

The baseline assessment for a regional HIV/AIDS referral system on improving the access to ARV treatment and care among migrants living with HIV/AIDS in Thailand

9-18 July 2018

AIDS Research Center, Thai Red Cross

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Duong Chan receives ARV since 2002. Now, she works as a peer support group at ARV clinic in Somdetprayuprahraj SaKaeo Province. The ARV package for 3 months placed in front of her will be delivered to Phuket province for a migrant living with HIV/AIDS.

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- **Ministry of Public Health, Department of Disease Control and Bureau of AIDS, TB and STIs promote and support the regional project on improving access to ARV among migrants living with HIV/AIDS in Thailand.**

- **Thai Government promotes and encourages all of migrants need to be registered into the system and health insurance in order to cover and access to health care and health facilities in Thailand.**

- **Migration data management system related to ARV treatment and care needs to be developed and established suggested by National AIDS Program. It would be great to start by Thai Red Cross.**



- **PLWHAs/ MLWHAS prefer to receive the ARV medicine in Thailand side and they do not want to travel across the border to get the medicines.**

Anonymous Wednesday Club , AIDS Research Center, Thai Red Cross

- Patients need to know about the access to ARV after the end of two years -health insurance while leaving/ staying in Thailand
- Patients request to continuously receive the ARV in Thailand with the appointment schedule should be at 3 months per visit. Patients would like to get the ARV medicine for free.
- Anonymous Wednesday Club of Thai Red Cross provide the ART service to PLWHA about 3,000 cases since the three decades. Currently, about 700-800 cases are under treatment. 60 out of 800 PLWHA are the migrants living with HIV/AIDS. Additionally, the Wednesday club is working closely with the BMA-Health Center No. 28- Khlong San Khet Thonburi to refer the cases to get the ARV medicine regularly. Some cases are receiving the ARV medicine under the project of The Princess Soamsawali (the Royal Patronage Project for PMTCT and HIV/AIDS Prevention and Control) coordinated by Mr Somchat -Thai RC staff .
- The stigmatization among migrants living with HIV/AIDS in Thailand is still very high. It is said that “we never share our health condition and our HIV status with our close friends and family members or even in the factories and in the work places” said Mrs. Deang -Nickname and Mr New and Mrs Kai (MLWHAs with undocumented status).

Anonymous Wednesday Club , AIDS Research Center, Thai Red Cross

- The health promotion and health education about HIV/AIDS should be conducted in the construction sites with the migrant groups with the permission of migrant leaders (one leader is taking care about 20-30 migrants in each construction sites I Klong SamWa).
- Migrant data hub center (data management system) should be developed and Thai Red Cross should be the focal point for coordination and provide information for MLWHA.
- The effective follow up mechanism between Thai RC and Cambodian and Lao RC national societies need to be created or developed with the concrete model.

Somdet Phra Yuparat Sa Kaeo Hospital- Sa Kaeo



- In 2018, ARV clinic at Somdet Phra Yuparat Sa Kaeo Hospital is very active and well organized in taking care the PLWHAs about 1452 cases, received ARV = 1230, death =189, lost follow up = 134 cases.
- At this ARV clinic, there about four peer HIV supporters to help ARV clinic's nurse-Mrs Kai Orathai.
- Follow up mechanism using the four peer HIV supporters to monitor and follow up the cases .
- The Line application is used and promoted for Follow Up and Monitor with the cases.
- There are six MLWHAs on ARV at the ARV clinic (four cases are using health insurance, two are paying by themselves).
- Only one case was referred to Poi Pet Hospital in 2018 using the standard referral form.



Ubon Ratchathani Province

- Thai Red Cross volunteers should work with RSAT team in promoting the HIV prevention and control in Ubon Ratchathani province
- The bilateral meetings between Ubon Ratchathani and Champasak have been implemented with VHV's buddy project. HIV AIDS will be integrated into the VHV's buddy project under the TIGA -MOFA project and focus on HIV AIDS.
- The pilot project should be scoped in Sirindron district and Varin district in reaching the migrants in Ubon Ratchathani province.
- The referral system is in place and developed but the details of case reports need to be checked with the district hospitals
- RSAT is providing the treatment and care for 19 cases out of 2356 since Oct 2017.
- The recruitment intervention should be implemented and link to RSAT and The Continuum Care Center of Provincial Hospital.





Sirindhorn hospital, Ubon Ratchathani Province

- There are 160 PLWHAs, 120 cases are on ARV.
- Lao VIP cases are 3 persons on ARV in this clinic.
- Miss Lamoon is a HIV/AIDS focal person and taking care TB/HIV program
- The referral system is in place but not effective yet. No follow up mechanism from both sides.
- Referral forms were used but no response from Lao side and no follow up process and treatment outcomes.
- Only 1-2 cases a year have been registered and referred to Lao side.
- At border check point, there is a health screening counter on duty 7 days a week (health center staff and Sirindhorn nurses).





NongKhai Provincial Hospital

- ARV clinic is very active and provides treatment and care for 1209 PLWHAs. 957 cases are on ARV in 2018.
- 81 cases were lost follow up
- 41 cases are MLWHAs and on ARV , 19 out of 41 are undocumented migrants with the support from NGOs –Garden of Friendships (paid for ARV medicine 50%)



NongKhai Provincial Hospital

- Provincial Health Office and NongKhai Provincial Hospital are working closely together with a good team work.
- Undocumented migrants are the high risk groups and very hard to reach them. The project needs to be scoped in small scale first.
- Garden of Friendships will be the sanatorium for MLWHAs, the poor and the homeless people.



Garden of Friendships

Friends for All Foundation

Good Shepherd Sisters, Nong Khai province

- Providing ARV medicines for MLWHAs in this extended clinic –sanatorium in communities for the poor and homeless people
- Health education in communities and promote recruitment for testing
- Home visit activities
- Stigmatization reduction and psychosocial support by social workers
- Patient's tracing and following up cases in communities





Khlong Yai Hospital, Trat province

- Raksthai Foundation provides the support and the referral HIV cases to Koh Kong hospital about 4-5 HIV cases –with undocumented status per year
- Khlong Yai hospital provides ARV for 34 documented migrants (not included undocumented migrants) with 100% retention rate.
- Drug delivery and drug management was discussed with NAA Cambodia but it was very hard to practice.

Khlong Yai Hospital, Trat province

- Thai RC and Cambodian RC should work with Khlong Yai hospital & Raksthai in referring the cases living outside Trat especially in Bangkok and other provinces and encourage the cases to visit the Thai RC AIDS Center in Bangkok
- Health education, home visit and stigmatization reduction
- Follow up and patients 'tracing and referral to Koh Kong hospital



Suggestions and recommendations



- It is confirmed and lack of migration information and unclear and little is known about migrants living with HIV/AIDS on ARV in Thailand. However, it is estimated that in average HIV prevalence in migrants in Thailand about 1 percent based on the surveillance and the estimation from National AIDS Program.
- The effective referral and follow up mechanism should be implemented and strengthened especially in the cross border areas/ provinces.
- Health education and health promotion about HIV/AIDS prevention and control should be urgently implemented among migrants.
- Based on the findings of baseline assessment, ARV treatment among migrants should be the key priority to support and save the patients' lives in regardless of their legal status.
- The migrant registration policy should be promoted nationwide in order to promote the benefits of health insurance and access to health facilities while working and living in Thailand.
- Thai RC will be working with key partners in promoting HIV/AIDS prevention and control and ARV treatment and support the referral system with the auxiliary role to Thai Government.
- In Bangkok, Thai RC will be working with BMA and 8 hospitals and health centers in referring the patients for routine services and the government policy.

Thank you for your kind coordination!



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