

Gender and HIV/AIDS

Factors for Two Vulnerable Groups: Sex Workers and Males Who Have Sex With Males



Sex Workers

| Types of Factors | Factors in Vulnerability |
|---|--|
| Individual and Relationship | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Power differentials and greater pay to not use condoms • Increased incidence of STIs • Physical and sexual violence • Poor self-esteem and sense of efficacy • Increased drug and alcohol use • Trust issues with stable partners and decreased likelihood of condom use |
| Social Norms | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Marginalized and stigmatized as “vectors” of HIV transmission • Assumed that sexual violence toward sex workers not possible or not cause for concern |
| Access To Information, Education, Services | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Poor access to needed, relevant information • Stigma & discrimination in services, and lack of access |
| Policy and Legal Environment | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Police harassment and violence • Policies that place responsibility on individual sex worker, not clients and owners • In some cases, mandatory testing policies that violate human rights • Policies that prohibit congregating, directed toward effeminate looking men • Policies that inhibit sex worker exchange of information and organizing |
| Economic Resources | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of access to economic resources cause for sex work |
| Social Networks and Political Capital | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Barriers to organizing and participation in programs/policies |

Males Who Have Sex With Males

| Types of Factors | Factors in Vulnerability |
|---|--|
| Individual And Relationship | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Background: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⇒ MSM does not imply gay or bisexual social identities. ⇒ Complex interaction between identity, desire, behavior and gender roles. ⇒ Patterns of protection with partners. • Sexual identity is source of stigma. • Lower self-esteem, and sense of control. • Potential family & community rejection. • Link to drugs and alcohol. |
| Social Norms | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Homophobia limits recognition of MSM sexualities by policy makers & programmers. • Culture of silence about sexuality. • Conservative religious environment. |
| Access To Information, Education, Services | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of programs, information or services addressed towards the diversity of social identities and practices. • Often secretive relations. Link between secretive relations and mobility makes it more difficult to reach groups with information. • Stigma & discrimination in services. Lack of capacity among providers to address and respond to concerns. • Inadequate focus on MSM in many health programs and systems (i.e. MOH). • Inadequate epidemiology. |
| Policy and Legal Environment | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Police abuse and harassment, especially of male sex workers, transvestites and effeminate males. • Existing laws and policies legislate against sexual rights and other human rights: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⇒ Laws against congregating. ⇒ Laws that penalize same sex sexual relations and discriminate against sexual minorities. ⇒ Vague morality laws used to persecute MSM. • Where supportive legislation exists, laws often not implemented. |
| Economic Resources | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Education and employment barriers due to stigma & discrimination. |
| Social And Political Capital | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social stigma and hostile legal environment makes it harder to organize. • Barriers to participation in programs/policies. |