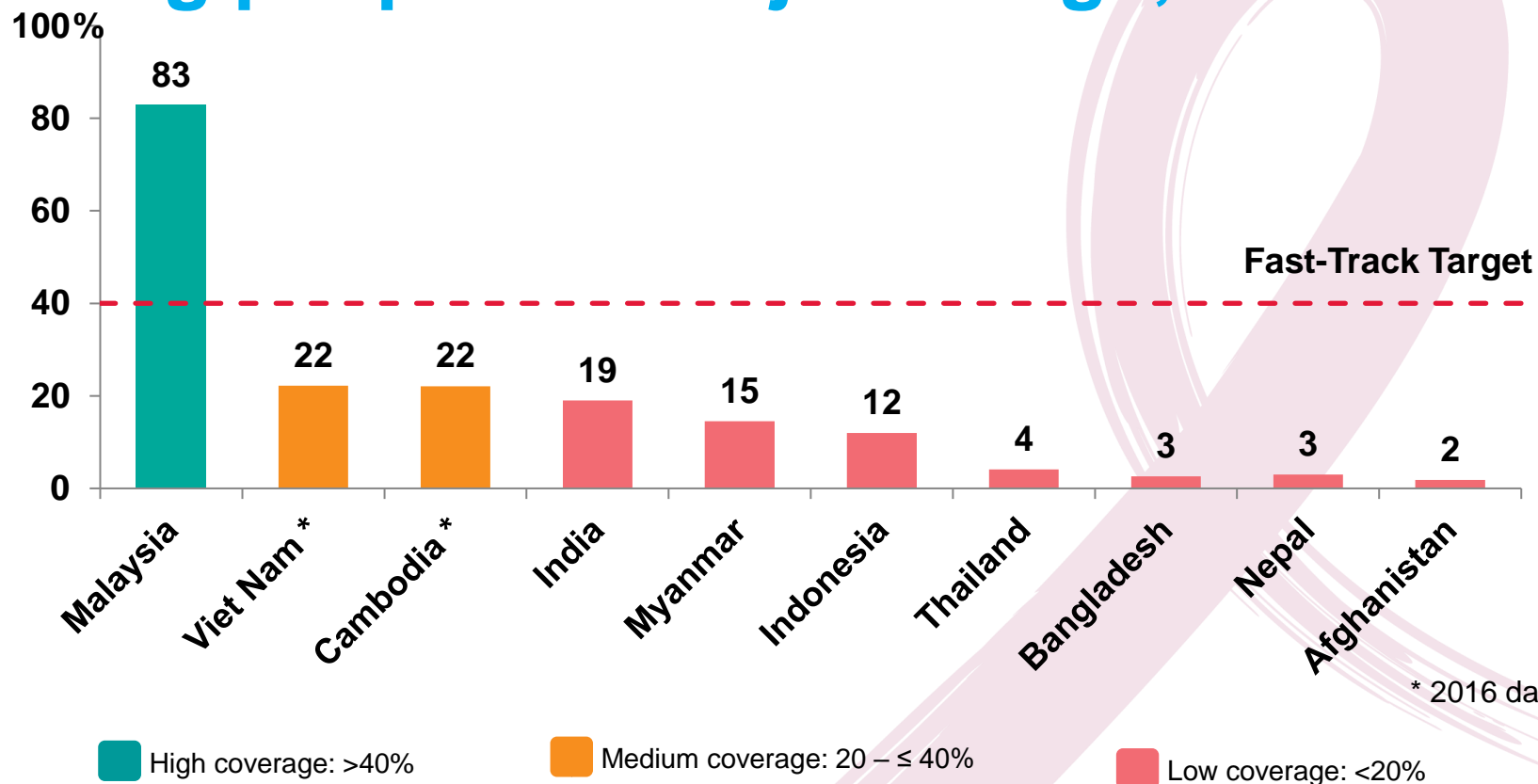
**Promote civil society's greater involvement**

**Create enabling environment**

## Needles and syringes distributed per PWID per year in Asia and the Pacific, 2016-2017

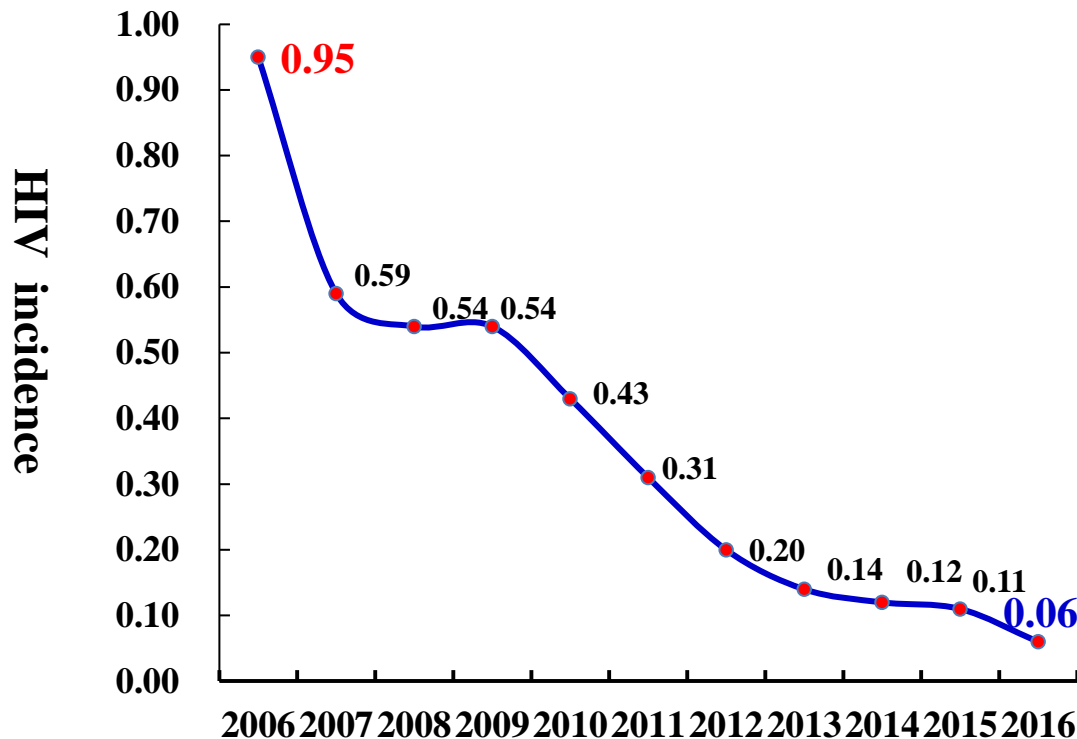


## Coverage of opioid substitution therapy among people who inject drugs, 2016-2017



# China: MMT program impact on HIV incidence

- *HIV incidence decreased 93.7% from 2006 to 2016*
- *Over 18,000 HIV infection among DUs prevented*
- *About 6,000 AIDS-related death avoided*



## *MMT cohort study :*

- *Sample size: over 100,000*
- *Duration: over 10 years*

# China: MMT program impact on HIV and drug control

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- *Over 130 tons heroin markets have been shrunk*
- *About 12 billions USD drug use expenditures have been avoided*

*Cost-effective: 1 Yuan spent, 20 Yuan saved*

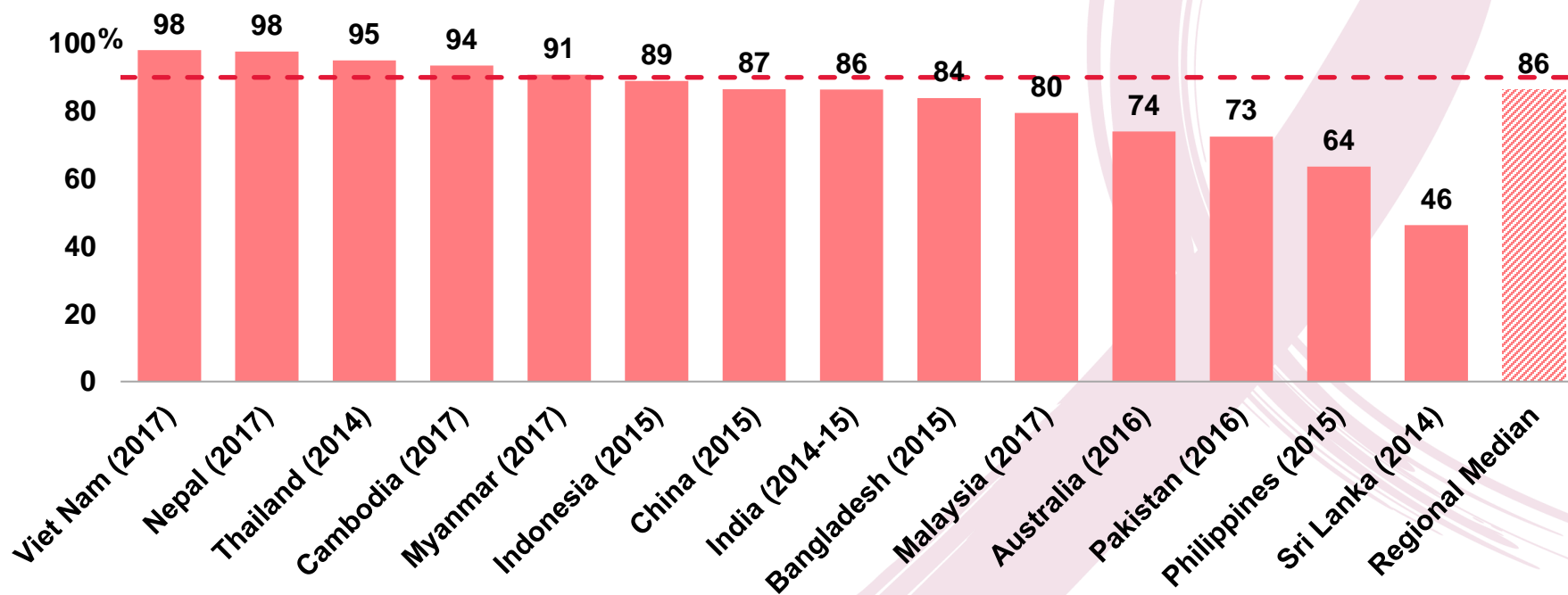
*Source: China National Specific Survey (2004-2016)*





## Safe injecting practices among people who inject drugs in Asia and the Pacific

Percentage of people who inject drugs reporting the use of sterile injecting equipment the last time they injected (2014-2017)



## Snapshot of harm reduction in Asia and the Pacific, 2017

	Needle and syringe programmes operational	Needle and syringe programmes coverage	Possession of needle and syringe used as evidence for arrest	Opioid substitution therapy programmes operational	Opioid substitution therapy programmes coverage	Naloxone available through community distribution	
<b>Afghanistan</b>	Yes		NO INFO	Yes		No	<p><b>Countries with HIV prevalence among PWID ≥ 5%</b></p> <p><b>NSP programme coverage</b> (syringes per PWID per year)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>High coverage: &gt;200</li> <li>Medium coverage: &gt;100—&lt;200</li> <li>Low coverage: &lt;100</li> <li>No service</li> <li>No info/ not reported</li> </ul> <p><b>OST programme coverage</b> (% opioid injectors on OST)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>High coverage: &gt;40%</li> <li>Medium coverage: 20 – ≤ 40%</li> <li>Low coverage: &lt; 20%</li> <li>No service</li> <li>No info/ not reported</li> </ul>
<b>Australia</b>	Yes		NO INFO	Yes		NO INFO	
<b>Bangladesh*</b>	Yes		No	Yes		No	
<b>Cambodia</b>	Yes		No	Yes		Yes	
<b>China</b>	Yes		No	Yes		Yes	
<b>India</b>	Yes		No	Yes		Yes	
<b>Indonesia</b>	Yes		NO INFO	Yes		NO INFO	
<b>Lao PDR</b>	Yes		No	No		No	
<b>Malaysia</b>	Yes		No	Yes		Yes	
<b>Myanmar</b>	Yes		No	Yes		No	
<b>Nepal**</b>	Yes		Yes	Yes		No	
<b>New Zealand</b>	Yes		No	Yes		No	
<b>Pakistan</b>	Yes		Yes	No		No	
<b>Philippines</b>	No		Yes	No		No	
<b>Sri Lanka</b>	No		No	No		No	
<b>Thailand</b>	Yes		Yes	Yes		Yes	
<b>Viet Nam</b>	Yes		NO INFO	Yes		NO INFO	

\* HIV prevalence from sentinel sites – Dhaka A1, A2 and Hili; \*\*Kathmandu

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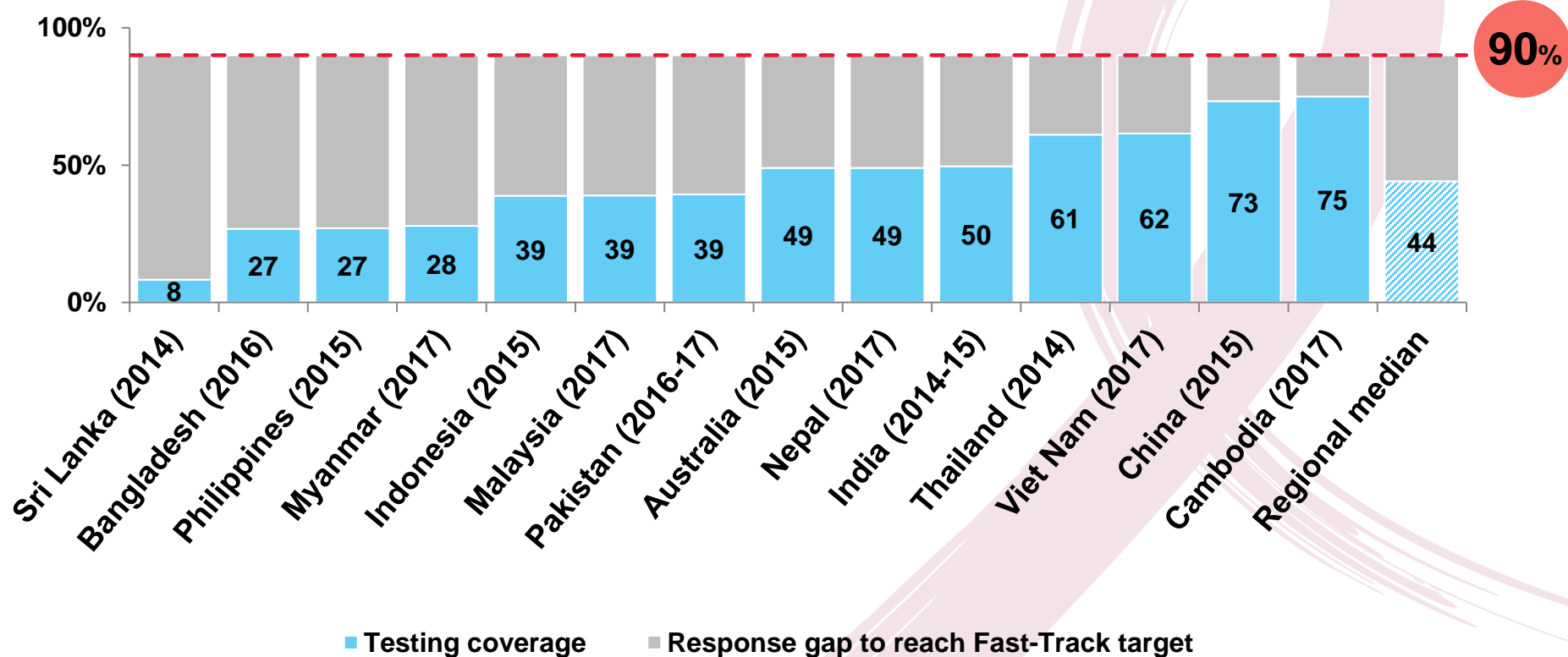
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  - The way forward

# Harm Reduction

## --Policy and Institutional Barriers(1)

1. Do not know their HIV status
2. Less access and slower expansion of Harm Reduction program
3. Insufficient comprehensive prevention and treatment services
4. Increasing co-infection: HIV, HCV, HBV, TB, STI ,etc.
5. Lack of ATS specific service packages

## HIV testing response gap to reach Fast-Track target: less than half of people who inject drugs know their HIV status



## NSP and OST sites by country where data is available, 2012-2017

	Number of needles/syringes programme sites	Number of opioid substitution therapy sites
<b>Afghanistan (2014)</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Bangladesh (2016)</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Cambodia (2017)</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>China (2017)</b>	<b>741</b>	<b>762</b>
<b>India (2014)</b>	<b>401</b>	<b>178</b>
<b>Indonesia (2014)</b>	<b>232</b>	<b>90</b>
<b>Lao PDR (2012)</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Malaysia (2016)</b>	<b>694</b>	<b>907</b>
<b>Maldives (2014)</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Mongolia (2013)</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Myanmar (2017)</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>51</b>
<b>Nepal (2017)</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>Pakistan (2016)</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Thailand (2016)</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>147</b>
<b>Viet Nam (2016)*</b>	<b>230</b>	<b>416</b>

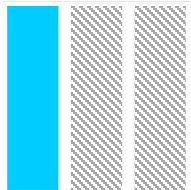
\* 2014 data for NSP sites

# But... a lot of missed opportunities



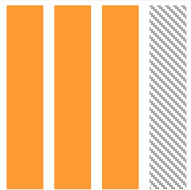
2 in 3

People co-infected with TB-HIV DO NOT know their HIV status



1 in 3

ART service providers DO NOT provide TB treatment in ART settings



3 in 4

TB service providers DO NOT provide antiretroviral therapy in TB clinics

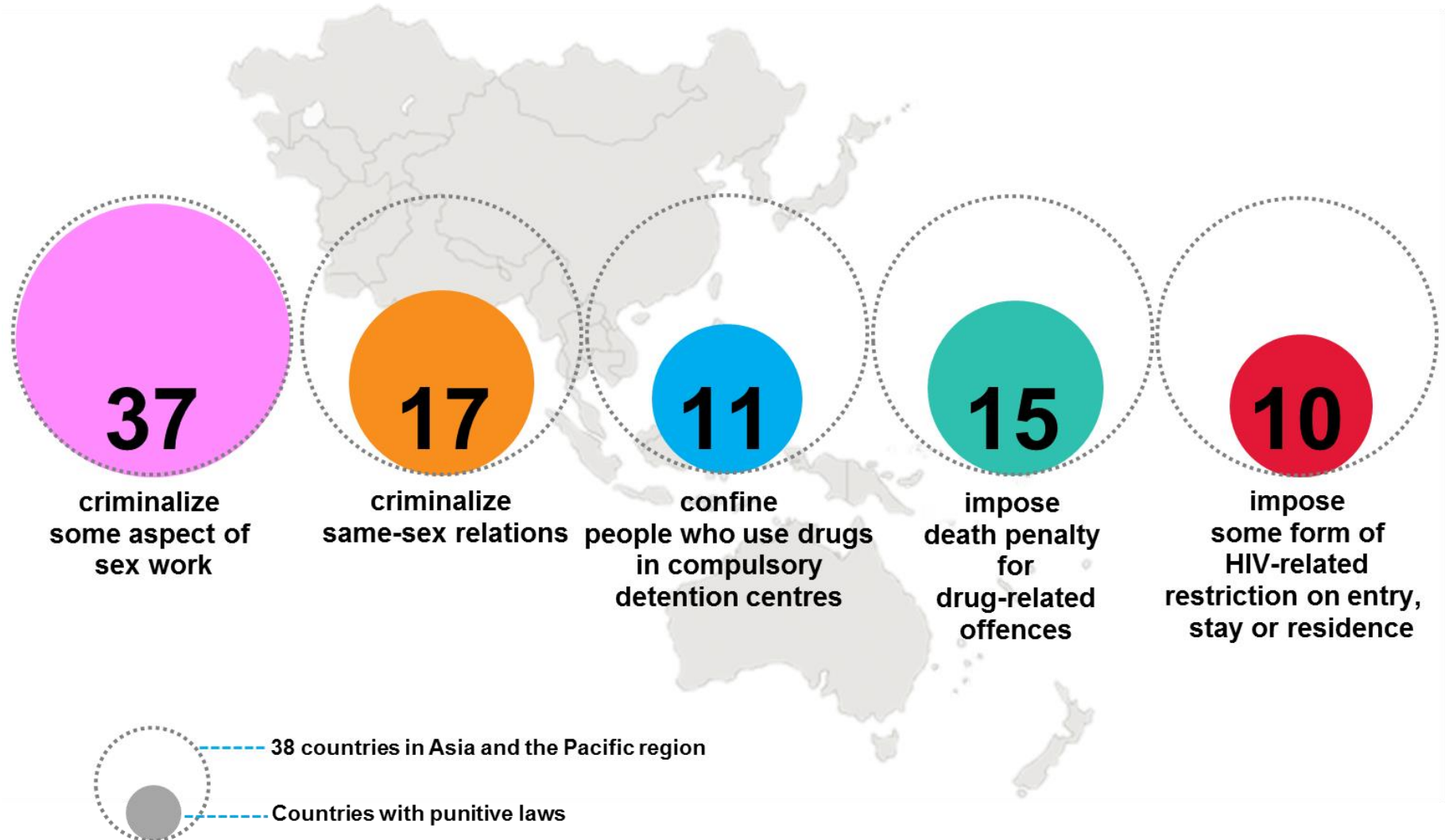
# **Harm Reduction**

## **--Policy and Institutional Barriers(2)**

- 6. Punitive law and environment**
- 7. Social stigma and discrimination**
- 8. Lack of civil society engagement**
- 9. Human rights abuse**
- 10. Gender inequity**



# Legal barriers to the HIV response remain in 38 UN Member States in Asia and the Pacific

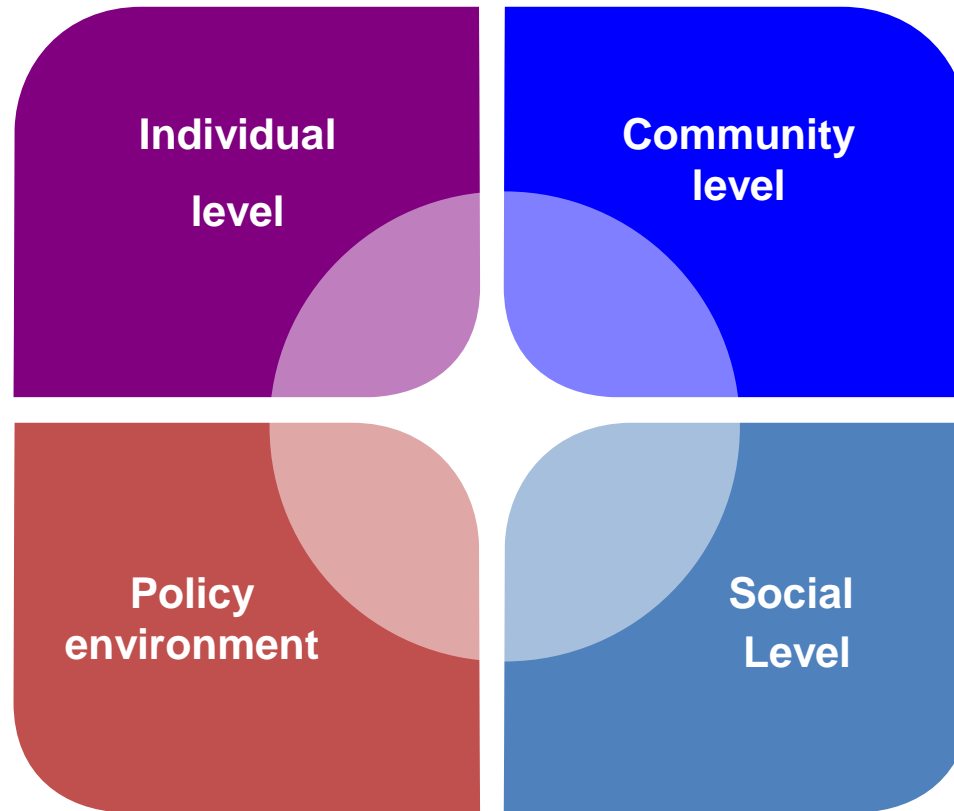


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# Harm Reduction: The way forward

## Structural Intervention



**Social support and health services need to be combined.**

# Harm Reduction:

## The way forward--(1)

- 1. Strengthen public education and peer outreach**
- 2. Expand and improve Harm Reduction program**
  - NSP program: Both for heroin and ATS/NPS injecting drug users
  - OST program: Heroin drug users-Methadone, buprenorphine, naltrexone ,etc.
  - ATS/NPS users: Cognitive-behavior therapy : counseling and support ,
- 3. Comprehensive prevention packages:** tailored services
  - Harm Reduction program, condom promotion, HTC, ARV, Co-infection treatment, etc.
- 4. Explore novel and innovative approaches:**
  - PrEP, PEP, etc.

# Harm Reduction

## Dependence treatment

### Opioid Drug Users

#### Medication : Available

#### Opioid Substitute Therapy

- Methadone  
(MMT program)
- Buprenorphine
- Naltrexone
- Naloxone (Overdose )

#### Mental and Behavior Therapy

WHO: Psychosocially Assisted  
Pharmacological Treatment of  
Opioid Dependence.

### Methamphetamine Drug users

#### Medication :

**Not available !!!!**

**only**

#### Behavior and Mental Therapy

- Cognitive-behavioral therapy
- Family support and social  
function restore
- Motivational interviewing and  
incentives

# Harm Reduction:

## The way forward --(2)

### 5. Community-based treatment: *include but not limited to*

Patients can receive treatment in many different settings with various approaches.

#### **Model: “Seek---Test----Treat----Retain”**

- Peer education and outreach
- Counseling and psychosocial support
- Risk behavior change: safe sex and injection
- Referral services to testing and treatment
- Avoid lapse and relapse
- Adherence to OST,NSP, ART programs
- Therapeutic communities services
- Opioid overdose prevention and treatment
- Increase healthy life skills and social function restore

# **Harm Reduction:**

## **The way forward --(3)**

- 6. Remove policy and institutional barriers**
- 7. Enhance civil society involvement**
- 8. Protect human rights**
- 9. Increase financial support**
- 10. Enhance multiple collaboration**
- 11. Scientific research**

# Support not Punishment!

## Thanks!

### No One Left Behind!

