

A REGIONAL ADVOCACY AGENDA ON TRANSGENDER HEALTH RESEARCH AND SURVEILLANCE AMONG TRANSGENDER PEOPLE IN THE ISEAN REGION

Cortes R N^{1,2}

¹ Islands of Southeast Asian Network on Male and Transgender Sexual Health

² The Philippine NGO Council on Population, Health and Welfare, Inc.

Email of presenting author: raine.cortes@isean.asia

Introduction: The ISEAN-Hivos Program (IHP) is a regional Global Fund AIDS grant focused on community systems strengthening (CSS) among males having sex with males (MSM) and transgender (TG) organizations in Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines and Timor Leste. One of the strategies of the program is to disaggregate transgender people from the MSM population, and be recognized as a unique key affected population.

Methods: Given the lack of evidence-based data to guide development partners, government agencies and international funders to develop transgender-specific health interventions, IHP through the ISEAN Secretariat conducted the TransISEAN: Regional Community Workshop on Health, SOGIE and Rights among Transgender People in the ISEAN Region last August 14-16, 2015 in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. The objective of the regional consultation is to develop a regional advocacy agenda for transgender people that is prioritized on the key areas of transgender health and services, and transgender research/surveillance.

Results: The agreed upon advocacy agenda on transgender health research/surveillance prioritized the following: A mapping of current organizations and available services including CSOs, health care service providers, trans communities, etc. Continuously push the health ministries to conduct transgender-specific IHBSS/IBBS and STI/HIV vulnerability (especially for transgender men), wherein transgender people are part of the research team, to provide disaggregated data for transgender women/men. A study on the possible drug interaction of anti-retroviral therapy and hormone replacement therapy, and a baseline study on the state of mental health among transgender people through participatory action research should be done. Lastly, there should more transgender-driven and transgender-focused researches, and research grant opportunities.

Conclusion: Addressing transgender issues should be multi-faceted approach with focus on transgender health research/surveillance. Therefore, this regional advocacy agenda can be used by transgender groups, program implementers, researchers, and key stakeholders in developing prioritized trans-specific advocacies on research/surveillance.

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in four countries in Insular Southeast Asia including the Philippines, Malaysia, Indonesia and Timor Leste.