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# USAID COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP

The U.S. Agency for International Development’s Community Partnership project aims to assist community-based organizations in Thailand to provide high quality HIV prevention, treatment and care to key populations, including men who have sex with men, transgender people, sex workers and people who inject drugs. Supported by the U.S. President’s Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR), this three-year project is implemented by the Thai Red Cross AIDS Research Centre (TRCARC) in partnership with three leading community-based organizations: the MPlus Foundation, the Rainbow Sky Association of Thailand (RSAT) and Service Workers in Group Foundation (SWING).

## KEY POPULATION-LED HEALTH SERVICES

Many people who face the greatest risks of HIV infection in Thailand experience discrimination and accessibility barriers to HIV services, such as inconvenient locations, limited service hours and services that are not tailored to their needs. A recent study conducted by TRCARC found that community health services can be effectively delivered by organizations comprised of and led by key populations. This entails that key population community health workers are trained in HIV service delivery to complement services provided by conventional health facilities. This key population-led approach has been particularly successful in the early identification of those most vulnerable to HIV and linking HIV-positive individuals to treatment at a much earlier stage of infection. Expanding this approach will be integral to closing national gaps in HIV prevention, care and treatment.

## ENSURING HIGH QUALITY SERVICES

To ensure high quality key population-led health services, this project will establish a training center for community-based organizations working with key populations to deliver efficient and effective HIV-related health services. The training center, in collaboration with local authorities, will follow set criteria for training and evaluation and provide a variety of trainings to meet the professional development needs of key population community health workers. Trainings will focus on effective delivery of HIV testing and counseling; sexually transmitted disease screening and treatment; antiretroviral treatment dispensing, and pre-exposure prophylaxis dispensing. Another critical component is to ensure that community health workers deliver client-centered prevention and care services without stigma and discrimination. This project will also support setting up a certification system to allow these organizations to be reimbursed for health service delivery and to ensure recognition of key population community-based organizations as formal HIV and health service providers.

In collaboration with local health authorities, this project will establish quality assurance systems in 13 priority provinces. It will also seek to mobilize financial resources and generate demand for sustaining this training program for key populations beyond the duration of the project.

## IMPACT AND RESULTS

The partnership between TRCARC, MPlus, SWING and RSAT will support efforts to standardize and expand quality HIV service coverage by and for key populations, an approach critical to ending the HIV epidemic in Thailand.

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