Engaging PWIDs in a research study

HPTN 074 Vietnam

Chu Viet Anh, MPH
Thai Nguyen, Vietnam
Outline

• HIV and PWIDs in Vietnam – An overview
• HPTN 074 overview
• Engaging PWIDs in HPTN 074: challenges and solutions
HIV in Vietnam

• 1990: First case of HIV/AIDS diagnosed in a PWID in Vietnam

• 2014: 256,000 PLWH

• After 20 years: HIV in Vietnam is considered a “mega epidemic” among PWIDs

• 45% attributed to injecting drug use

HIV is concentrated in key populations in Vietnam

- General population: 0.26%
- Sex worker: 2.6%
- MSM: 3.7%
- PWIDs: 10.3%

Complex socio-political context of PWID in Vietnam

- Golden Triangle has fueled Asia’s drug epidemic
- Shift from smoking opium to injecting heroin
- *Doi Moi* has led to growth and development
- Drug users increased 70% between 2000-2004
The Golden Triangle
70% of HIV infections among PWID are in concentrated regions of Vietnam
PWIDs in Vietnam – A vulnerable group

• Drug use is labeled a “social evil”

• Historically, government has used crackdowns, mass arrests and forced detoxification to discourage drug use

• Stigma and discrimination against PWID
Thai Nguyen province
Our previous studies among PWID in Thai Nguyen

1. HIV/STD Network Prevention Trial (1R01 MH64895)
   - Goal: To reduce HIV, injecting and sexual risk among PWID and their risk networks

2. Prevention for Positives (1R01 DA37440)
   - Goal: To reduce HIV risk behaviors among HIV-infected PWID
HPTN 074 overview

- Target population: People who inject drugs (PWIDs)
- Targets:
  - Enroll: 195 units (an index + at least 1 injection partner)
  - FU participant: 12 - 24 months, retention rate at least 90%
- Site activated: Feb 2015
- First enrollment: 21 Apr 2015
- Recruitment end: May 2016
- Study end: May 2017
Recruitment strategies

- Recruiters do community outreach activities
- Peer educators/leaders of self-help groups refers PWIDs
- Peer referral
- Engage CAB in study’s activities
Key values

• No stigma and discrimination
• Honest and trustworthy
• Supportive
Community advisory board (CAB)

- Engage people from different groups, including participants, leaders of self-help groups
- Help understand participants
- Protect participant’s safety and rights
  - Authorities understand the contribution of the study for HIV/AIDS prevention in Vietnam
  - Authorities help protect participants
- Increase the study’s prestige and dispel rumors
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Organization</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Organization</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nguyen Duc Vuong</td>
<td>Pho Yen District Health Center</td>
<td>Truong Be Thien</td>
<td>Thai Nguyen city Health Center</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nguyen Van Chinh</td>
<td>Local authority</td>
<td>Nguyen Duc Viet</td>
<td>Police</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tran Van Chinh</td>
<td>Doctor, HIV/AIDS prevention</td>
<td>Hoang Van Thang</td>
<td>Thai Nguyen PAC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ngo Ngoc Tam</td>
<td>DOLISA</td>
<td>Ho Quynh Trang</td>
<td>Thai Nguyen PAC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do Thi Hong Khanh</td>
<td>Women Union</td>
<td>Ha Chi Dan</td>
<td>Leader of self-help groups</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pham Thi Thom</td>
<td>PLWH</td>
<td>Hoang Thi Van</td>
<td>Resident</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pham Van Minh</td>
<td>PWID</td>
<td>Le Xuan Vinh</td>
<td>Farmer</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Encourage information spread

- Community approach to introduce the study to potential participants
  - Appropriate words
  - Appropriate dressing
  - Appropriate context – street context
- Disseminate flyers with appropriate messages
- Collaborate with “key persons” – peer educators, leaders of self-help groups, “prestigious” PWIDs
- Encourage “word of mouth”
  - Be friendly, no stigma and discrimination
  - Support participants as much as possible
  - Transparent: procedures, benefits, risks and discomforts
  - Incentive for peer referral
**Flyer**

**BY PARTICIPATING, YOU MIGHT GAIN**
- Free HIV test
- Free CD4 and HIV viral load tests, if needed
- Referral to MMT and early ARV services

**PROJECT PURPOSE**
Cung Ban is a research project to help us understand more about factors that impact HIV transmission in the community.

**WE INVITED YOU TO PARTICIPATE IF YOU**
- Identify as an active injection drug user
- Are between 18 and 60 years old

**THAI NGUYEN PROVINCIAL HIV/AIDS PREVENTION AND CONTROL PROGRAM**

**“CUNG BAN - HPTN 074” PROJECT**

Branch 1: Pho Yen District Health Centre
Ba Hang Town, Pho Yen District, Thai Nguyen Province
Tel: (0280) 3664.525

Branch 2: Ground Floor, Building E, Medical Centre of Thai Nguyen City
Group 34, Phan Dinh Phung Ward, Thai Nguyen City
Tel: (0280) 3655.188

**HOT LINE**
0912 456 769
Dedication of recruitment staffs

- Residents in the community
- Trainings: study procedures, soft skills
- Encouragement at work
- Closely monitor
  - Progress update
  - Orientation/strategies
  - Booster training need assessment: soft skills
- Listen, share and support
Identifying the challenges

- To identify and understand the recruitment challenges:
  - Consulted CAB
  - Worked closely with recruiters – weekly meeting
  - Analyzed data from our tracking data base
  - Employed GPS
Cumulative Screening:
Peer referral: (65%)
Community outreach: (32%)
Others: 3%
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Point when became ineligible</th>
<th>Cumulative N</th>
<th>Reason Ineligible</th>
<th>Cumulative n</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(4) Not Eligible after</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>Did not inject within last 3 months</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Screening Survey &amp; HIV</td>
<td></td>
<td>Injected &lt; 2times/week</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>negative</td>
<td></td>
<td>Unable to verify injection anatomy</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Did not share needles/syringes in last month</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Not willing to introduce a partner</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(4a) Not Eligible after</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>Did not inject within last 3 months</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Screening Survey &amp; HIV</td>
<td></td>
<td>Injected &lt; 2times/week</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>positive</td>
<td></td>
<td>Unable to verify injection anatomy</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Did not share needles/syringes in last month</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Not willing to introduce a partner</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Currently on ARV treatment &amp; adherent</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
GPS map
Major challenges in recruitment and retention

- Coverage of MMT and ART
- Rumors about the study (at the beginning of the study only)
  - Police/authorities
  - Cross check ART and MMT services
- “Social evils” elimination campaigns
  - Rehabilitation centers
  - Incarceration
- Community stigma and discrimination
  - PWIDs hide their injection status
  - PWIDs travel far away from home for work
Combined key solutions

• Encourage information spread in the target population
• Use data to understand and monitor the issues
• GPS mapping
• Build rapport and increase mutual understanding between study staffs and participants and their family members
• Brings more benefits to the target community – referral services
Build rapport and increase mutual understanding

- With both enrolled and not enrolled participants and their families as well (if applicable)
- Act as a friend
  - Care about their needs/thoughts/situations before talking about our needs.
  - Frequently contact
  - Listen and appropriately answer questions
  - Support them as a friend can do
- Respect “the contract” - ensure participant’s confidentiality
- Dispel rumors about the study
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The HIV Prevention Trials Network is sponsored by the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, the National Institute of Mental Health, and the National Institute on Drug Abuse, all components of the U.S. National Institutes of Health.

The HPTN 074 study team acknowledges
Vietnam Administration of HIV/AIDS Control
Thai Nguyen People Committee
Thai Nguyen Prevention AIDS Center
Pho Yen District Health Center
Thai Nguyen City Health Center