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


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) organisations in Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines and Timor Leste. One of the strategies of the program is to disaggregate transgender people from MSM, and be recognised as a unique key affected population. Methods Given the lack of evidence-based data to guide development partners, government agencies and donors to develop trans-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 trans people that is prioritised on the key areas of trans health and services, and trans research and surveillance. Results The prioritised advocacy agenda on trans health and services are the following: Sensitisation of healthcare workers and facilities for trans people to ensure confidentiality and recognition of their identities. Development of trans-health and SOGIE IEC materials and strengthening the peer education program for trans youth. Development of a blueprint for the establishment of a Transgender Wellness Centre and trans-PLHIV support system; and developing a Service Delivery Network for other trans services including psychosocial, gender reaffirming procedures, legal concerns, etc. There should be continuous capacity building of trans groups for trans-led health service delivery. Lastly, SOGIE should be mainstreamed, localised and integrated in the health education and curriculum. Conclusion Addressing trans issues should be multi-faceted approach with focus on transgender health, including sexual health services. Therefore, this regional advocacy agenda can be used by trans groups, program implementers, researchers, and key stakeholders in developing prioritised trans-specific health advocacies.