

Supporting community action on AIDS in developing countries

# LESSONS LEARNED FROM HIV AND AIDS WORK WITH PEOPLE WHO USE DRUGS IN ASIA AND EASTERN EUROPE

Authors: Chris Connelly, International HIV/AIDS Alliance; Aditia Taslim, Rumah Cemara; Azahari Said, Malaysian AIDS Council.

ISSUES

Injecting drug use is a key mode of HIV transmission in Asia and Eastern Europe. Issues faced by people who use drugs (PUD) in Asia and Eastern Europe include:

- stigma and discrimination
- poor access to services
- poverty
- other health issues including hepatitis C
- human rights violations from law enforcement and health services

Access to HIV and harm reduction services in these regions is limited. The International HIV/AIDS Alliance is trying to address this gap through our programmes.



Armand Ali: Outreach by Malaysian AIDS Council (MAC) peer educators

RESPONSE

## Alliance programmes

We work with people who use drugs in six countries in Asia and Eastern Europe:

- Alliance Ukraine
- Alliance China
- Khmer HIV/AIDS NGO Alliance (KHANA) in Cambodia
- Rumah Cemara in Indonesia
- Malaysian AIDS Council (MAC)
- Social Awareness Service Organisation (SASO) in Manipur, India.

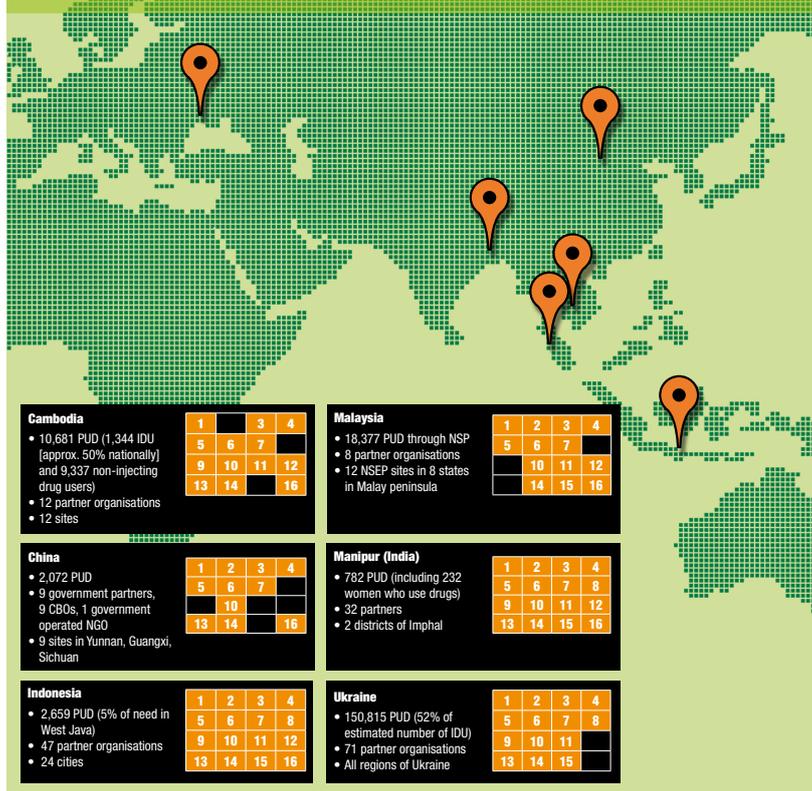
INTERVENTIONS

## INTERVENTIONS PROVIDED OR PROMOTED BY ALLIANCE PROGRAMMES

- 1\* Needle and syringe programmes (NSP)
- 2\* Opioid substitution treatment (for opioid users) and other drug dependence treatment
- 3\* HIV testing and counselling
- 4\* Antiretroviral therapy (ART)
- 5\* Prevention and treatment of sexually transmitted infections
- 6\* Condom promotion for injecting drug users and their sexual partners
- 7\* Targeted information, education and behaviour change communication
- 8\* Diagnosis, treatment and vaccination of viral hepatitis
- 9 Prevention, diagnosis and treatment of TB
- 10 Advocacy (for harm reduction, for access to services, enabling environment for human rights)
- 11 Basic health services (including vein care, and overdose prevention and management)
- 12 Sexual and reproductive health services (including PMTCT family planning, access to safe abortion and maternal health services)
- 13 Home-based care and support for HIV positive drug users
- 14 Family support (for parents and families of drug users, and for drug users who are parents)
- 15 Access to justice/legal services
- 16 Livelihood development and economic strengthening activities

\* WHO, UNODC, UNAIDS technical guide for countries to set targets for universal access to HIV prevention, treatment and care for injecting drug users.

## ALLIANCE WORK WITH PEOPLE WHO USE DRUGS IN ASIA AND EASTERN EUROPE



## Alliance good practice programme standards: drug use and HIV

Through our programmes we are learning that reaching a large number of people with a range of services delivered to quality standards is important. Our programming with PUD is informed by a quality standards approach. Our good practice standards define key interventions, promote user involvement and build capacity.

GOOD PRACTICE PROGRAMME STANDARDS		EVIDENCE AND LESSONS LEARNED
STANDARDS	<b>PREVENTION</b>	Provide or promote access to clean injecting equipment, condoms and information about safe injecting and safe sex for people who use drugs and their sexual partners.
	<b>TREATMENT AND CARE</b>	Provide or promote access to ART, TB prevention and treatment, drug substitution treatment and HCV treatment for people who use drugs and their sexual partners.
	<b>PSYCHOSOCIAL SUPPORT</b>	Provide or promote access to psychosocial support services to meet the priority psychosocial needs of people who use drugs and their sexual partners.
	<b>STIGMA AND DISCRIMINATION</b>	Combat stigma and discrimination related to drug use.
	<b>INVOLVEMENT OF PEOPLE WHO USE DRUGS</b>	Involve people who use drugs in programming and decision making.
	<b>GENDER</b>	Develop gender-sensitive interventions, including interventions for the sexual partners of people who use drugs.
	<b>BUILDING CAPACITY</b>	Build capacity of people who use drugs and related civil society organisations.
	<b>ADVOCACY</b>	Advocate for harm reduction service provisions for people who use drugs.
		<p>Alliance Ukraine is one of the largest national HIV prevention programmes reaching 52% of IDU nationally. Prevention services include counseling, NSP, condom provision and safe sex education. Prevention services are targeted to different segments of the population of people who use drugs including young people, women and stimulant users. To maximise reach services are offered through street outreach, office-based and mobile points, including pharmacies and mobile clinics.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>SASO provides a comprehensive package of care attending to and advocating for SRH, HCV, TB, OI and basic health needs of people who use drugs in Manipur.</li> <li>In Ukraine an intensive scale-up of ART provision to people living with HIV, including people using drugs, resulted in consistent decline in AIDS morbidity from 4,729 in 2006 to 4,386 in 2008. In addition opioid substitution treatment reaches 5,078 IDUs and in 2010 five pilot projects started hepatitis B diagnosis and vaccination.</li> <li>KHANA has developed a standard package of services for working with people who use drugs in Cambodia.</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Alliance China provides methadone adherence support programmes including psychosocial support, family support and outreach. In Sichuan province clinic officials attribute high retention to the peer led support activities.</li> <li>Rumah Cemara provides psychosocial support to positive inmates in prisons. They also train inmates and guards as peer educators reaching 1,792 prisoners with HIV prevention information.</li> </ul> <p>SASO's work with women who use drugs aims to reduce the high rate of stigma and discrimination faced from the general community, pressure groups and law enforcement through advocacy, involvement in service provision, and provision of drop-in centre and night shelter facilities to reduce vulnerability.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>SASO and Rumah Cemara are organisations established and run by former drug users and operate at state level addressing the needs of marginalised populations.</li> <li>Rumah Cemara emphasise engagement with young people through sport and music.</li> <li>Alliance China facilitates peer involvement of people who use drugs enabling them to discuss their issues with local public health and public order authorities.</li> <li>Alliance Ukraine supports a network of drug users on substitution treatment to enable advocacy and peer to peer support. PUD are involved in various national working groups.</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>SASO runs specific programmes for women who use drugs. Providing drop-in centre and night shelter facilities reduces vulnerability to sexual violence and police harassment.</li> <li>KHANA designs services for partners of people who use drugs including SRH, condom distribution, family support and tailored HIV prevention education and counseling services. Female partners attend drop-in centres and can seek counseling and psychosocial support from staff.</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Alliance Regional Technical Support Hubs in Kiev, Delhi and Phnom Penh meet regional capacity building needs using local technical support providers.</li> <li>The Alliance produces resources to support HIV and harm reduction programming, for example: Good Practice Programme Standards: Drug Use and HIV; Good Practice Guide for HIV and Drug Use Programming at Community Level; Developing Work with Drug Users: A Guide to Participatory Assessment and Response and Nothing About Us Without Us: A Guide to the Meaningful Involvement of People Who Use Drugs (collaboration with OSI and the Canadian HIV Legal Network).</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>MAC led NGO advocacy resulting in government approving of harm reduction strategies of NSP and Methadone Maintenance Therapy in Malaysia. MAC now collaborates with government to provide a national level NSP.</li> <li>Advocacy efforts led by Alliance Ukraine contributed to government approval of methadone programmes.</li> </ul>

## CONCLUSION

Building a culture of good practice in HIV programming for people who use drugs is important. It helps to define priority interventions and to improve the quality and reach of programmes.

Such programming leads to comprehensive packages of services which meet many of the needs of people who use drugs and their sexual partners.



A global partnership:  
**International HIV/AIDS Alliance**  
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For further information contact:  
 Chris Connelly (cconnelly@aimsalliance.org)  
 Susie McLean (smclean@aimsalliance.org)  
 Tel: +44 1273 718900  
 Fax: +44 1273 718901

International HIV/AIDS Alliance  
 Preece House  
 91-101 Davigdor Road  
 Hove, BN3 1RE  
 United Kingdom