

UNAIDS ACTIVITIES in Myanmar

Supported by 3MDG

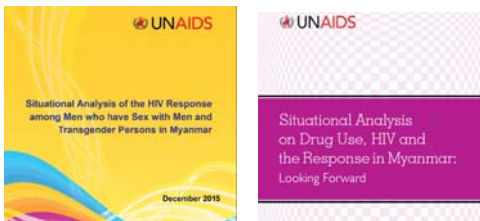
Please find below examples of activities that UNAIDS has undertaken in 2014-2015 with either the full or partial support of our 3MDG "Creating an Enabling Environment" Project.

Situational analyses on the HIV response among key populations in Myanmar

Three situational analyses were undertaken in 2014-2015 on:

1. People who inject drugs (PWID)
2. Men who have Sex with Men (MSM) and Transgender persons (TG)
3. Sex workers

These situational analyses contributed to improving knowledge about the HIV response towards key populations; identifying programmatic gaps and priority actions to strengthen the response in Myanmar. Two of the three reports have been released. The report on the 'HIV response among Sex Worker in Myanmar' will be available during the first half of 2016.



Seminars on the HIV response among KPs

Based on the findings of these analyses, UNAIDS organized three national seminars involving participants from a broad range of national stakeholders (health and law enforcement sectors, I/NGO, CBOs, development partners and UN agencies) and international speakers to share best practices from the region. Innovative prevention approaches and strategies were discussed to fast-track the response to HIV.

The Seminar on "Drugs Use and HIV: collaborating for a public health approach in Myanmar" was conducted in Nay Pyi Taw on 19-20 June 2014, jointly with the Ministry of Home Affairs and the Ministry of Health.



The seminar on "Responding to Sexual Diversity: Collaboration for HIV Response among MSM and TG in Myanmar", was organized March 2015, with Ministry of Health.



The seminar on "Collaboration for the HIV Response with Sex Workers in Myanmar", was jointly organized with Ministry of Health in September 2015



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National Legal review workshop on The Narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances law (1993)

Upon request from the Ministry of Home Affairs, UNAIDS and UNODC supported the organization of a wide ranging consultation on amending 'The 1993 narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances drug law' in early 2015. The workshop followed an earlier report that UNAIDS initiated with inputs from experts and partners and submitted to MoHA in late 2014.



Key outcomes from the consultation included:

- (1) Removal of compulsory registration for drug users;
- (2) Switching from punitive to drug treatment approach;
- (3) Reduction of penalties for small offenders;
- (4) Inclusion of harm reduction in the law.

The draft law which resulted from this consultation is still to be enacted by the Parliament.



Amendment of the Excise Act of 1917

One major outcome of the advocacy efforts that UNAIDS undertook in 2015 in partnership with civil society, key populations, development partners and other key stakeholders was the amendment of the Excise Act 1917 (December 2015) to repeal sections referencing the illegal possession of needles and syringes. This will provide greater support not only for injecting drug users but also to health workers (I/NGOs, community health aides etc.) to effectively implement harm reduction programmes

Legal review workshop on the Penal Code 377 with lawyers

A workshop to review the penal Code section 377 which criminalises homosexual acts was conducted by UNAIDS on 15-16 May 2014 in partnership with the LGBT rights organization, Colors Rainbow. 25 lawyers from different regions participated in this workshop.



As an outcome of the workshop, the amended version of the Penal code, section 377 was drafted by participating lawyers.

This amended version is to be used in advocacy actions towards parliaments. 12 lawyers committed to actively take part in the advisory board of Myanmar LGBT Rights Network. Additional consultations on the 377 are planned by 2017.

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Study tour in Malaysia

Jointly organized by UNAIDS with WHO and UNODC, the 'Study tour on best practices and policies in the response to HIV and drug use in Malaysia' involved 13 Myanmar high-level officials from different Government sectors (i.e. Ministry of Health, Ministry of Home Affairs, Ministry of Social Welfare, Attorney General Office, and Parliament).

A specific focus was put on the sub-national level with the participation of the Minister of Social Affairs from Kachin State Government, an area with a high disease burden.



The study tour provided a broad overview of both NGO/community and government-led harm reduction projects in Malaysia from which Myanmar delegates recommended the following priority actions for their own country:

1. Scale-up harm reduction interventions through decentralizing services and providing needles and syringes in government settings;
2. Provide MMT in closed-settings;
3. Integrate harm reduction services at community level;
4. Provide voluntary-based rehabilitation treatment; and
5. Reform existing drug laws.

Dissemination workshop on the findings of the study tour

In sharing key findings of the study tour on harm reduction organized by UNAIDS, UNODC and WHO in Malaysia, Myanmar government officials **agreed to initiate MMT for the first time ever in 2-4 prisons in 2016.**

Other agreed outcomes include the commitment to scale up and decentralize harm reduction through community-led interventions and to introduce and integrate harm reduction in public sector (particularly needle and syringe programs). In opening remarks, the Chief of Myanmar Police and the Director General of the Public Health Department both highlighted the need to move harm reduction effort forward, especially through law reforms.



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Police training on Drug use and HIV

To complement the work on the laws, UNAIDS oversaw the development of a training curriculum on Drug Use and HIV for operational law enforcement agencies and conducted trainings in different state/regions with high HIV burden. Trainings were conducted in partnership with the local organization Sao Mon and involved a wide range of stakeholders (law enforcement & health sectors, I/NGOs, CBOs, community leaders). This multisectoral partnership approach helps strengthen the working relationship between law enforcement and harm reduction services at local level and create a climate of mutual understanding.



By end of 2015, a total of 12 trainings has been conducted for over 470 operational police & staff from general administration department.



Policy Briefs on issues pertaining to key populations

Six policy and technical briefs highlighting the key findings of the situational analyses were disseminated to support advocacy effort for decisions makers, through promoting law reforms and innovative strategies for the way forward. These advocacy documents are available both in English and Myanmar language.

1. Best practices of Police in support of HIV prevention, care and treatment among people who inject drugs in Myanmar - in cooperation with UNODC
2. Expanding the law enforcement role in the HIV response people who inject drugs in Myanmar - in cooperation with UNODC
3. Expanding access to HIV services for MSM through mobile phone and web-based platforms in Myanmar
4. Increasing uptake of HIV testing and counselling among MSM and TG in Myanmar
5. Expanding the role of law enforcement in the response to HIV among Sex Workers in Myanmar. This policy brief was developed, in cooperation with UNFPA
6. Innovative and impactful strategies to accelerate the HIV response among sex workers in Myanmar. This will be printed out and disseminated in early 2016.

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POLICY BRIEF

Expanding access to HIV services for men who have sex with men through mobile phone and web-based platforms in Myanmar

UNAIDS

POLICY BRIEF

Increasing uptake of HIV testing and counselling among men who have sex with men and transgender persons in Myanmar

UNAIDS

UNODC

POLICY BRIEF

Best police practices in support of HIV prevention, care and treatment among people who inject drugs in Myanmar

UNAIDS

UNODC

POLICY BRIEF

Expanding the law enforcement role in the HIV response among people who inject drugs in Myanmar

UNFPA

UNAIDS

POLICY BRIEF

Expanding the role of law enforcement in the response to HIV among Sex Workers in Myanmar

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Human Rights and Gender working group under HIV Technical Strategy Group

The HR&G WG was formed based on the recommendations from Mid-Term Review of the HIV NSP which pointed out the need for a specific platform for partners to address human rights and genders issues related to HIV programme.

The HR&G Working group is involved in the review of Legal Review Report recommendations, in policy development and in the drafting of protective framework for people living with HIV.



Symposium on HIV Law

A Symposium on Lessons learned from HIV Laws in Asia and the Pacific was organized on 15 May 2014 in Yangon. The symposium provided summarized key elements of HIV laws from other countries in Asia and the Pacific relating to discrimination, confidentiality, compulsory testing and HIV prevention. This event was followed by Parliamentary Joint Committee meetings where key issues were discussed and prioritized.

Community Consultation on the HIV law

Upon request from key populations and people living with HIV (PLHIV), a draft framework for a protective legal instrument for people living with HIV and key populations was developed.

UNAIDS organized a community consultation with key populations, PLHIV and relevant stakeholders in early 2015. The purpose of this consultation was to understand the interests in developing a HIV law. The participants supported the drafting of a separate HIV law. The Sub-Working Group on HIV Law was formed and led the drafting process.

The law on "Rights of people affected by HIV" has been drafted and is currently under review.

TOT on Human rights and gender sensitive approaches for HIV programing

Training of trainers (TOT) on 'Human rights and Gender sensitive approaches for HIV programing' was conducted on 3-5 September 2014. The workshop covered basic principles of human rights, a human rights-based approach to HIV/health and gender, UN human rights mechanisms, and commitments made by Myanmar under international law, particularly for human rights and gender equality.

In additions, TOT trained participants from different organizations to serve as trainers, facilitators and human rights resource persons in organizational-level trainings or community-level trainings.



Refresher training on 'Human Rights-based and Gender Sensitive Approaches to HIV Programming' was provided to previously trained participants in October 2015. These trained participants will organize local level trainings to disseminate the knowledge and awareness gained.



Training at sub national level

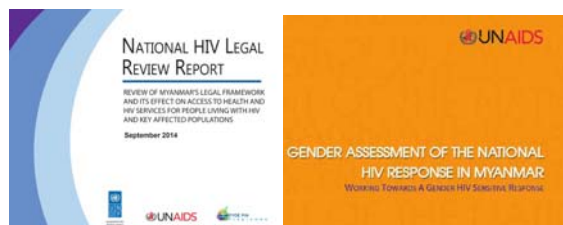
Two trainings on Human Rights-based and Gender Sensitive Approaches to HIV Programming was being organized by UNAIDS in Mandalay and Patheingyi in 2015. In 2016, the topic of sexual orientation and gender identity (SOGI) was incorporated in the training on Human Rights and Gender Sensitive Approaches.

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Launching, dissemination of legal review and Gender assessment report at national and local level

A national HIV legal review report was launched in Nay Pyi Taw on 23 September 2014. The report, a collaboration between UNAIDS, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), and the community organization Pyoe Pin provided evidence of widespread stigma and discrimination of PLHIV and key populations at higher risk of HIV in employment, education and the provision of health care and other services and offered recommendations to improve the legal framework and create a more enabling environment for the HIV response.

The launch called for immediate and long-term legal reform and capacity building to ensure access to health and HIV prevention and treatment services for people living with HIV (PLHIV) and key populations. Following the launching at national level, the regional disseminations of legal review and Gender assessment report were held in Mandalay and Taunggyi.



Legal training

A three-day legal training, September 2015, was provided to participants from civil society, key populations - including LGBTI community members, I/NGOs, academia, and faith-based organizations. Purpose of the training was to increase knowledge and awareness on basic law and specific laws that adversely impact key populations and the LGBTI community. As well, participants were informed on the constitutional rights as a citizen in terms of discrimination, equal protection, and personal freedom, including how to uphold the rights of key populations and other minority groups.



Community Champions

4 people representing MSM, 4 people representing Sex Workers, 4 people representing Young Key populations and 3 people representing Drug Users were identified as champions. 2 champions from faith-based organizations were also identified. The selected 17 persons agreed to become spokespersons and commit themselves in the fight against discriminations faced by their respective community.



To improve the understanding of principles and better engage in advocacy, the following trainings were provided to the community champions:

1. Advocacy in action
2. HIV and Human Rights
3. Effective Communication
4. Organizational Development
5. Public Speaking and
6. Gender and HIV



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Media Sensitization Activities on HIV and Human Rights

Four media sensitization workshops on HIV and Human Rights were organised in Yangon and Mandalay during 2014 and 2015, in cooperation with the INGO Internews, whose mission is to empower local media worldwide. These workshops aimed to raise awareness of the role of media in the HIV response and improve their knowledge and reporting practices on issues pertaining to HIV. Over 120 editors and journalists representing a broad range of media attended these workshops.



Following the media workshops, 20 journalists selected on account of their willingness to engage further in the HIV response, attended a three to five days intensive training. Two intensive trainings and one refresher training were conducted for about 40 journalists.



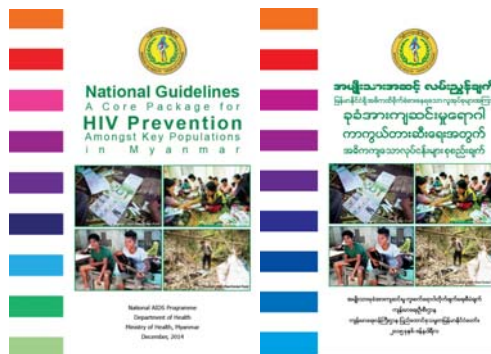
Some journalists were selected for the Small Grants programme aiming to give a chance to journalists travelling to different parts of the country to produce HIV related stories. Over 100 stories produced from the project were published or broadcast in the mainstream media which included leading daily newspapers, popular weekly journals, radio, TV and websites.



National Guidelines: a Core Package for HIV Prevention amongst Key Populations in Myanmar

UNAIDS contributed to the 'Core Package for HIV Prevention Amongst Key Affected Populations' developed by government and non-government partners, Save the Children and UNFPA through support of the Global Fund. It was designed as a concise, yet comprehensive reference to the minimum standards of prevention services required for an effective HIV response among KPs in Myanmar, including FSW, PWID, MSM and TG.

The Core Package also includes useful guidelines for those providing services to KAPs in Myanmar's HIV response for measuring prevention programme coverage in the National Monitoring and Evaluation Plan. It is available both English and Myanmar version.



Dissemination workshop on the 'Core Package'

In October 2015, UNAIDS jointly with NAP, UNFPA and STC organized a **Dissemination workshop** to present and disseminate the 'Core Package for HIV Prevention Amongst Key Populations' and identify key priorities for inclusion in the new NSP (2016-2020).



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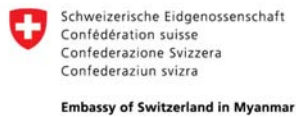
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