

Human rights based HIV interventions for MSM in Vietnam: looking towards the future

AmfAR meeting on Integrating Rights and Health for MSM and other LGBT Peoples:

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Vietnam, HIV, and MSM: the setting

HIV epidemiology

- Concentrated HIV epidemic among IDU, FSW, and MSM
- Even among MSM and FSW, significant correlation between injection drug use and HIV infection

MSM environment

- Increasingly open environment for MSM to meet; increasing number of bars, saunas, websites
- Community organizations formed and maturing

Policy

- AIDS Law protecting PLWHA and mandating HIV prevention to FSW, IDU, MSM
- Implementation and enforcement still in infancy stage



Interventions currently targeting MSM in Vietnam

- Peer outreach to hotspots, e.g. saunas, bars, massage
- MSM-friendly HIV testing and STI treatment
- MSM community-based organizational development
- MSM Website development and links to HIV services on “sex-oriented” websites
- Needle exchange and methadone for injecting drug using MSM
- ARV treatment and related care services
- Access to legal services
- Quality Improvement (QI) initiative on MSM interventions
- Integrated bio-behavioral surveillance monitoring HIV, STI, behaviors, and intervention exposure among MSM
- Advocacy to policymakers and the government

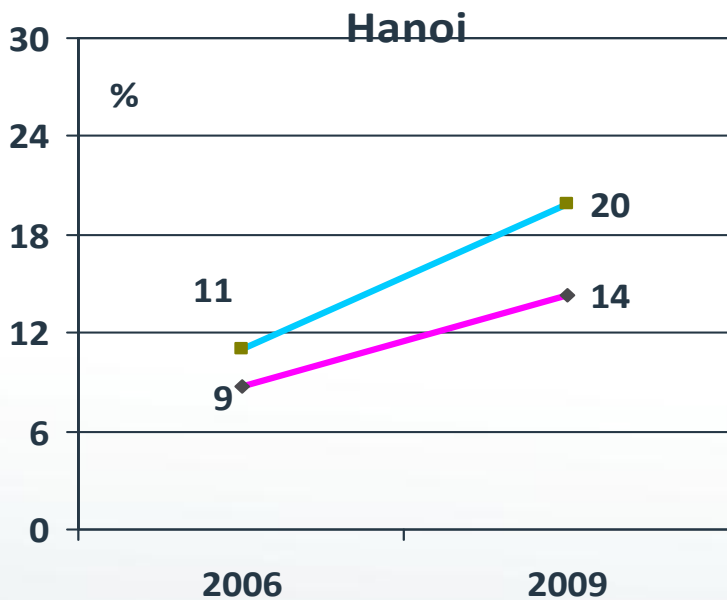




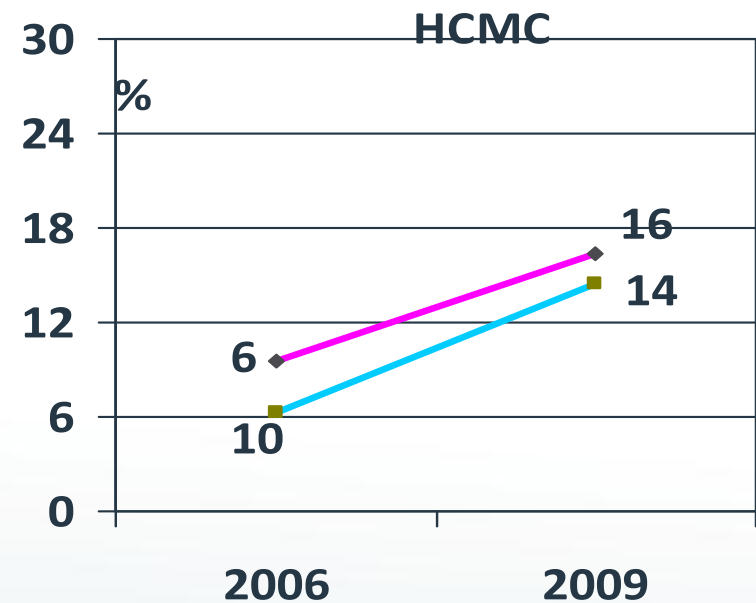
So what's the problem?



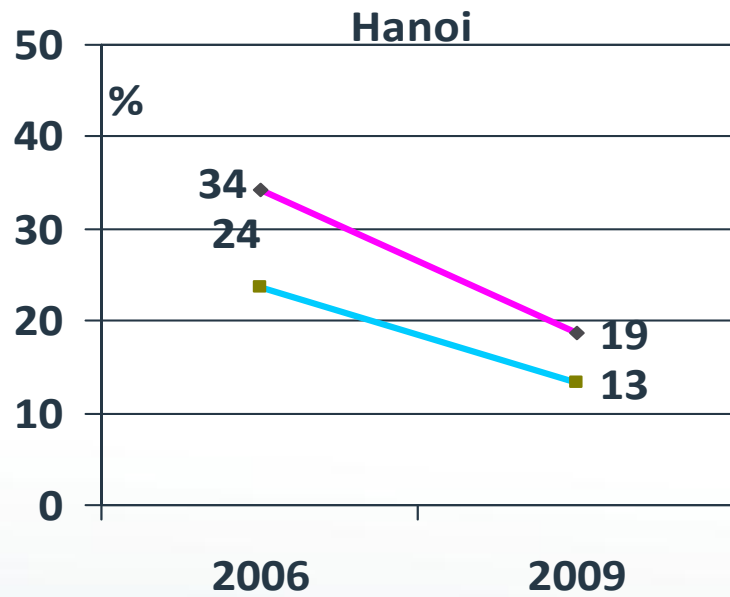
HIV prevalence among MSM: comparisons between 2006 and 2009 integrated bio-behavioral surveillance (IBBS)



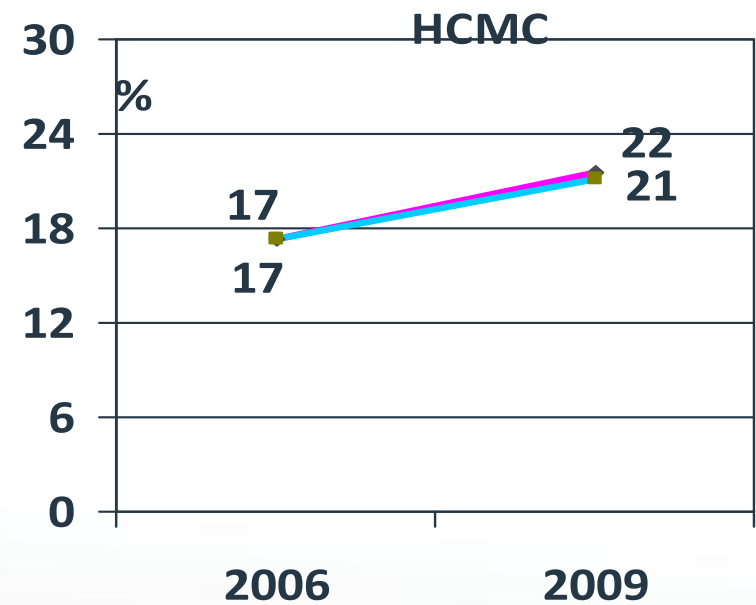
◆ MSM reported transactional sex
■ MSM who did not



Prevalence of any STI* among MSM: comparisons between 2006 and 2009



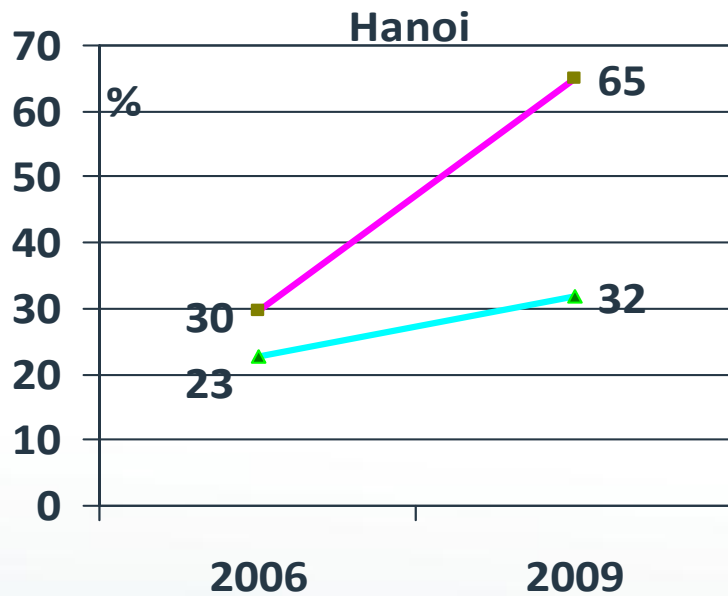
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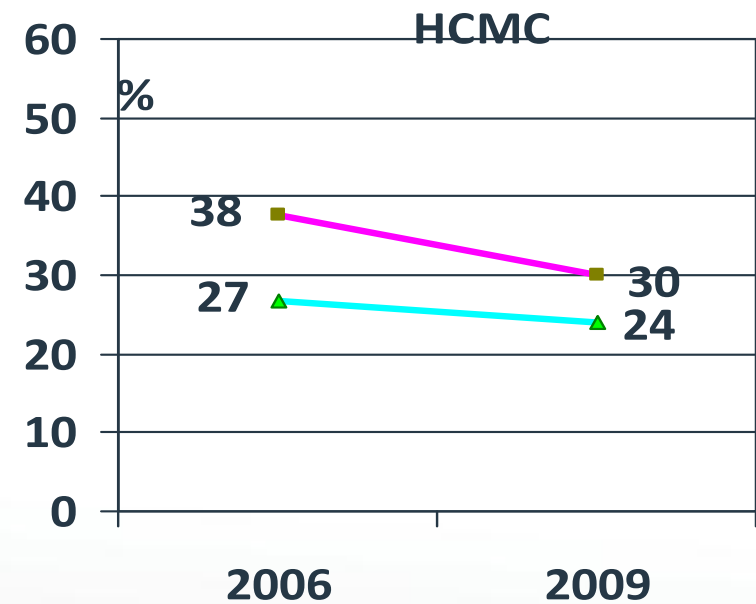
*Syphilis, GC, CT, HIV



Consistent condom use during anal sex among MSM reporting not selling sex: comparisons between 2006- 2009



■ Consensual partners
▲ Regular female partner



* In the last month for male partners and in the last 12 months for female partners

Looking towards the future



- **Lack of risk perception since few peers have died of HIV**
 - Solution: Carefully bring more HIV+ MSM into community fora for discussions
- **Lack of knowledge that HIV has substantially penetrated the MSM community**
 - Solution: Planning “MSM Alert” campaign through emails, twitter, texting announcing that 1 in 6 MSM in Hanoi and Saigon are HIV-infected
- **Internet keeps MSM from having to meet in social settings, thus inhibiting discussions**
 - Solution: Advertise health services and community events to bring people out of “cyber space” and back to earth



Looking towards the future (continued)

- **Lack of reach of nascent NGOs; Tendency to be “clique-ish” and reach “friends” instead of larger communities**
 - Carefully analyze reach data and size estimates
- **Lack of quality BCC products targeting MSM**
 - Solution: Involve MSM and professionalize communications product development



First set of ad drafts promoting condom use, VCT

- Materials presented:
 - 1st set: Promote condom & lubricant use:



Focus group findings



- The metaphor using images of food to talk about sex was not appealing nor understood; sex appeal gets more attention among the target group
- Some of the images are considered not specifically MSM oriented
- The models used are not attractive to MSM, the group prefers more attractive males

Pretest findings & revised materials

- Promote condom & lubricant use:



Pretest findings & revised materials

- Encourage use of HIV testing & counseling services:



Không phải nhiễm trùng lây qua đường tình dục nào cũng có biểu hiện.
Hãy khám sức khỏe sau khi bạn có quan hệ tình dục qua hậu môn không bảo vệ!

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How can we improve guidance on MSM programs

- **Service-oriented minimum package should be expanded to be Comprehensive MSM Health Package that includes:**
 - Reduction in homophobia
 - Reduction in gender-based violence
 - Self-esteem building interventions
- **Brand and market this package to donors, acknowledging that service outcomes are more short-term and measurable while homophobia and other “social change” interventions are longer-term but EQUALLY necessary**
- **More guidance and TA on the science of advocacy**
 - Building support within “polar opposite” groups, e.g. religious groups



How can we improve guidance on MSM programs

- **Engage MSM communities in planning local NGOs**
 - Manage expectations and avoid establishing too many NGOs
- **Clarify HIV testing issue**
 - Evolution from VCT to HTC to PITC
 - What is needed is Regular HIV Testing and Counseling (RHTC?) within context of regular Men's Health exam

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Clarify HIV testing issue

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Thank you



- USAID and CDC colleagues
- MSM organizations in Vietnam

