



**afao**  
**IN ASIA AND  
THE PACIFIC**



**A trusted  
partner in  
Asia and the  
Pacific**

The HIV challenge across Asia and the Pacific is acute – approximately 5.1 million people are living with HIV and fewer than half receive treatment. Approximately 270,000 people become HIV positive each year. Many countries have stigmatising laws that make the challenge all the more difficult.

For three decades, AFAO has worked to extend and entrench effective HIV responses across our region. For the past decade we have done this from our Bangkok office.

We work with community and non-government organisations, faith-based organisations and grassroots advocates, helping them establish strong and effective organisations, design and deliver programs, and work

more effectively with partner governments and international agencies.

Science and medicine are critical to our mission. However, HIV feeds on stigma and discrimination. Our greatest asset is the insight and experience of those directly affected including men who have sex with men, people living with HIV, people who inject drugs and sex workers. We couple our commitment to our communities with a fierce public health determination to drive down rates of HIV and reduce its impacts.



📍 At a Bangkok clinic housed in a community centre, a client is counselled and tested for HIV. The centre is run by the Rainbow Sky Association of Thailand with support from a Global Fund grant, and serves key populations such as men who have sex with men. “Our biggest challenge is fighting stigma and fear, but at our centre we have built trust, so our members feel comfortable and at home when they come in for testing,” says Kamolset Kanggerner, a clinic staff member.





## COMMUNITIES FIND THEIR VOICE

AFAO's Community Advocacy Initiative supported organisations in China, Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia to work with their governments to bring about positive action on HIV. In partnership with the Asia Pacific Council of AIDS Service Organisations, the project informed and built skills among community advocates to work with their governments towards better planned and more rational responses to HIV.



AFAO has helped foster community and civil society organisations in Asia and the Pacific from the late 1980s, sharing valuable insights from Australia's pioneering and pragmatic policy response to HIV.

Since then we have continued to provide assistance and support. Three decades of experience gives us an in-depth understanding of the strengths, capacities and constraints of the HIV response across the region.

The most effective community-led responses harness 'community knowing' with disciplined interrogation of evidence and data, experienced community advocacy, programming and delivery. These elements together

constitute the 'comparative advantage' of community-led action.

AFAO believes an enduring and effective HIV response will only be achieved through increased domestic investment in prevention, testing and treatment.

We are passionately committed to helping our friends and colleagues across the region become more powerful advocates.

In the words of one participant, "in the past, we seldom had grassroots groups involved in advocacy. With this project, community groups grasped the idea of advocacy and ran with it."

In Vietnam, successful advocacy through the project led to HIV treatment being included in Vietnam's National Health Insurance Law and more prevention funding for communities at greatest risk. Before the project, 95% of HIV treatment was funded by international aid agencies. Now, Vietnam meets most of the costs of HIV treatment.

**Robust  
partnership,  
powerful  
collaboration**

 Left, armed with a loudspeaker and plenty of humor, a community worker takes the message of safe sex and HIV prevention to the streets.



Improving  
advocacy for  
a sustainable  
HIV response



AFAO's Sustainable HIV Financing in Transition (SHIFT) program strengthens community action on HIV in Malaysia, Thailand, Indonesia and the Philippines.

Through advocacy, policy and communication, our SHIFT part-

ners campaign for better funded, more effective HIV responses from national governments.

SHIFT has conducted seven studies on regional and national HIV financing. More than 800 people have been involved in its

advocacy.

SHIFT is AFAO's biggest program to date in Asia and the Pacific. It is funded by the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria.

## ACHIEVE

In the Philippines, ACHIEVE is campaigning alongside other civil society organisations for a new law to dramatically increase domestic HIV/AIDS funding from PHP 20m to PHP 4.3b. ACHIEVE is also seeking increased domestic funding opportunities for civil society organisations. ACHIEVE is providing training, information and support on HIV finance advocacy to civil society and key population networks. It also works with government decision and policy makers to improve understanding of HIV. ACHIEVE is a sub-recipient of the SHIFT program.

 *Left, a health outreach worker talks to sex workers and shares information about HIV prevention.*



## Amplifying the voices of men who have sex with men

In 2003, AFAO became concerned that men who have sex with men were all but invisible in the International AIDS Conference programs, so we initiated an 'MSM pre-conference', immediately before the Bangkok IAC in 2004.

AFAO worked closely with the Rainbow Sky Association of Thailand, with assistance from other partners, Terrence Higgins Trust (UK) and the AIDS

Project Los Angeles/Gay Men's Health Crisis Collaborative Institute of Education (US).

This work rapidly coalesced into a permanent movement, the Global Forum for MSM & HIV, which continues as a powerful advocacy voice today, under its new name: MPact – Global Action for Gay Men's Health & Rights, co-chaired by former AFAO executive director, Don Baxter since 2006.



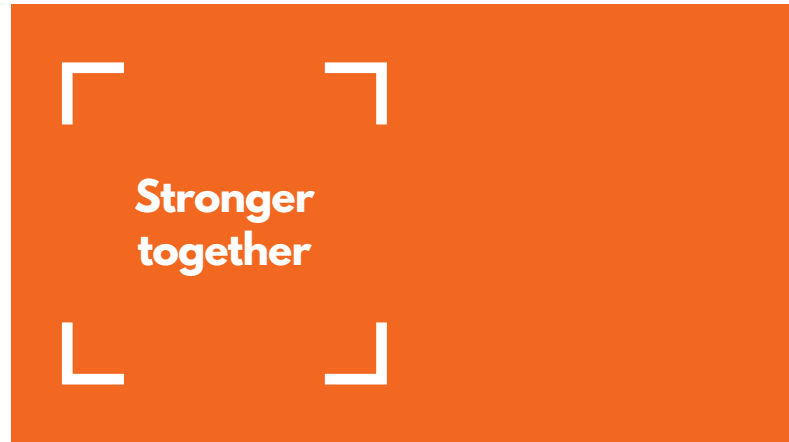
## Our Mission

*Working together to end HIV transmission and reduce its impacts through leadership, advocacy and community-led action on health, human rights and social justice in Australia, Asia and the Pacific.*

The voice and involvement of key populations is woven through all AFAO's work, including our governance, staff, volunteers and networks. We are of the community. Our work in Asia and the Pacific strives to support communities to realise a self-determined response to HIV. We also understand public health. Our highest order goal and determination is to end HIV transmission and its impacts.

## AFAO's values include:

- Respecting the value, dignity and diversity of all people
- Empowering our communities and supporting their ownership and self-determined control of their health and lives
- Protecting and promoting human rights
- Recognising the social determinants of health
- Promoting and supporting harm reduction principles
- Building and promoting evidence-based approaches to policy, advocacy and health promotion, guided by the Ottawa Charter
- Being accountable and responsive to the communities we are part of, work with and serve.



 *Left, HIV patients getting check-ups at San Lazaro Hospital HIV ward in Manila, the Philippines.*



We are  
learning



Australia's response to HIV is world-leading. AFAO is distinctive by being composed of organisations representing those most affected by HIV – men who have sex with men, trans and gender diverse people, sex workers, people who inject drugs, people living with HIV, culturally and linguistically diverse communities, and, in Australia, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.

Our international work expresses the wish of Australian key populations to partner with our communities, civil society, donors and government to prevent new HIV infections and reduce the impact of HIV.

We strive to create enduring partnerships – standing with

communities and organisations in Asia and the Pacific over the long-term, and especially when things are tough. We are inspired by the energy of community advocates.

And we are learning. Our work in Asia and the Pacific comes from deep values connecting Australian communities with our communities in our region. But we benefit too. Through SHIFT and the leadership of our partners, we've learned how to advocate more effectively for HIV financing in Australia. Our Blueprint to End HIV Transmission in Australia draws directly from this learning. Endorsed by all leading HIV community, scientific and clinical organisations in Australia, it describes the efforts and investment need to drive

HIV to very low levels, and the human and economic returns on that investment. The Blueprint is helping to guide Australia's new National HIV Strategy and informing national investment decisions.



*Left, at the An Duong District Health Center, Hai Phong city, Vietnam, Doctor Bui Thi Thu Hang talks with a woman living with HIV*





**afao**  
AUSTRALIAN FEDERATION  
OF AIDS ORGANISATION  
leading the community  
HIV





**We have  
great people**

AFAO is led by Adjunct Associate Professor, Darryl O'Donnell, who brings 25 years' experience in health education, advocacy and management. Darryl has held leadership roles in government and the community sector. He holds master's degrees in research and public policy and divides his time between Bangkok and Sydney.

Joselyn Pang leads AFAO's international programs and heads our Bangkok office. Joselyn has 17 years' experience working in HIV with extensive coverage of South-east Asian countries including Cambodia, China, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Vietnam, and Thailand. Her work has focused on grant and project management, technical support management and delivery, community capacity development, training, monitoring and evalua-

tion and proposal development at both national and regional levels.

Don Baxter has been a leader in the global HIV response since it began and continues to serve as AFAO's international advisor. Don led AFAO for a decade until 2011 and also served as an alternate Global Fund board member, representing developed countries' non-government organisations.

The AFAO team includes a further eight staff working from Bangkok and nine in Sydney.

Together, our people are leaders in education and prevention, public health, communications, advocacy, monitoring and evaluation, research, government relations, and national, regional and global policy dialogue.



*Left, AFAO team members Joselyn Pang, Greg Gray, Rebecca Gupta-Lawrence, Jenny Xie and Phornchai Chiravinijandh, together with SHIFT partners. Not pictured: AFAO team members Chonlada Chanwana, Punawit Phong and Manoj Pardeshi.*







