

Executive summary

Monitoring and Evaluation Research on Model Development and Redefine Mechanisms for AIDS Prevention and Alleviation in Youth and other Most At Risk Population (Religion: Muslim community)

HIV/AIDS is an importance public health problem of Thailand that induces morbidity and premature death. The country spends healthcare cost to provide treatment for people living with HIV/AIDS (PLWHA) while the PLWHA are stigma and discriminate by society because almost community still lack of knowledge and understanding and also have negative attitude towards PLWHA. This study was aimed to evaluate the prevention and control of HIV/AIDS program in Muslim community under responsible of the Northern Muslim Network Organization for Development. This organization is the local organizational network that provides knowledge and understanding on HIV/AIDS among Muslim community by applying religious principles and practices in Muslim to prevent HIV/AIDS epidemic in Muslim community. Evaluation was focused on achievement indicators as indicated in the project, best practices and implementing process, strengthen of partnership network and project management lead to model and strategies for effective HIV/AIDS prevention and control among Muslim community as well as to suggest for policy implications on sustainable model and strategies for effective prevention campaign of HIV/AIDS among Muslim community in Thailand. Data were collected through self-administered questionnaire, in-depth interview and focus group discussion among different target groups. The target groups composed of project organizer, core group of trainers, religious leaders and target communities from 10 sites as; Doisaket mosque, Varun Niwate mosque, Darulbiramus mosque in Changklan, Tukwa mosque, Nhongban mosque, Muslim student club of Maejo University, Muslim student club of Chiangmai University, Fhang Muslim community and Yamee-Artul Islam mosque that all are located in Chiangmai province and Mae Sareang district, Mae Hongson province. Data were collected during March-June, 2010. All findings are summarized as follows:

Evaluation results based on the project indicators

1. Number of core group of trainers and number of process trainers were 6 persons per each site. Total number were 60 persons from 10 study sites whose are selected from those who had public mind and want to devote themselves for public.

2. Number of target groups who directly achieved benefits from HIV/AIDS prevention project.

2.1 Number of the target group to have sufficient knowledge on HIV/AIDS prevention. It was found that the entire target group have their understanding as good level or equal or more than 80% of score in all items, especially regard "At present, there has anti-retroviral drug" and "PLWHA have their right to join all community events" with total 100% of them answered for these 2 questions. When concerning on total

knowledge scores, 94% of the samples have their knowledge scores at a good level or equal or more than 80% of the total scores.

2.2 Around 10.2% of the samples have their total awareness scores on HIV/AIDS infection and benefits of practices to prevent HIV/AIDS at a high level or equal or more than 80% while approximately half of them (51.1%) have their awareness scores at a moderate level or between 60-79 scores and only one-third (38.7%) found at a low level. Majority of them aware that PLWHA can work or spend their daily life as general people can (100%). Every time when having sex, it is necessary to use condom to prevent HIV/AIDS (98%). While low awareness was found on people who stay in the remote area are at risk on HIV/AIDS infection. Their answer on this issue found to be “yes” only 38%.

2.3 Total of the target group have their knowledge on risk and prevention of HIV/AIDS at a high level or more than 80% of total score in almost items especially regard “Having multiple sex partners is the risk of HIV/AIDS” (100%). It is found only 1 item that the correct answer is lower than 80% as “Kissing is a low risk of HIV/AIDS infection”. It is found correct answer only 74%.

2.4 Thirty eight percents of the target group indicate they had sexual experiences. Among this experienced group, only one third (30%) have sex within the last 6 months. Within the same group, they have correct skill to prevent HIV/AIDS at the highest level regard “Never has sex with PLWHA”. Follow with “Never change sex partner” (86%). While only one-fifth (20%) indicate on “Using condom every time when having sex”. And one-third have withdrawal ejaculation for sometimes.

Best practices of HIV/AIDS prevention and sustainable implementation

Best practices of the HIV/AIDS prevention program among the Northern Muslim community is focused on people' thought that HIV/AIDS is not concern only sexual intercourse and condom use to prevent the transmission but it reflects good ethics of community people. So, the sustainable and appropriate prevention program of HIV/AIDS should emphasize on how to change thought and to create knowledge and understanding of community people on HIV/AIDS. The program should focus on parental close supervision to their teenage child. Using principles of Muslim based on Al-ku-ra-ann bible to integrate in teaching. The content is on respectful to the god or “Eh-mhan” that emphasize on good and bad practices, sin and karma. The god taught if individual practices in a good way, he/she would be appreciated and felt very happy. On the other hand, if he/she does in a bad way, he/she would be sad and unhappy. The concept of “A-ma-na” which defined as role of Muslim to behave to other Muslim by devoting oneself and by having public consciousness to help community people to know and to understand correctly on HIV/AIDS. Also, to raise awareness that HIV/AIDS is a problem for all community people. Everybody has chances to be at risk for HIV/AIDS infection if no effective prevention strategy. It is also focused on how to change attitude

of community people toward PLWHA to create acceptance and to reduce social stigma on PLWHA. Using religious principles on kindness and forgive to PLWHA is stressed. Participatory learning experiences using the religious principles in daily life by easy words let everybody consensus understand to actively prevent of improper sexual behaviors, to ashamed on sin and deviance behaviors from religious principles or “Se-na” based on the core group from religious leaders to enhance fast and coverage of acceptance due to respect from the community people.

Strengthen of partnership and network

The targets come from religious leaders, community leaders, housewives and teenagers who have public mild to become as a focal point for implementing the program for motivating changes among the community people as a “change agent”. They participate in the program by involving in the training of trainer skill development program, community preparation, conduct training sessions for community people, monitoring and evaluation, conclusion of problems and obstacles as well as to summarize for lesson learned to use in the next plan. Collaborating networks come from local religious organization to involve in planning and implementing with other religious organization such as Christ and Buddhist, PLWHA, AIDS organization and public health personnel from health center while local authority has unclear role and responsibility. Capacity building to strengthen the teamwork is done through SALT visit (Support, Appreciate, Learn & Listen, and Team). A self assessment activity is done through AART (After action review of team) using a river mapping to evaluate one’s performance to become a process trainer to build up one knowledge and understanding on HIV/AIDS by giving opportunity to present oneself to become a trainer to transfer knowledge and understanding on HIV/AIDS to community people. The community people will realize on susceptibility to HIV infection and have positive attitude to PLWHA, accept and be able to live with PLWHA in community. The training curriculum consists of giving knowledge, changing attitude, raising awareness lead to risk behavioral change and to increase preventive skills. The whole training program is conducted through discussion and experience sharing by the core group who have public consciousness and completed training of trainer program under supervision and technical support from the responsible persons of the project. Sense of belonging to response on program implementation in the target areas is also created. Horizontal communication among the networks and create network sharing of learning experiences among the target communities are done through lesson learned meeting for sharing working experiences on management of problems and obstacles. This implementing strategy enhances learning experiences among different sites to put their efforts to achieve equal success of the project implementation and creates self help group among the different target sites to help each other for effective implementation in each site

without depending on outside trainers. This strategy creates sustainable of the project at some level.

Project management

Project management is under the committee which a leader of the Northern Muslim organization is acted as an advisor. All participants who involve in the training program are satisfy with the quality of activity process at high level because everybody has a chance to share ideas and to participate in every step such as analytical, planning, implementing and knowledge sharing to raise one ideology on public consciousness to do for other people without any concrete return while abstractly return as happiness to help other human beings. The activity process helps to motivate positive attitude toward PLWHA, reduce social stigma and create acceptance on PLWHA in terms of supportive and no discrimination. Though the training activities are effective but all activities should continuing implement and should expand to cover all target groups among other Muslim communities and also should arrange the repeated activities to enhance knowledge and skills of the participants in order to be capable to conduct the training by themselves.

From findings, the implementing process is still in a limited area that cannot expand to the other areas of Chiangmai or other provinces in the Northern region. The reasons are because of some religious leaders in the community still have their negative attitude toward PLWHA and dare not to merge HIV/AIDS with the religious principles. If the training program can motivate the religious leaders to change their attitude, the community acceptance on PLWHA will be increased as a whole. Additional, majority of those volunteers to be the trainers are come from housewives rather than men's group. The reason may due to those housewives are stay at home and have more times than the men do. If this project can negotiate the men's group or head of the household to participate more, the coverage of implementation will gain better.

Activities in the curriculum emphasize on strengthen knowledge and understanding as well as to motivate positive attitude on PLWHA to reduce social stigma. While in some areas the PLWHA are living so in the future, the training activities should merge training skills of the participants on home visit, counseling for referral to proper treatment and care or family counseling to take care and support the PLWHA to cover all aspects of HIV/AIDS works.

The implementation should expand to introduce among new study sites based on community context and possibility of implementing process. If any area has enthusing or the religious leader pays attention more that area should be prioritized first to select as the target place to launch the training program. The project should seek out collaboration and financial support from local authorities in order to blend the activity with the community development plan to create continuing and sustainable

implementation. In addition, the collaboration with other religious organization should be identified in order to mobilize resources for creating community understanding and awareness on HIV/AIDS in an appropriate way. For example, to exchange the trainers, to construct learning materials and medias, experience sharing to solve the problems and obstacles to induce sustainable learning organization.

Learning materials obtain from an application of manuals and books from other organization. This may limit in use with the Muslim community. In nearby future, situation analysis and need assessment should be conducted among the trainees who already passed the training program to use as inputs for arrangement the training curriculum and materials to fit with the target's needs, more identity and relevant to the Muslim social contexts by applying religious principles as a key component of the training process.

Project administration by the team works still limit in their knowledge and experiences on methodological approach for scientific evaluation. The evaluation form has improper items that not directly measure to the evaluation point. Also, the teamwork still lack of knowledge and skills on care and support as well as mental support to the PLWHA. The local authority has unclear role to participate in the project while funding support only obtains from one source that may limit for increasing scale of work.

Suggestion on model and HIV/AIDS prevention campaign strategy achieved from project implementation in the target sites

Model for HIV/AIDS prevention campaign in Muslim community should be implied as follows:

1. Implementing strategy should focus firstly on attitude change among the religious leaders in different target communities. An intensive participatory training to change attitude of the religious leaders on HIV/AIDS should perform because this group will be a focal point to transfer knowledge and understanding of community people for effective change their thought and risk behaviors.

2. The skill development and capacity building in standard method of evaluation among the project teamwork should be conducted. The evaluation methods and patterns should revise as a systematic and standard procedure based on the target indicators.

3. The implementing activities should merge between preventive, care and support together such as enhance knowledge and understanding to reduce discrimination and social stigma on PLWHA and raising awareness on HIV/AIDS prevention. Also, mental support of PLWHA and family to be able to live with other people and access for proper should be included.

4. Increase motivation of work among the networks from different target sites by competition of achievement results every year in order to enhance capacity of work

development among them by propose name of the target community with success implementation to win the award from the religious leaders at the regional or national level.

5. The program implementation should expand to the youths whose are the vulnerable groups and have their ability to learn and transfer their knowledge to the others. Addition, these groups are the young generation that ready to accept and change their concept and attitude better than the old generation.

6. To create sustainable implementation, senses of belonging should be created to the target community. Brainstorm from community people to realize on the problem and to identify strategies or methods to prevent by themselves should be done by using the religious leader as a key person. At least 1 family member from each family should participate in the training for broad dissemination of information to his/her own family.

Suggestions/Policy implications for sustainable HIV/AIDS prevention campaign among Muslim community in Thailand

Policy Implications

1. The AIDS National Committee should support HIV/AIDS activities and sex education as a routine task of Chula Ratch Montri that leads to a meeting issue on HIV/AIDS and religions and religious schools among 3 religions including Buddhist, Muslim and Christ-Protestant.
2. The government should give financial support on implementation through Chula Ratch Montri to open a road map of HIV/AIDS activities among religious networks to change attitude, to produce core working groups and capacity building of core groups in the study areas.

Suggestions for further works

1. Should construct a clear road map for launching the project in a new study site to strengthen networks' capacity and potential of work. Should sort out partnerships from other organization to support the activities especially local authorities such as Tumbol administration organization, Municipality organization, Province administration organization. The concrete collaboration as a network among these local authorities may done through collaboration in financial plan to maximize benefits to each other and to create senses of responsibility in the local areas as well as to create continuing and sustainable implementation by funding support from the local authorities.
2. Should expand the core groups whose have public mind and capacity in project management by disseminate lesson learned via different medias such as set up a regional meeting for knowledge sharing, scientific publication of the results to explain experiences in works, management of problems and obstacles and outcome achievements, campaign through television or radio to increase

motivation of Muslim community in other areas whose capable to act and have a clear direction to conduct the activity.

3. Standard curriculum and manuals or teaching materials should be produced and distributed to other Muslim community under the patent of the Northern Muslim Network to increase scale of work to cover all target communities and to create the same standard learning experiences in every target areas.
4. Collaboration with local health personnel, personnel from the Ministry of Social Development and Human Security, other religious leaders from temples or churches, or local non-governmental organization should be done to create collaboration networks on HIV/AIDS in all aspects.
5. Contents and curriculum in Muslim should be revised by merging correct knowledge and understanding on HIV/AIDS to reduce stigma on PLWHA, to ovoid from an awful picture of PLWHA while to create acceptance on PLWHA social capacity. Some figures or daily living information of PLWHA may distribute to let people understand on the work that benefit to the society.
6. Muslim religious leaders or Muslim teachers should be trained to understand on the training of trainer process and be familiar to transfer knowledge and understanding on HIV/AIDS to their students in Muslim schools located in different areas in order to let them disseminate the correct information to their family as a whole.