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## HIV/TB Agency, Information and Services Activity

# Harm Reduction for Amphetamine Type Stimulant Users: Experiences Sharing on Peer-led Approach

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Médecins Du Monde (MDM)

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# Rationale and Key Issues

- Preliminary assessment in three MDM intervention localities in June 2021
- Higher number of ATS users were found in Hopin and Moegaung (compared to Myitkyina where heroin use remains more prevalent).
- Hopin was selected as a project location to start a pilot project
- A Series of interviews/face-to-face discussions/FGDs with ATS active users, ex-users & patient support group members
- Formed ATS Project Working Group with 12 participants
- The group was named as “Light of Dawn” အရုဏ်ဦးအလင်းတန်း

# Objectives of the Specific Harm Reduction

- Adapted HR services to ATS Users through peer-led approach
- Integrate with existing HR services
- Technical Capacity, Organizational and Structural Development of peer-led group strengthened

# Background data

Project Title: Peer-led Project on Harm Reduction for Amphetamine Type

Stimulant Users in Kachin State, Myanmar

Project Location: Hopin

Coverage area: 4 wards, Hopin

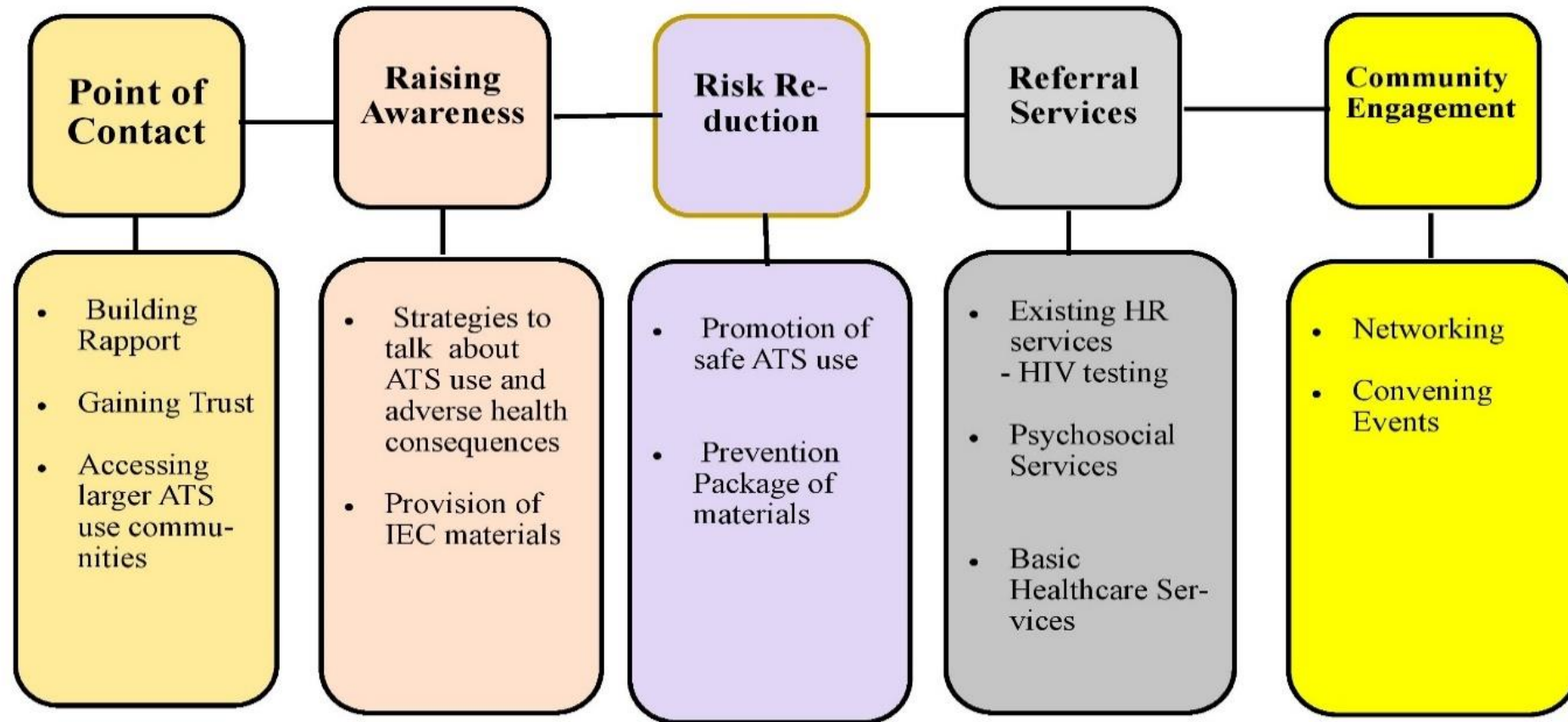
Target populations: Pure ATS, Polydrug, FSW, MSM

Project period: 18 months (1<sup>st</sup> Apr 2022 – 30<sup>th</sup> Sep 2023)

No. of estimated PWUM: Maximum-1340 (*2022-PSE Assessment*)

- Almost 90% are polydrug users and the most common using method is smoking.
  - ATS are commonly known as Yote Hsoe, Ah Sae, Pae Sae.
    - Female ATS use is around 300. 70% are hidden.

# Description of Model and Approaches



# Detail Activities

## Assessment/Survey

- ATS paraphernalia assessment
- Quick Needle Survey
- Population Size Estimation

## Creation

- ATS kit preparation (full package)
- Small box for local use (to put needles)

## Distribution

- ATS commodities (needles, pipe, foil)
- IEC (Methamphetamine, ChemSex) – Original developed by WHO & Burnet Institute

# Detail Activities

## Accompany referral (Linkage to care)

- Testing, MMT referral, STIs, Mental Health referral

## DIC recreational services

- Taking rest, playing guitar, music, carrom match, hair cutting, sport activities

## Community Mobilization & Advocacy

- Sensitization, Awareness raising sessions, Events/Campaign, Female friendly activities, Community engagement activities

# Monitoring, Supervision, and Quality control

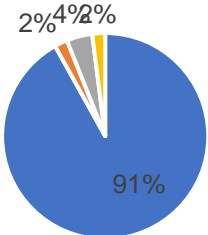
- **MDM** provide financial, technical, capacity building and coaching, assigning ATS Project Officer as a focal person
- **Peer-led group** takes the overall implementation of the project in Hopin coverage areas



# Achievements

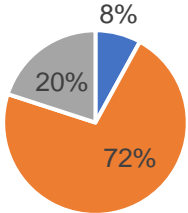
697 ATS users has been registered  
- male-652, female-45 (6%)

Level of education



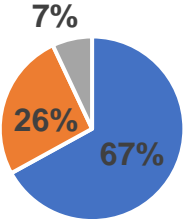
- Basic Education
- Graduate
- Illiterate
- University Student

Jade/Gold Mine Worker



- Current
- Ex
- NA

Other Risk Factors



- IDU
- DU
- Pure ATS

# Achievements

- People who were referred for linkage to care - 264
- People who received HIV testing - 96
- People who were referred for ATS related psychosis - 29
- DIC attendance numbers— 3998
- Distributed ATS Kits- 1672

# Good Practices of the Project

- Community-Based Approach (including ex-users, active users)
- Integrate Approach
- Experienced Leaders and Members
- Coordination and Networking Effort
- Accompany Referral

# Challenges

- Time investment to build trust & self-confidence
- Technical persons & skills: reporting, data collection, and IT equipment use
- Inadequate Human Resources: Women Outreach Workers, Service providers, Counsellors
- Can not organize big events in public areas, officially advocacy to local administrators

# Way forward

- Integration of current approaches into the existing HR Program
- To build capacity for the psychosocial support
- Female volunteer approach (more reaching women)

# Lesson learnt

- Engagement with family members: Become trust the peer-led group, voluntarily come to seek help from the group for their family members especially rich persons/family
- Adoption of safer practices: Mostly to have good practices such as oral care, personal hygiene, washing nose after ATS use, taking rest, sharing ATS risks and harms to others
- Community acceptance: Empowerment and service provision by peer-led group
- Empowerment of ATS users: Explore the potential leaders among them

# Photos



ATS kits preparation

“အပ်နှင့်ပိုက်ကို အသစ်သုံးပါ၊ ရောဂါမရအောင် ဂရုစိုက်ပါ၊ အိပ်ဖို့ စားဖို့လည်းမမေ့နဲ့ဟာ သတိရှိပါသူငယ်ချင်းရာ ”

# ATS Kit

တစ်ဦးနှင့်တစ်ဦး ပေါင်းမသုံးခြင်းဖြင့် ကူးစက်ရောဂါအန္တရာယ်များကို လျော့ချရန် ဖြန့်ဝေခြင်းဖြစ်ပါသည်

ATS Slogans on Kits

“အပ်နှင့်ပိုက်ကို အသစ်သုံးပါ အဟောင်းသုံးမှ ရောဂါရ ဆေးသုံးပြီးတိုင်း သတိရပါ နှာခေါင်း၊ ပါးစပ်ကို သန့်ရှင်းပါ ”

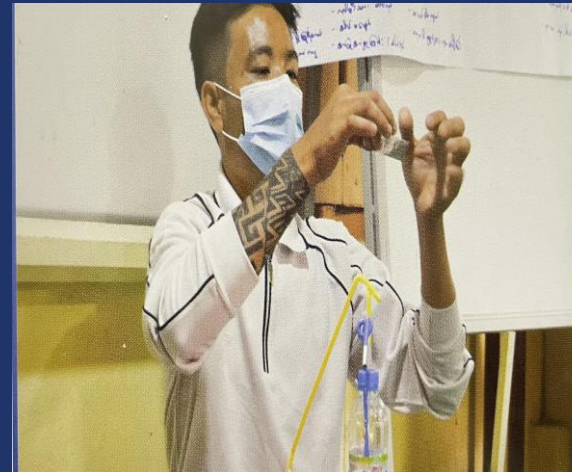
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# Photos



Needle with lighter (From ATS paraphernalia assessment)



Demonstration session on ATS safe use



# Photos



Small box creation for local use



Neighborhood Cleaning Activity



IOAD Event



Awareness/ATS HE



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THANK YOU.