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

CDC0838 - Greater inclusion of migration and mobility issues in the response to HIV/AIDS among men having sex with men in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam

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Issues: It is proven that male and female's sexuality is expressed and changed throughout migration and mobility process (CARAM Asia, Rockefeller Foundation Asia). In Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam, men having sex with men (MSM) and other types of homosexuality groups have become more visible among rural-urban migrants. While HIV/AIDS prevention and treatment for general migrants and mobile population remains limited, such responses for this sub-group is even poorer. This limitation puts this group at greater risk of contracting HIV/AIDS.

Description: First, the project reviewed a number of information, education and communication (IEC) materials and program by key NGOs that target to migrant and mobile populations and it reveals that there is a lack of messages and specific responses for migrant MSM. Then, the project developed two sets of IEC materials on HIV prevention for migrant and mobile population: one is a compilation of NGO's materials without messages for MSM and the other has specific messages on MSM vulnerability to HIV, preventive messages and access to treatment. These two sets were disseminated to managers and migrant workers in major companies with high density of male migrants and rural-urban migrant groups. These people were asked to compare the two sets. The feedbacks reveal that managers and migrant MSM view specific information for MSM is very useful for them and despite homosexuality is a taboo issues in Vietnam, managers and migrant workers accept to talk about the issue very openly.

Lessons learned: The interventions shows that the needs of information for MSM who migrate or mobile have been long ignored and the inclusion of specific messages to related to MSM and homosexuality is crucial part in the prevention and treatment of HIV/AIDS for migrant and mobile populations.

Next steps: The materials will be shared with agencies working on migration for integration.

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