



HIV PREVENTION FOR MSM

KEY DATES

ICAAP11 ACTIVITIES

SUB-REGIONAL
NETWORK HIGHLIGHTS

OUR COALITION



2013
**ANNUAL
UPDATE**

Founded in 2007, the Asia Pacific Coalition on Male Sexual Health (APCOM) is a coalition of governments, UN partners, non-profits, academics and community-based organisations concerned with improving the sexual health and human rights of men who have sex with men and transgender people in the Asia and the Pacific Region.

We represent a diverse range of interests working together to advocate on male sexual health. We highlight and prioritise HIV issues that affect the lives of men who have sex with men (MSM) and transgender people, including rights, health and well-being.

What we do

As a coalition, APCOM performs a critical role in community liaison.

We review and track the degree of inclusion of MSM and HIV issues in the National Strategic Plans of different countries in the region. We monitor violations of MSM rights. We nurture the growth of supportive networks by working with MSM and HIV community networks and providing support, mentorship and technical expertise.

We also advocate for quality research to guide policy makers and service providers in performing their duties. As a community of excellence, we emphasise that data and insight sharing are key elements in building capacity, knowledge and recognition. This information is brought together in our online resource centre called "The Source", where a wealth of searchable data related to HIV, MSM and transgender is found.

Our core mission is to change attitudes and sensitise society to the needs of our diverse and vibrant community. Together, we are sharing knowledge and real-life stories that support and promote the sexual orientation and gender identity rights of MSM and transgender people.

What we believe

As a coalition, we believe in collaboration. We have faith in ideas. We advocate for change. We are focused on creating a world where men who have sex with men and transgender people live life fully, free of stigma and discrimination, a world where everyone is treated equally.

We believe in sharing knowledge and experiences so that outcomes are stronger and impact is greater. Committed and passionate, we anchor our work in understanding and facts.

A joint message

FROM THE CHAIR PERSON AND EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

“Consolidation” best sums up 2013 for APCOM. An external evaluation commissioned by Hivos and UNDP in early 2012 strategically guided our work to assess its impacts and progress from its inception in 2007. It provided guidance by looking at areas of Relevance, Effectiveness, Efficiency, Sustainability and Equity.

The evaluation helped us consolidate the foundations to move forward in the next strategic phase of our work with a strong focus on strategy development, governance-strengthening and strategic operations.

Throughout 2013, we firmed our bases and continued to build momentum as we geared up to an effective engagement for the 11th International Congress on AIDS in Asia and the Pacific (ICAAP11), hosted in Bangkok, 18-22 November 2013.



“We are in our strongest position since inception, and going from strength to strength, made possible by the number of our collaborating partners.”

CHAIR PERSON **Dédé Oetomo** / EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR **Midnight Poonkasetwattana**


We began the year strongly. In January, we conducted our third Governing Board meeting in Bangkok with support from UNAIDS. We also successfully held a consultation with regional stakeholders for developing a new Strategic Plan 2014-2019, which involved participation by representatives from the UN Sector, development partners, researchers and key affected communities.

Another exciting event for APCOM during November was the official launch of “Raising our game. Raising our voices; APCOM Strategic Plan for 2014-2019”. Following an 11-month consultative process with community partners and stakeholders, we debuted our new strategic plan during ICAAP at the APCOM Reception supported by Hivos.

With our new vibrant organisational identity, messaging and website launched in March, communication was a strategic focus in this period. The need for the redevelopment was highlighted through recommendation 6 of the external evaluation which states; “The APCOM website should be overhauled and redesigned to act as a portal for the storage and dissemination of strategic information”.

A key element of the website redesign has been the repositioning of the site around an important knowledge and information sharing platform called ‘The Source’. This, along with other APCOM online communication tools and social media channels, have become an exhaustive source of information about MSM and transgender populations within Asia and the Pacific.

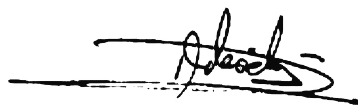
2013 was also a time to implement new projects. They included the Communications Causes Change Project supported by the Robert Carr Civil Society Networks Fund, and the MSM and Transgender Networks Capacity Strengthening Initiative in partnership with AFAO and supported by the Australian Government Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade.



Throughout 2013, APCOM successfully launched three pieces of strategic information: a discussion paper on Islam and sexuality, a policy brief on transgender health and rights, and the use of the Internet to generate HIV testing demand for MSM in China. These are aimed at filling in strategic information gaps and act as a conversation starter for advocates throughout the region.

ICAAP11 was the highlight for APCOM. During the conference, we raised our visibility through our bold programme of engagement including a one-day pre-conference, a regional MSM and HIV testing and counseling consultation at the Community Forum, five satellite sessions and two skills building sessions, a stakeholder reception to launch the new Strategic Plan, an advocacy engagement booth and post-conference after party. Throughout ICAAP11, APCOM was prominent in pushing forward the needs of MSM and transgender people through our social media and mainstream media engagement. APCOM was rated in the top five influencers of the ICAAP11 discussion on Twitter and we saw 1,000+ new 'likes' on our Facebook page. APCOM was engaged in five media interviews, two press conferences, issued three press releases and was invited to deliver a joint statement at the closing plenary.

We are in our strongest position since inception, and going from strength to strength, made possible by the number of our collaborating partners. 2014 will be another busy year for us. After 10 years, the International AIDS Conference will once again be held in our region, hosted by Melbourne, and APCOM will have a strong presence there.



2013 HIGHLIGHTS

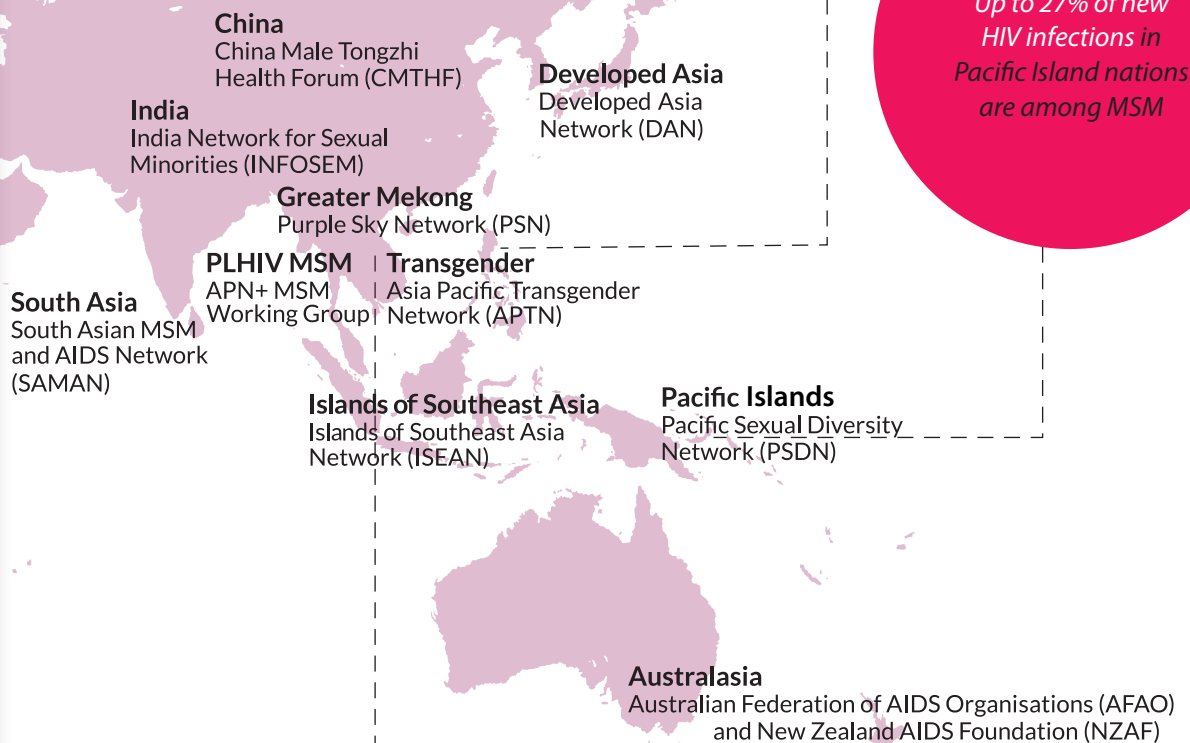
- Joint meeting on ending AIDS in Asia by re-strategising the MSM response (with UNAIDS and UNDP).
- Foreplay – The Final Push Towards the Three Zeros: Pre-ICAAP11 event focusing on latest updates in Asia and the Pacific region and developing approaches to address the needs of men who have sex with men (MSM) and transgender people.
- ICAAP11 – APCOM rated in the top influencers following Foreplay, five satellite sessions, two skills-building sessions and a stakeholder reception to launch its new Strategic Plan 2014-2019.
- Regional meeting on community-based HIV testing: Challenges and Opportunities.
- Launch of discussion paper on Islam and Sexuality, policy brief on transgender rights and the use of the Internet to generate HIV testing demand for MSM in China.

MSM in the Asia and Pacific region are estimated at between 10.5 and 27 million

MSM now accounts for 10 out of 13 new HIV cases reported each day in the Philippines

OUR CHALLENGES, OUR PARTNERS.

Up to 27% of new HIV infections in Pacific Island nations are among MSM



Prevalence among MSM in large urban areas such as Bangkok, Ha Noi and Jakarta is particularly high at between 15 and 30%. Cities should continue to be the focus of HIV prevention

Nineteen out of 38 countries in Asia and the Pacific criminalise same-sex sexual activities, which are punishable by imprisonment, caning, stoning and even death

The state of investment in HIV prevention for MSM in Asia and the Pacific

Over the past several years, investment in HIV programmes for MSM has increased across the region. However, this progress is not shared equally. Even in countries with the greatest progress, the share of new infections resulting from sex between men still outpaces the share of programmatic attention as indicated by the share of HIV prevention spending that targets MSM.

Evidence is important not only in influencing national strategic planning, but should also shape how communities and institutions advocate for change. Recent data speak volumes about the urgent need to invest in targeted programmes for MSM. They show that the road to adequate and equitable investment may be longer for some countries than others.

Key Points:

■ HIV programming for MSM has received greater attention over time relative to other HIV prevention programmes since 2007. *(Source: National AIDS Spending Assessments)*

■ Between 2007 and 2011, spending on MSM programmes increased considerably, both in actual amounts and as a share of overall prevention spending. This trend is evident among the six Asia and the Pacific countries that reported the data consistently during this period: Fiji, Thailand, Myanmar, Cambodia, Philippines, and Laos. *(Source: National AIDS Spending Assessments)*

■ While investment is ultimately determined by many factors and constraints, the proportion of programmatic attention that a population receives should aim to be commensurate with that population's share of the overall national HIV burden. In the case of MSM, there is still considerable discrepancy between the two.

Source: National AIDS Spending Assessments, Global AIDS Progress Reports, and individual modes of transmission studies (see expanded sources). (Source: UNAIDS)

Information about Transgender Health in Asia and the Pacific

HIV looms as a serious threat to transgender people worldwide. In Asia and the Pacific, it is widely reported that most new HIV infections will be among men who have sex with men and transgender people by the year 2020. This threat of HIV has only recently been recognised by policy makers as a major threat to the health and well being of transgender people in the region and an impediment to achieving the 2015 goals. *(Source: UNAIDS Website)*

Limited studies have been reported regarding HIV surveillance, HIV and STI prevalence, population size estimations, or behaviour patterns for either transgender women or transgender men in the region. The most current data documenting HIV infection rates amongst transgender people only include transgender women in urban settings. Nevertheless, the data shows disturbing infection rates throughout the region:

Delhi 49%, Mumbai 42%, Phnom Penh 37%, Jakarta 34%, Surabaya 25%, Bandung 14%, Chaing Mai 18%, Phuket 12%, Bangkok 11%, Lahore 0.5%.

These figures are higher than most HIV prevalence rates among MSM in Asia and the Pacific, which are highest in Bangkok at 31.3%.



Community campaigns, including through social media, continue to be important advocacy tools for APCOM

GOAL ONE

To strengthen advocacy efforts that improve social protection and provide enabling environments for men who have sex with men (MSM) and transgender people in Asia and the Pacific.

Over the past 12 months, collaborating with the United Nations and other key institutions, we have participated in a variety of meetings that have brought people together from Asia and the Pacific region, including governments and their law enforcement agencies, judiciary and lawyers. Our intent is to promote and advocate for more legal and equitable social policy reforms.

KEY ACTIVITIES INCLUDED:

- Convened a joint meeting regarding Ending AIDS in Asia: Re-strategising the MSM Response 20-22 January 2013 – Bangkok, Thailand (UNAIDS and UNDP)
- Advocated at the National HIV/AIDS and STI Programme Managers Meeting for Asian Countries in the Western Pacific Region, 25-28 February 2013, Kunming, China (WHO)
- 7th International AIDS Society (IAS) Conference on HIV Pathogenesis, Treatment and Prevention, Kuala Lumpur, 30 June – 3 July 2013
 - Led an MSM discussion in a session on HIV in Islamic Majority Settings, using the APCOM discussion paper on Islam and Sexuality [\(SEE\)](#)
 - Co-chairing and on a panel on “What will work in the future? Rethinking strategies for HIV prevention for MSM populations” [\(SEE\)](#)
- Out on the Street Asia: 2013, Hong Kong, China, 24th October 2013. This is the first ever LGBT workplace summit to take place in Asia
 - Panelist on session entitled “Global Challenges: Asian Solutions” [\(SEE\)](#)

- Sixth Asia Pacific Population Conference, Bangkok, Thailand, 16-20 September 2013 (SEE)
- Technical support provided for ICAAP11 abstract submissions

This was mainly through APCOM's abstract-writing mentorship programme, (SEE) the first time that APCOM coordinated this at the regional level with call out to mentees and mentors. The programme matched up 36 people with researchers, academics and experienced abstract-writers, with people preparing conference abstracts for the first time. To improve on the support for the future, APCOM has also asked for feedback from the people who participated in the programme.

- Produced a discussion paper on Islam, sexual diversity and access to health services. Recognising the need to conduct advocacy with faith-based leaders and religious groups, especially in countries where religion and homosexuality make an uneasy partnership. The aim of these efforts is to support the many MSM and transgender people that struggle with the contradictions posed by their sexuality and gender identity in the context of their faith and religious customs and norms.
- Delivered a comprehensive MSM conference agenda at the 11th International Congress on AIDS in Asia and the Pacific (ICAAP11), held in Bangkok, Thailand. Successfully held the Pre-Conference on 17 November 2013 with nearly 300 participants.
 - Regional Consultation on MSM and HIV testing held at the Community Forum on 18 November with 100 participants
 - Two Skills-Building workshops held on Advocacy, and using Social Media
 - Five Satellite sessions held

MOVING FORWARD, WE AIM TO:

- Advocate at the Experts Group Meeting on "Implementation of National Reviews and Consultations on Legal and Policy Barriers to Universal Access to HIV Services" on 4-5 March in Pattaya, Thailand (SEE)
- Provide input into the LGBT Rights and Health Asia-Pacific Regional Dialogue in partnership with UNDP
- Provide input into the regional overview report of the progress made in achieving universal access to comprehensive HIV prevention, treatment, care and support in partnership with UNESCAP



Outlining APCOM's ICAAP11 and beyond's visions and goals

Photo credit: Jeanne Hallacy

GOAL TWO

To advocate for increased access to rights-based, comprehensive HIV prevention, care, treatment and support services for men who have sex with men (MSM) and transgender people, including people living with HIV.

Photo credit: Jeanne Hallacy



As a coalition, APCOM advocates for universal access to appropriate HIV prevention, treatment, care and support services for MSM and transgender people within Asia and the Pacific. By working with local, national and global partners, our aim is to improve the health sector's response to better meet the needs of MSM and transgender people.

We also seek to source and increase funding opportunities for local MSM and transgender sexual health and rights advocacy programming.

KEY ACTIVITIES INCLUDED:

- 'Ending AIDS in Asia - Re-strategising the MSM Response', Bangkok, Thailand, 21-22 January 2013
- Meeting the HIV Treatment and Health Needs of Gay and other Men who have sex with men, Geneva, Switzerland, 13-14 May 2013 ([DOWNLOAD](#))
- Continuing to advance the sexual health and well-being of MSM and transgender people in the Pacific: Building collaboration beyond the HIV/STI Response fund, Auckland, New Zealand, 27-28 May 2013 ([SEE](#))
- Regional consultation on improving access to prevention, care and treatment of HIV among men who have sex with men and transgender people, Bangkok, Thailand, 21-23 August 2013
- Regional Meeting on Community-Based Testing: Challenges and Opportunities, Bangkok, Thailand, 10-11 October 2013
 - Core group member and input into the Joint Statement on Scaling up voluntary community-based HIV testing and Counseling for Key Populations in Asia and the Pacific which was read out by the Executive Director at the closing plenary of ICAAP11. ([SEE](#))

MOVING FORWARD, WE AIM TO:

- Attend HIV2014 Symposium at New York Academy of Sciences, New York, 5 May 2014
- Expert Consultation on WHO Guidelines and MSM Implementation Science Agenda, Washington D.C., 20-21 May 2014



Delegates at the pre-ICAAP11 forum Foreplay

GOAL THREE

To increase the production and utilisation of strategic information to strengthen HIV and sexual health intervention programming, as well as regional and national level advocacy efforts to improve the sexual health of men who have sex with men (MSM) and transgender people in Asia and the Pacific.

We have made it our top priority to ensure that strategic information on MSM, transgender and HIV in Asia and the Pacific moves beyond behavioral and epidemiological knowledge.

While still maintaining the importance of epidemiologic data for advocacy with policy makers and donor agencies to increase funding and programmatic efforts to prevent HIV and improve the human rights of MSM and transgender populations, we have pushed for epidemiological data to be complemented with anthropological, sociological and ethnographic information.

We believe this will help to better inform programming and the design of more acceptable, diversified, and therefore more effective HIV prevention, treatment, care and support services.

As a coalition, we have continued to advocate for, encourage and promote the importance of social research amongst MSM and transgender communities in Asia and the Pacific. Also, where possible we have continued to advocate for the production of such knowledge to centrally engage with the affected communities and service providers, particularly where there is no previous research.

KEY ACTIVITIES INCLUDED:



Staff and community partners celebrate the launch of APCOM's new website

Since the launch and activation of www.apcom.org as well as the additional improvements in our social media strategy, we have seen a dramatic increase in traffic visiting our website. What's more, our presence on social media through Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn and YouTube, has also increased.

With funds made available through the RCNF, we focused significant energy on identifying and highlighting quality content. In order to amplify the diverse community voices and use the APCOM website as a platform for the community, we created three key focus areas that highlight quality country based services and individuals, and a reflection piece to 'report' back on key events and meetings:

Launch of the Spotlight, Limelight, Highlight and Reflection series:

- **Spotlight Series** focuses on community-based organisations (CBOs), networks, services and other organisations working in the area of MSM and transgender health and advocacy. To date 16 Spotlight pieces have been completed. The Spotlight Series can be found on the APCOM website.
- **Limelight Series** focuses on individuals and everyday heroes working in the community, particularly from voices that are often not profiled (such as PLHIV and youth for example). This series showcases their activities, pays tribute to diverse individuals and provides the services they are working for . As this is the newest of our series, two have been completed focusing on a Young MSM in Vietnam and a Transgender in Myanmar, with more to come.
- **Highlight Series** is our premium communication service. Through our sub-regional networks, it highlights a number of exceptional services working at the country level. The Highlight series focuses on documented evidence of good practice and works with local services to develop an in-depth analysis of their projects, with lessons being shared across the region. We launched a highlight series on a case study on Guangzhou, China entitled 'A practice of internet-based mass mobilisation of the MSM community testing'.
- **Reflection Piece Series** is one of the ways APCOM staff or networks get feedback about our attendance during conferences or meetings. This short reflection piece is then posted to the APCOM website, Facebook and Twitter. This facilitates information sharing, capacity building and ensures accountability.



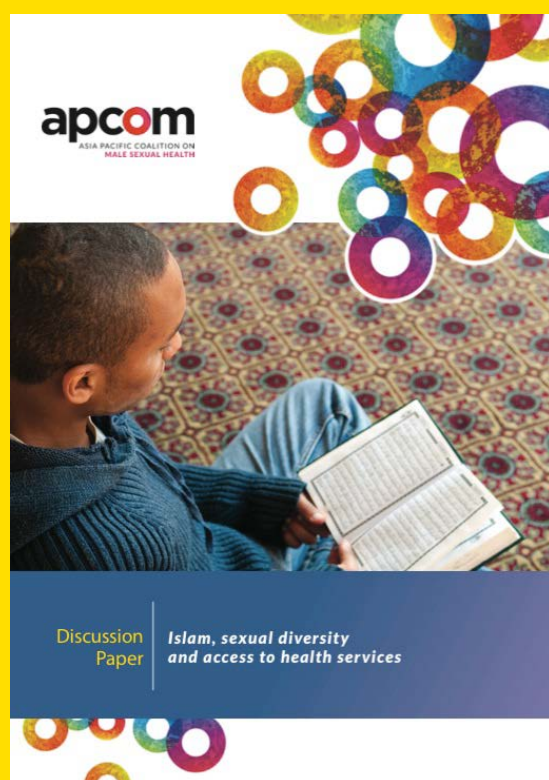
APCOM's new "Highlight Series"

In 2013, APCOM produced and launched four papers:

- Islam, sexuality and access to health services [SEE](#)
- Overlooked, ignored, forgotten: HIV and basic rights of transgender people in Asia and the Pacific [SEE](#)
- Highlight Series: Using the Internet for mass mobilisation of the MSM community for the purpose of HIV testing [↓ DOWNLOAD](#)
- In partnership with UNAIDS developed the Supplementary section on MSM in the UNAIDS 2013 Report in Asia Pacific

MOVING FORWARD, WE AIM TO:

- Develop a Scoping Paper on identifying gaps in social research for future development of strategic information
- Launch APCOM's Headlight Series. These bite size briefs are a summary of key discussions and advocacy points from publications and resources relevant to the MSM and transgender communities in Asia and the Pacific. The launch of this series focuses on understanding young people and the law in Asia and the Pacific
- Release a discussion paper of the state of investment for MSM within Asia and the Pacific, to be released during the International AIDS Conference in Melbourne
- Produce a Regional Report on MSM HIV Counseling and Testing in Asia and the Pacific. This report will detail the HCT activities of key informants in the region, focusing on the efforts of reaching out to and providing HCT for MSM
- Provide a regional analysis report on A capacity assessment of regional, sub-regional and national MSM—and transgender organisations—and networks in Asia and the Pacific. This report will be based on the work of the APCOM AFAO MSM and Transgender Networks Capacity Strengthening Initiative
- Produce a scoping paper on assumptions behind, and key principles of, HIV prevention and care programming for MSM and transgender people in Asia and the Pacific



Discussion paper, Islam, sexual diversity and access to health services



Participants from across the region take part in the “Communication Causes Change” training session in Bangkok

GOAL FOUR

To strengthen the capacity of APCOM and sub-regional networks to support national community efforts to effectively advocate and participate in national planning processes.

Close collaboration with and nurturing of our regional and sub-regional networks is at the very heart of the APCOM coalition. We actively advocate for an increased investment and amplified coverage of HIV prevention, treatment, care and support services for MSM and transgender people at the national level.

Over the past 12 months, the APCOM Secretariat has worked closely with our regional and sub-regional networks to increase their visibility and solidify our own organisation and coalition membership. New policies and operational procedures have been developed, increasing APCOM’s productivity and laying a solid foundation for the APCOM Secretariat’s many functions.

Most notably, there has been significant investment in, and consequently improvements in, APCOM’s internal and external communications work. This was made possible through AusTraining, an AusAID-funded volunteering programme and a grant we received from the Robert Civil Society Network Fund. APCOM was successful in securing a full-time communications officer, and additionally, in late 2013 we were able to appoint an advocacy officer, working on our MSM and Transgender Community Network Strengthening Project in partnership with the Australian Federation of AIDS Organisations (AFAO).

As a coalition, we continue to provide support and develop the capacity of our regional and sub-regional networks. As you will see in the following pages, many of the networks, our coalition partners, are now well established and moving towards providing greater support to national and local MSM, transgender and HIV organisations within their regions.

KEY ACTIVITIES INCLUDED:

- Third Governing Board Meeting held January 2013



Raising our game, Raising our voices – APCOM's new strategic plan.

- APCOM Secretariat firmly established in Bangkok. In August the Office moved to a new location in Thong Lor (due to landlord renovating the entire building). The Secretariat is co-located with other community organisations; AFAO, IDPC, PSN and YV.
- The launch of our strategic plan, 2014–2019 in November 2013
- The Secretariat continued to look for new funding opportunities and was successful in securing:
 - AusAID (in partnership with AFAO) for MSM and TG Networks Capacity Strengthening Initiative. Fund ending on 30 June 2014. An advocacy officer was employed under this grant
 - Robert Carr Civil Society Networks Fund for Communication Causes Change project (Phase I). Fund ending on 31 December 2013. A media and communications advisor was secured for PSN and APCOM
 - Appointed advocacy officer working APCOM AFAO MSM and Transgender Networks Capacity Strengthening Initiative
- 5th Executive Committee meeting held before ICAAP 11, on 16 November 2013
- On-going mentorship technical support to Youth Voices Count (YVC) and its coordinator
- APTN, ISEAN, PSN, PSDN, YVC have undergone the Rapid Assessment to identify network's technical support needs and advocacy priorities

MOVING FORWARD, WE AIM TO:

- Disseminate a summary of the new WHO Consolidated Guidelines: Understanding WHO's Consolidated Guidelines on HIV Prevention, Diagnosis, Treatment and Care for Key Populations
- Produce a Briefing paper on the Global Fund New Funding Model mechanism for communities

Between 2007-2011, spending on MSM programmes increased considerably, both in actual amounts and as a share of overall prevention spending but there is still not enough investment

KEY DATES

January

28th – 1st February APCOM 3rd Governing Board Meeting, Bangkok, Thailand.

28th – Unveiling of APCOM 2.0 branding during the 3rd Governing Board Meeting.

February

March

6th – Launch of APCOM’s new website and knowledge sharing platform ‘The Source’.

April

APCOM finalizes official partnership with the ICAAP LOC as official Community Partner for International Congress on AIDS in Asia Pacific.

APCOM confirms funding from Robert Carr Civil Society Network fund for regional Communication Causes Change Project, partners with Purple Sky Network (PSN), Pacific Sexual Diversity Network (PSDN) and Islands of South East Asia Network (ISEAN).

May

17th, to mark International Day Against Homophobia, APCOM launches discussion paper on Faith Sexuality and Access to Health Services and policy brief on Transgender health, Overlooked, Ignored and Forgotten.

June

Formation of APCOM’s Knowledge Reference Group – First meeting was held in Bangkok, Thailand.

A night of tribute to Shivananda Khan OBE, Dusit Thani, Bangkok Thailand.

July

Midnight & Dédé attended IAS Pathogenesis Conference KL, Malaysia.

August

5th – APCOM finalizes partnership with UNAIDS Regional Support Team for the production of a pilot campaign to increase HIV Testing among MSM in Bangkok, Thailand – TestBKK.

September

9th – 13th CCC Project Pilot Training Package for Regional Communication Focal Points, Bangkok, Thailand.

October

7th – 11th CCC Project Training for Communication Focal Points - Pacific, Auckland, New Zealand.

14th APCOM’s Advocacy and Capacity Development Officer started leading APCOM / AFAO MSM and Transgender Networks Capacity Strengthening Initiative.

21st APCOM hires two Campaign Assistants to work on Regional HIV Testing Community mobilization Campaign for Bangkok, Thailand – TestBKK.

28th October 1st November CCC Project Training for Communication Focal Points- Islands of South East Asia Network (ISEAN), Jakarta, Indonesia.

November

11th – 15th Comprehensive MSM conference engagement package for 11th International Congress on AIDS in Asia and the Pacific (ICAAP), Bangkok, Thailand.

17th MSM Pre Conference FOREPLAY: Final push towards the three zeors: for 11th International Congress on AIDS in Asia and the Pacific (ICAAP), Bangkok, Thailand.

21st – APCOM reception, launch of APCOM Strategic Plan 2014 – 2019 Raising our game. Raising our voices.

APCOM MSM ICAAP After Party – One Night in Bangkok, Thailand.

December

World AIDS Day

Activities from ICAAP 11

As an official community partner of ICAAP11, we worked closely with several networks and partners to ensure a strong presence of men who have sex with men, transgender sessions and voices at the Congress.

APCOM played a pivotal role in the proceedings of the conference, from the abstract-mentoring programme, ensuring high quality abstract submission, FOREPLAY (the MSM pre-conference) and the MSM Community Forum organised on the 17th and 18th of November. Throughout the conference, we organised five satellite sessions and two skills-building workshops.



APCOM Pre-Conference: FOREPLAY – The final push towards the three zeros

Through FOREPLAY, we presented an opportunity to engage in a community dialogue, as well as learning about the latest information in the region on ‘what do we know?’ and ‘where are the gaps?’ We highlighted the importance of strategically working together to map out strategies and solutions for moving forward.

The pre-conference drew a crowd of nearly 300 participants from all over Asia and the Pacific region. Tantalisingly entitled “Foreplay”, the pre-conference whetted the participants’ cerebral appetites for more.

This section of the report chronologically presents the 17th and 18th of November program activities in order.

Regional MSM Consultation at the Community Forum

Participants engaged with APCOM during the MSM Community Forum on HIV Counselling and Testing (HCT): Success and Challenges.

The session gave participants an opportunity to share their expertise and contribute to the development of the World Health Organization (WHO) Consolidated Key Populations Guidelines due to be launched on the International AIDS Conference (IAC) 2014 in Melbourne, Australia. A total of 50 people attended this consultation from 35 countries and territories.





APCOM's Play Booth!

Play Booth!

The APCOM Play Booth was generously donated by the Asian Development Bank (ADB). Not only was it a place to congregate and distribute various resources that we have developed in partnership with other organisations, but it also allowed us to conduct a social media campaign “#SayIt! It gave the communities an opportunity to share their voices and join together. Visitors to the APCOM Play Booth, received a #SayIt t-shirt and were asked to write a message about what they wanted to see in their community. The APCOM crew snapped a quick photo and promoted it using APCOM's Facebook, Twitter and Instagram.

In total, we handed out 946 t-shirts each with the personal messages of those receiving the t-shirts – we’ve included some of the photos here for you to see.

ICAAP11 After-Party

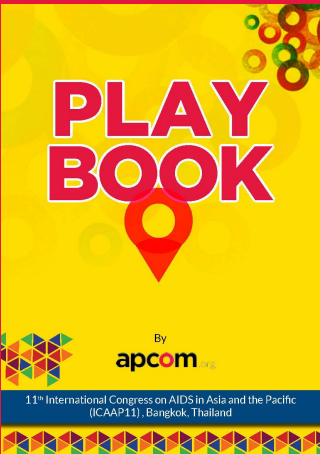
Whether you have been presenting, learning, advocating or networking, conferences can be stressful. Everyone needs time to wind down.

Hosted at One Night Only Bar, in Bangkok’s popular gay area - Silom Soi 4 – the evening was the perfect way to finish a great conference and an opportunity for people to give back to a city that provided so much entertainment during the conference week. All the profits from the evening were donated to local HIV organisations in Bangkok – the night was celebrated by more than 300 people who attended the evening’s event. We were happy to be able to donate 35,000 THB to local organisations in Bangkok.



ICAAP11 after party at Bangkok’s famous Silom Soi 4

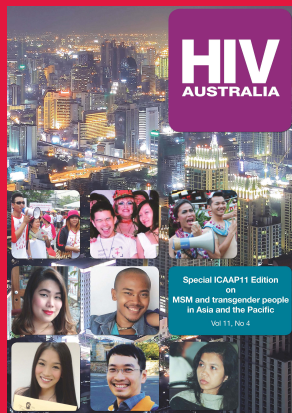
A big thank you to One Night Only Bar and Bangkok Rainbow for helping us organise this great event.



PlayGuide - A road map to all MSM and transgender sessions at ICAAP11 & PlayBook - A pocket guide to Bangkok

Over 6,000 copies of APCOM's popular “Play Book” and “Play Guide” were given out to participants at the conference. The “Play Guide” outlined all the MSM and transgender plenary sessions, satellite sessions, symposia and oral sessions. It was included in all the conference participants’ packs when they registered. The ‘Play Book” also served as mini-guide for tourist information on shopping, cultural places of interest as well as bars, saunas and entertainment venues that cater to the MSM and transgender communities.

Both of these publications were handed out at APCOM events. At the same time, these publications and the information ‘Play Booth’ were available for download from the APCOM website before the conference.



Special HIV Australia Edition on MSM and Transgender people in Asia and the Pacific

In partnership with the Australian Federation of AIDS Organisations (AFAO), the special edition was included in all the conference participants' packs and highlight issues relevant to MSM and transgender people in the region including the legal environments, issues faced by young people, PLHIV, transgender people and it also profiled organisations working at the grassroots level taken from the APCOM's Spotlight Series.

APCOM Symposia, Satellite Sessions and Skills-Building Workshops

- Self-Stigma Among Young Men who have Sex with Men and Transgender Women and the Linkages with HIV
- Strengthening Policy and Advocacy Skills for MSM and TG Community Based Advocates City Based Approaches for working with MSM and TG People in Southeast Asia
- Ensuring needs-based and stigma-free HIV/STI Services for TG People in Asia
- More Than Likes and Followers: Leveraging Social Media for HIV Prevention and Community Engagement
- Coming Out: Promoting Youth Leadership Community and Innovation in HIV Response Among Men Who Have Sex With Men
- Faith and sexuality: A dialogue with faith-based leaders

MSM and Transgender Networks Capacity Strengthening Initiative

In partnership with the Australian Federation of AIDS Organisations (AFAO), supported by the Australian's Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT), to implement a programme to strengthen the technical and advocacy capacity of the regional and sub-regional networks in Asia and the Pacific to effectively respond to HIV.

The MSM and Transgender Networks Capacity Strengthening Initiative increases the accessibility of regional strategic information in the region. Through the Rapid Assessment Apparatus ('Rap App'), a tool developed to assess the organisational and programmatic areas of the partners and networks, the project determines the technical and advocacy support needs of the organisation to further strengthen their capacity.



The Hidden and Positive MSM City Consultation in Yangon, part of the MSM and Transgender Networks Capacity Strengthening Initiative.

Objectives

- To strengthen the capacity of APCOM to better provide advocacy support to its regional and sub-regional networks;
- To strengthen the regional and sub-regional networks' advocacy capacity and policy analysis; and
- To increase the availability and reach of regional policy briefs.

Key Achievements

- A Rapid Assessment Apparatus ('Rap App') was developed to assess the current strengths and needs of the partner organisations against eleven organisational and programmatic criteria. Eight partners completed this assessment.
- Three APCOM Policy Briefs were translated in the languages of Greater Mekong (Burmese, Chinese, Khmer, Lao, Thai, Vietnamese) and the Pacific (French, Pidgin). The MSM Country Snapshots and In Focus pieces were also translated.
- A comprehensive Monitoring and Evaluation Framework was developed to guide the country partners in the implementation of their city-based projects.
- A Dissemination Plan Template (D-Plate) was developed, to guide project partners in strategic and effective dissemination of the translated documents, in order to increase their availability and reach.

Project Partners

- Australian Federation of AIDS Organisations (AFAO)

Greater Mekong Sub-Region

- Purple Sky Network (PSN)

Insular South East Asian Nations

- Islands of South East Asian Networks for Male and transgender Sexual Health (ISEAN)

The Pacific Sub-Region

- Pacific Sexual Diversity Network (PSDN)

Regional Networks

- Youth Voices Count (YVC)
- Asia Pacific Transgender Network (APTN)
- Asia Pacific Network of People Living with HIV (APN+)

Country Partners

- Myanmar MSM Network (MMN)
- Viet Community Development Ltd. (VCDL)

APCOM's pre-ICAAP11
Foreplay conference drew
nearly 300 participants from all
over Asia and the Pacific

Communication Causes Change (CCC) Project – Robert Carr Network Fund

Funded by the Robert Carr Civil Society Network Fund (RCNF), built on the recommendations from the APCOM Outcome Assessment on a need to develop a distribution (or dissemination strategy) of strategic information produced by APCOM, as well as how information from grass-root level ascends to APCOM.

The CCC Project has strong linkages to our other projects including synergies with the AusAID-funded AFAO/APCOM Project – MSM and transgender networks capacity strengthening initiative. This project looks at providing capacity building initiatives to local community-based organisations and networks in the area of HIV, health and human rights.

Objectives

To strengthen the capacity and role of MSM and transgender civil society networks in Asia and the Pacific to respond to HIV, health and human rights issues.

Project Goal

To strengthen the policy and advocacy efforts as well as the organisational capacity of APCOM and sub-regional networks to support and conduct community, national and regional lobbying and advocacy work, through an informed and coordinated communications strategy and strong communications structures and systems.

Key Achievements of CCC Project

- Developed APCOM Strategic Plan and Communications Strategy.
- Enhanced the organisational website (apcom.org) and Social Media Activation.
- Recruitment of a communications capacity support officer.
- Supported recruitment of communications officers in three sub-regional networks, Purple Sky Network (PSN), Islands of South East Asia Network (ISEAN) and Pacific Sexual Diversity Network (PSDN).
- Training of 47 communication focal points throughout Asia and the Pacific in basic communication skills.
- Supported project partners to facilitate five local capacity building sessions in Thailand, Laos, Cambodia, Auckland, and Jakarta.
- Formation of APCOM's Communications Working Group and Communications Work Plan.
- Funds through this project contributed to APCOM's organisation registration as a Foundation in Thailand.
- Skills building session, 11th International Congress on AIDS in Asia and the Pacific (ICAAP 11 Conference), November 2013.

Project Partners

Greater Mekong Sub-Region

- Purple Sky Network (PSN)

Insular South East Asian Nations

- Islands of South East Asian Networks for Male and transgender Sexual Health (ISEAN)

The Pacific Sub-Region

- Pacific Sexual Diversity Network (PSDN)

Raising Our Game. Raising Our Voices: The APCOM 2014-2019 Strategic Plan



APCOM launches its new Strategic Plan 2014-2019, with key partners (Left to Right) Dr. Chris Beyrer (IAS president-elect), Steve Kraus (UNAIDS), Midnight Poonkasetwattana (APCOM), Mirjam Musch (Hivos International), and Mandeep Dhaliwal (UNDP)

In 2012, an evaluation of APCOM resulted in the Outcome Assessment of the Asia Pacific Coalition on Male Sexual Health (APCOM). This process was unique - the first such evaluation of a network to assess the impacts it has had on the HIV epidemic and HIV response in relation to MSM and transgender communities in Asia and the Pacific.

The evaluation’s purpose was to aid APCOM in consolidating its foundations and to incorporate lessons learned in order for it to move forward in the next phase of its work.

The Outcome Assessment cites, ‘Overall, there is consensus amongst key informants that there is a need for APCOM, the important and necessary regional advocacy role that APCOM plays. The majority of survey respondents also agreed that APCOM is relevant, and that its objectives are appropriate in addressing HIV amongst MSM and transgender in Asia and the Pacific.’

However, future relevance depends on a clear vision, focused strategy, and focused plan, which are presently not evident. Whilst APCOM has been successful in gaining recognition as the key representative voice for MSM and transgender people in Asia and the Pacific, in the absence of a strategic and focused plan, it is in danger of losing its legitimacy. The first recommendation from the Outcome Assessment was to develop one.

With support from UNAIDS RST Asia Pacific Region, UNDP and Hivos, APCOM was able to identify an independent consultant to complete this task. The consultant identified had many years of experience in organisational evaluation as well as working at a regional level within the Asia and the Pacific, mostly with MSM and HIV.

The APCOM 2014-2019 Strategic Plan was officially launched on Wednesday 20th November 2013 during ICAAP11 at a public reception for donors and stakeholders who are working closely with APCOM.

Sub-regional Network Highlights - 2013



Participants at the Positive Capacity Development Initiative

Sub-regional Network:

APN+ MSM Working Group

6-8 August, 2013

Positive Capacity Development Initiative: M&E Workshop

The aim of the workshop was to develop a monitoring and evaluation framework for projects under the AusAID Positive Capacity Building Development Initiative together with in-country partners.

In terms of resource mobilisation and partnership building, the MSM project coordinator and Australian project leaders traveled to six cities in four countries to explore and initiate partnerships with local positive MSM groups who had expressed interest in becoming part of the regional project.

As a result, five partnerships were formed to start needs-based projects targeting positive MSM beginning in May-June 3013. They are VSmile (Hanoi), It's Me Club (Ho Chi Minh City), Beautiful Life (Shanghai), Myanmar Positive Group (Yangon) and Positive MSM Project of CPN+ (Phnom Penh).

Sub-regional Network:

Pacific Sexual Diversity Network

October 7-11, 2013

Communications Training Workshop

The PSDN was able to secure a training programme held in collaboration with APCOM and funded by the Robert Carr Fund. It was held in Auckland, New Zealand over three days and attended by 25 participants.

The training underscored the difficulties in sharing information between Pacific countries due to differing levels of technology.

However, the PSDN communications training resulted in a Communications Plan 2014-2018.



Pacific Sexual Diversity Network

Purple Sky also co-hosted a plenary session on challenging discrimination against key populations in Asia and the Pacific and spoke at the satellite session on the post-2015 HIV agenda. It launched its e-posters “They are different! HIV infection risk behaviours of transgender people and MSM in Thailand” and “Sharing lessons learned across borders: building capacity to empower the MSM and TG Community in Lao PDR”.

Sub-regional Network:

Purple Sky Network

Date: November 2013

Purple Sky played an active role in ICAAP11, both supporting APCOM and organising its own events. These included attending the APCOM pre-conference on 17th of November, presenting the community response to the 7th Asian Administration Meeting, organising a LGBT networking zone, chairing the oral session “Sex Workers Leading HIV Prevention”, speaking at the symposium session on “Negotiating research priorities and community care: the case of biomedical approaches in Thailand”. Purple Sky also co-hosted a plenary session on challenging discrimination against key populations in Asia and the Pacific and spoke at the satellite session on the post-2015 HIV agenda. It launched its e-posters “They are different! HIV infection risk behaviours of transgender people and MSM in Thailand” and “Sharing lessons learned across borders: building capacity to empower the MSM and TG Community in Lao PDR”.





Sub-regional Network:
Youth Voices Count
Date: May 2013

Loud and Proud community events were held in Vietnam, Cambodia, Mongolia, Indonesia and the Philippines.

The aim of the events was to promote self-acceptance, self-confidence and health-seeking habits among young MSM and transgender people.

YVC, supported by APCOM, submitted a report on the event to donors. The key messages were well delivered and well-received at the events among the young communities.

In-country study reports were produced on self-stigma, along with presentations of key findings and recommendations to participating stakeholders.

Sub-regional Network:
China Male Tongzhi Health Forum
Date: February, 2013

As part of the China Red Ribbon Beijing Forum Workshop, the China Male Tongzhi Health Forum participated in discussions about the closure of “forced drug rehabilitation” centres in China and HIV/AIDS prevention policies among drug users in the country.



Throughout the year it also took part in talks with Ministry of Health disease control experts on subjects including drug use within a HIV context, and AIDS prevention measures. Tongzhi made written submissions to the government on these topics.



Sub-regional Network:
ISEAN (Islands of Southeast Asia Network on MSM, TG, and HIV)
Date: February, 2013

ISEAN's goal is to reduce the vulnerability and risks of MSM and TG to HIV infection and the impact of HIV on their lives in Insular Southeast Asia. It intends to address critical gaps in supporting and scaling up activities that reduce HIV/AIDS among MSM and transgender communities.

In 2013, ISEAN assisted the International Development Law Organisation (IDLO) to conduct interviews with the government, UN bodies and NGOs at the National Human Rights Institutions’ SOGI (Sexual Orientation and Gender Identities) meeting in Timor Leste. In Bali, June 2013, ISEAN and Hivos also co-organised the consultations for the preparation of the Phase II of the Global Fund Project meetings.

Our Coalition

As a community of change-makers, people are the critical ingredient of our success. We are fortunate to have skilled board members and staff to help us advance our mission.

APCOM's Governing Board, comprised of community representatives from across the two regions, directs its overall strategic direction. The Governing Board also includes coalition sector advisors from government, donors, technical experts and United Nations agencies.

Our current **Governing Board** members are:

<i>CHAIR PERSON</i> Dédé Oetomo	<i>South Asia (excluding India)</i> Shale Ahmed
<i>VICE CHAIR PERSON</i> Roy Wadia	<i>Transgender</i> Khartini Slamah Laxmi Narayan Tripathi
<i>COMMUNITY REPRESENTATIVES</i> <i>Australasia</i> Jason Myers Robert Lake <i>China</i> Lin Fan, Colin Meng Gang ("Roger") <i>Developed Asia</i> Jae Kim <i>Greater Mekong</i> Rapeenpun Jommaroeng ("Ohm") Vieng Akhone Souriyao <i>India</i> Aditya Bondyopadhyay Pallav Patankar <i>Islands of Southeast Asia</i> Ferdinand V. Buenviaje <i>Pacific</i> Joleen Mataele Resitara Apa	<i>MSM PLHIV</i> Sean Slavin Vijay Nair <i>Youth</i> Niluka Perera GOVERNMENT AND DONORS <i>Government Sector</i> Glen Cruz, Philippines <i>Donor Sector</i> Panus Na Nakorn, USAID Paul Jansen, Hivos <i>Technical Advisor</i> Jan Willem de Lind van Wijngaarden UNITED NATIONS Edmund Settle, UNDP Dr. Pengfei Zhao, WHO-WPRO



APCOM staff celebrating at a donor's party in Bangkok

During 2013, APCOM's talented **Secretariat** consisted of seven full-time staff filling the positions of Executive Director, Senior Programme Officer, Programme Officer, Advocacy Officer, Knowledge Sharing Officer, Campaign Assistant and Office Coordinator.

Executive Director
Midnight Pookasetwattana

Advocacy Officer
Inad Rendon

Senior Programme Officer
Matthew Vaughan

Office Coordinator
Wattana Keiangpa ("A")

Programme Officer
Vaness Silpakhon
Kongsakul

Campaign Assistants
Apiwat Thubumrung ("Em")
Chaiyawat Chomsa ("Plug")

Knowledge Sharing Officer
Yogie Wirastra

Thank you



Empowered lives.
Resilient nations.



Australian Federation
of AIDS Organisations





66/1 Sukhumvit 2, Klongtoey, Bangkok 10110, Thailand. Tel: +66 2255 4410

