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Track C - Prevention programmes for men who have sex with men (MSM)

CDC0831 - Strengthening MSM capacities on HIV/AIDS prevention in Morocco

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Background: HIV/AIDS prevalence in Morocco is low (<1%) but reaches 4% among vulnerable populations such as Men having Sex with other Men (MSM). Due to socio-cultural Moroccan context, MSM are subject of stigma and discrimination, with limited access to prevention services.

Methods: AMSED (development and prevention NGO) and ALCS (thematic NGO) jointly developed a focused prevention program to reduce infection risk and strengthen prevention skills among MSM population. The project was carried out with participative and proximity approaches allowing MSM Peer Educators (EP) active involvement in the project design and implementation.

Results: The one year Pilot project had significant outcomes for MSM population: 1- MSM capacities in HIV/AIDS focused prevention are reinforced; 2- Access to ALCS health service is facilitated; 3- IEC tools and messages produced with MSM participation are accepted by MSM population; 4- A space for information and ideas' exchange is created and active listening skills are developed by ALCS members; 5- MSM leaders are recruited within ALCS institution and are given key responsibilities to carry out the project; 7- Homosexuality is better understood and self esteem is enhanced among MSM population.

Conclusion: Focused prevention, designed and implemented through a participatory approach are important to reduce HIV/AIDS vulnerability among MSM population. Involving Peer Educators in this effort multiplies the effect of prevention outreach.

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