

# PURPLE BRICKS

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KHANA'S MONTHLY BULLETIN

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## COLLABORATION BETWEEN TRADITIONAL AND BIOMEDICAL HEALERS IS BENEFICIAL TO BOTH PARTIES

In many developing countries, people turn to traditional medicine not only because they believe it is effective but because it is readily available and affordable. By contrast, modern medicine or biomedicine is in short supply and requires out-of-pocket expenditures that many cannot afford. This report from GTZ discusses collaboration between practitioners of modern and traditional medicine in an attempt to reduce the burden of HIV/AIDS in Malawi. To date, Malawi's national response to HIV/AIDS draws on biomedical practices to manage the disease and ignores the fact that the majority of the Malawian people draw their understanding not just from biomedicine but also from traditional medicine. The authors describe a series of focus groups in one district of Malawi between traditional and biomedical practitioners, moderated by trained locals. Discussions ranged from local sexual practices, beliefs and taboos to their ideas about illness, prevention, diagnosis and treatment. The information provided by these groups helped design a three day medical dialogue workshop, between groups of traditional and biomedical healers. As a result of the workshops, the healers formed a Task Force Team and agreed on a mutual referral system, a referral

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A group of TV and Radio journalists interview a woman who is living with HIV in Battambang province during their fieldtrip which is a part of Journalism Training Course on "Influence of TV & Radio Medium in Response to HIV and AIDS" on 19-21 March, 2008. Story on page 3.

## HIV AND AIDS PROGRAMME RESPONDING TO MSM OFFICIALLY INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL STRATEGY

After months, the National MSM (Men Who Have Sex with Men) Technical Working Group has officially launched the National Strategic Framework and Operational Plan on STI and HIV and AIDS for MSM in Cambodia. KHANA is also a member of the National MSM Technical Working Group that organised the launching ceremony.

Speaking in his welcoming remark at the launching event in Phnom Penh on 12 March, 2008, Jonathan Ross, Deputy Director of the Office of Public Health of USAID-Cambodia, said "After a long period of the initial initiative initiated by KHANA and its partners, Men Who Have Sex with Men (MSM) population group have been included in the sentinel surveillance and national program, particularly in the national plan with specific national strategic framework and operational plan in conformity with NSPII." He said with provision of supporting from donors, National MSM Technical Working Group has good coor-

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# TRAINING ON FINANCIAL SYSTEM FOR IMPLEMENTING PARTNERS

On 11 March, 2008, KHANA's Finance & Administration Department organised a training course on "Quick Book" for its implementing partners at KHANA office. The a 5-day training which was held between 11-14 March was funded by USAID and the Global Fund.

Quick Book Pro-2002 was created by a Financial Specialists Team which helps the

users to control and extract transactions at all levels and thousands of companies and NGOs are currently utilising this system.

Ms. Pen Monorom, KHANA's Finance & Administration Director, said the training aims to upgrade financial capacity, to additionally strengthen the production and the efficiency of financial reports, to manage in consolidating accounts, and to convert from manual



Mr. Cheav Thary (right), KHANA financial officer, presents Quick Book system to the training course.

accounting to computerize accounting (QuickBooks) for implementing partners.

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dination and collaboration with the government and other key stakeholders in improving the quality of the national response to the issues of MSM. The key members of the National MSM Technical Working Group are KHANA, FHI, UNAIDS, UNESCO, PACT, PSI, and others government institutions.

HE Dr. Teng Kunthy, Secretary General of the National AIDS Authority (NAA), said the launching is very important to reduce the epidemic of HIV, AIDS and STI's among MSM and the general population nationwide. He said reducing discrimination and stigma against MSM are also the key issues included within the strategic framework. "Programs involving MSM in Cambodia are quite new but fortunately, we do not have much discrimination and stigma towards MSM, unlike many other countries. Because there is a lot of encouragement and care taken from our national leaders, hence we have our National Strategy for MSM today."

According to the National Strategic Framework and Operational Plan on STI, HIV and AIDS for MSM, released at the ceremony, the 2005 STI Sentinel Surveillance survey found that HIV prevalence among MSM was 8.7% in Phnom Penh capital and 0.8% in both the second largest city, Battambang, and the main tourism city of Siem Reap. Based on the report, HIV prevalence was significantly higher among transgender population groups and

MSM aged 25 years and older. It reported that 9.7% of MSM based in Phnom Penh and 7.5% based in Battambang and Siem Reap are living with STI's. Further, it reported that 45% in Phnom Penh and 84% of MSM population groups in provinces engaged in unprotected anal sex within that past month. David Lowe, the International Consultant for NAA, said in his presentation that there is about 4% or 140,000 MSM among the male adult population in Cambodia.

According to the National Strategic Framework and Operational Plan for MSM in Cambodia, there are five strategies for MSM:

1. Prevent new HIV infection among MSM
2. Mitigate the impact of HIV and AIDS on HIV positive MSM and their partners and families.
3. Build and sustain an environment that supports HIV, AIDS and STI programs for MSM
4. Strengthen the capacity of partners
5. Improve the collection and use of strategic information

It says each strategy has their respective objectives: prevention; care, support and treatment; supportive environment; capacity building; and strategic information. It also

indicates the key priorities for MSM in the future:

1. Scaling-up of a comprehensive prevention package to achieve significantly increased in coverage, particularly of hidden MSM.
2. Improving the quality of prevention services.
3. Building the technical skills and organisational capacity of CBOs and the National MSM Network.
4. Strengthening the involvement of MSM in the HIV and AIDS response through community development and mobilisation.
5. Strengthening the partnership between the government, CBOs, MSM and technical assistance providers.
6. Reducing stigma and discrimination against MSM.
7. Mobilising sufficient for an effective response.

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form and a pilot area of manageable size.

The report concludes that a year after the workshops, collaboration between the two groups of healers is strong and patients were continuing to benefit from this relationship. For example, maternal mortality was reduced to zero because traditional healers are referring serious cases to the local hospital in a timely manner. The benefit is passed both ways as traditional healers are given rubber gloves to prevent HIV infection. Malawi already has a draft Traditional Medicine Policy in place and the success of the medical dialogue method could help move that draft toward ratification by Parliament. [adapted from author] (Publisher: Deutsche Gessellschaft fur Technische Zusammenarbeit, 2007 and posted on the Eldis website. Eldis is based at the Institute of Development Studies (IDS) in Brighton, United Kingdom.)



HE Dr. Teng Kunthy (left), NAA Secretary General, gives his opening remark at the launching ceremony of the National Strategic Framework and Operational Plan on STI and HIV and AIDS for MSM in Cambodia. Jonathan Ross (third from left), Deputy Director of the Office of Public Health of USAID-Cambodia.

# CAMBODIA'S TV & RADIO JOURNALISTS JOIN KHANA IN RESPONSE TO HIV AND AIDS

Broadcasting mediums can potentially be a very powerful means for sending HIV/AIDS messages to a diverse and vast amount of the Cambodian population. KHANA in cooperation with the Club of Cambodian Journalists have recently organised a special journalism training course for both national TV and Radio journalists. The one-day training course was titled "Influence of TV& Radio Medium in Response to HIV and AIDS" in Phnom Penh, and consisted of a two-day fieldtrip to the Battambang province, in the north-west country near the Thai border. The training was conducted from 19-21 March, 2008 and brought together 15 journalists, whom represented 7 of the country's TV stations and several radio stations.



Journalists' group presentation on the results of their discussion on the reduce of stigma and discrimination

The training aimed to raise awareness of HIV and AIDS among broadcasting journalists, to further develop their capacity on the accurate means to report HIV and AIDS information, and to encourage them to focus more stories on HIV and AIDS regarding to developmental impact. After the training and experience from the fieldtrip, KHANA believes that the journalists have now gained more knowledge and a greater understanding of HIV and AIDS; furthermore KHANA believes that the participants are now more empowered and equipped to deliver accurate and sensitive reports on HIV and AIDS.

Speaking in his welcoming remark, Mr. Emerson Mar, KHANA's Policy, Advocacy and Resource Mobilization Department Director, said that the training covered a very interesting topic and it would provide the participants with broad skills and with the ability to report on HIV and AIDS stories. He said the role of media can be a very powerful tool, which can potentially reach many



Journalists' group discussion on how TV and radio mediums can help reduce stigma and discrimination among PLHA, entertainment workers, drug abusers, MSM, and drug user.



Mr. Pen Bunna (second from left), Board Member of Club of Cambodian Journalists, gives his welcoming remark at the opening training course. Mr. Emerson Mar (far left), KHANA's Policy, Advocacy and Resource Mobilization Department Director.

different pockets of the population and influences them in a positive manner in regards to changing behavioural habits, for example; especially within the grassroots communities. During the one-day session in Phnom Penh, the participants were instructed on three different topics: "Why are TV and radio powerful in response to HIV and AIDS?",

"Where can we get news on HIV and AIDS and other relevant issues of drug abuser, sex workers, MSM, PLHA, and OVC?", and "Using proper words and language regarding to HIV and AIDS and other relevant issues". The journalists also had the opportunity to engage in a group discussion on "How can TV and radio journalists help with reduction of discrimination and stigma regarding to HIV and AIDS and other relevant issues?", before presenting their findings to the whole group.



Journalists visit Buddhism for Development, one of KHANA's implementing partners in Battambang province.

Mr. Pen Bunna, Board Member of Club of Cambodian Journalists, said the course is very unique. "It's really important to organize such a training course for journalists because journalists must understand about the issue they're reporting on before reporting it to the public. This information is repeated in the next paragraph – except it says there were 3 courses. We hope that after the course, our journalists will be aware of more useful websites and that they can search accurate information to fill in their news articles on HIV/AIDS."

The second part of the training course consisted of the field trip in the Battambang province, whereby the journalists met and discussed HIV/AIDS with two local non-governmental

organisations -- Buddhism for Development and Battambang Women's AIDS Project. The two are KHANA's implementing partners. During the fieldtrip, the journalists met and interviewed People Living with HIV/AIDS and Orphans and Vulnerable Children in three different communities, exploring their perspectives. This is the third training course KHANA has organised. On 2-3 July, 2007 KHANA in cooperation with the Club of Cambodian Journalists conducted a course on "HIV and AIDS reporting" involving 28 Cambodian print journalists. On 19-21 December with financial support from UNESCO, KHANA co-organised another course on "Effective Use of Internet to Access HIV/AIDS Information" engaging 37 journalists from both private and state-run print and broadcast mediums, including media officials from the Ministry of Information.

Miss Soy Lekana, reporter of national radio AM, said she feels very proud to learn such valuable information from the course the fieldtrip. "This is a special course like the topic states. I really appreciate that KHANA and the Club of Cambodia Journalists organized it. The course has educated me and other participants to become more understanding about the issue of HIV/AIDS in the county, and through our fieldtrip in the communities here in Battambang province, I learnt more about what people living with HIV need and what the NGOs, especially KHANA, do to help them to improve their quality of life. I wish that such a course could be available for other journalists, and that the fieldtrips were offered in other provinces."



Journalists visit Battambang Women's AIDS Project, one of KHANA's implementing partners in Battambang province.

Story and pictures by Chhay Sophal

# KHANA JOINS THE WORLD TO CELEBRATE INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY

For notable decades the world has rallied and struggled to gain women's rights and gender equality, oftentimes led by courageous women themselves who endeavor to build a better world for their children, their families, their societies and themselves.

March 8 marks International Women's Day which is a day celebrated internationally, commemorating these challenges, achievements and visions of women within the world. Cambodia, along with many other countries recognizes this day as a special day for women.

KHANA was proud to be involved in this day on Friday 7th March, to join the world to

celebrate women, by combining an afternoon staff meeting with an International Women's Day program. Speaking during the event to commemorate the women staff, Dr. Oum Sopheap, KHANA Executive Director, said both female and male staff have equality and rights and "we join together to work for our communities and to achieve our vision and mission and with all of these we can participate in building our society."

Ms. Pen Monrom, KHANA Finance and Administration Department Director, also spoke about focusing on individual efforts as being the key to contribute to gender equality within the society. She also included that the female staff are trying their best to closely cooperate with the male colleagues

to become the good and cooperative colleagues and sisters in the office and within the communities, and good wives and mothers at home as well.

During the event, small purple ribbons were distributed by the male staff to all of the female members. Some entertaining role plays were offered by some enthusiastic staff members, which were aimed to demonstrate equality within male and female relationships before a friendship party was held.



*KHANA male staff offer small purple ribbons to their female colleagues for friendship at the International Women's Day.*

## KHANA'S STAFF CORNER

### ***KHANA congratulates the transferring one staff member and welcomes two voluntary assistants to join the KHANA family in March 2008.***



**Meng Sokkheang**  
is transferred from senior accountant to financial analyst.

**Kep Pisoth**  
becomes a Voluntary assistant for Grant Management Unit on 17 March, 2008.  
"I am very happy to work with the KHANA family and I hope to learn more from KHANA."



**Seak Sothun**  
becomes a voluntary assistant for Grant Management Unit on 17th March 2008. "I am very happy to be a member of the KHANA family. It is a great opportunity for me to learn more and build my own capacity with KHANA."



### ***KHANA also wishes all the best to 2 people who left KHANA in March for their new careers***



**Mak Sodaline**  
was a financial officer. She left KHANA for a new job.

**Chhun Eng**  
was a financial analyst at the Finance and Admin Department. He left to work for the Australian Embassy.



**Long Sokha**  
was a voluntary assistant for the financial unit. She left KHANA for her new job.



**Chin Sophea**  
was a voluntary assistant for programme management. He left KHANA for a new job.

KHANA's Purple Brief is a monthly news bulletin covering real life stories of Cambodians living with, and affected by HIV and AIDS. The publication also raises significant awareness of the impacts of HIV and AIDS on the broader national and international communities.

The KHANA Communication Committee (KCC) is responsible for the development and publication of the monthly bulletin and the content does not reflect the views and opinions of the donors.

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