



Regional Meeting of L'Initiative's Partners in Southeast Asia

Context and Objectives

L'Initiative, launched in 2011, is a French facility aimed at accelerating the fight against major pandemics such as HIV/AIDS, Tuberculosis (TB), and Malaria. It is implemented by the health department of Expertise France, and is financed by and placed under the aegis of the French Ministry for Europe and of Foreign Affairs. L'Initiative, as a Global Fund set-aside, complements the efforts of the Global Fund to fight HIV, tuberculosis and malaria. L'Initiative focuses on strengthening health systems, including by investing in health professionals' training and supporting innovative health approaches through various modalities, including technical assistance, project funding, and addressing neglected health challenges.

L'Initiative in Southeast Asia

In Southeast Asia, significant progress has been made in reducing the incidence and mortality of HIV/AIDS, TB, and malaria, aided by investments from the Global Fund. These efforts have enhanced prevention, treatment, care services, infrastructure, supply chain management, and human resource capacity. L'Initiative has invested over 50 million euros in the Greater Mekong sub-region over the past decade, funding 37 projects targeting the three diseases and health system strengthening. Despite these advancements, challenges such as drug-resistant malaria, new diseases, stigma, discrimination, sustainable financing, and robust health system components persist.



The Regional Meeting

Held on 10-11 June 2024 in Bangkok, Thailand, the Regional Meeting gathered over 120 participants, including L'Initiative partners, project leaders, regional experts, and representatives from organizations such as the Global Fund, WHO, UNAIDS, IOM, and various French institutions. The meeting served as a platform for dialogue, learning, and experience sharing on regional health issues, aiming to fortify local health systems and integrate the One Health approach.

Meeting Objectives and Structure

The two-day meeting had dual objectives:

1. To discuss project results and challenges.
2. To foster synergy among regional stakeholders by providing a collaborative space for reflection and knowledge sharing based on L'Initiative's supported activities in Southeast Asia.

This summary encapsulates the essence of the regional meeting, highlighting the ongoing efforts and future directions in combating pandemics and enhancing health systems in Southeast Asia.

SUMMARY

Context and ObjectivesP 1

L'Initiative in Southeast Asia
The Regional Meeting
Meeting Objectives and Structure

Day oneP 3

Welcome Remarks
Keynote Speech

Session 1 Tackling Tuberculosis in the Greater Mekong SubregionP 4-5

1. OPTICAM Project - Cambodia
2. CapThai Project - Thailand
3. Zero TB Viet Nam Health Economic and Operational Performance Evaluation (ZTV HOPE)

Session 2 Sustaining and Integrating Efforts Towards Malaria EliminationP 6-7

1. Sustainable Strategies for Malaria Elimination in Greater Mekong Subregion
2. Holistic Approach to Malaria and Other Diseases

Session 3 HIV: New Prevention and Care ToolsP 8-9

1. Implementing Long-Acting PrEP in Cambodia
2. Community-Based ART Distribution Model (CAD)
3. Emergence of Dolutegravir Resistance

Session 4 Community-based Approaches Among Drug UsersP 10-11

1. DRIVE Testing and Integrated Care Model - Vietnam
2. Evolving Approaches to Harm Reduction - Vietnam
3. Operationalising National Policy on Harm Reduction - Thailand

Day twoP 12

Session 5 Shifting to the 'One Health' ApproachP 12-13

1. One Health: From Concept to Collective Action
2. Integrating Environmental Indicators with Epidemiological Surveillance
3. Role of Civil Society in One Health Integration

Session 6 Health Community Workers: The Centerpiece of a Stronger and More Integrated Health System?P 14-15

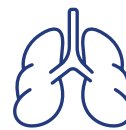
1. Role of Village Malaria Health Workers in Malaria Elimination
2. Sustainable and Integrated Approach via CHWs
3. Training and Integration of CHWs in Cambodia

Session 7 Sustainability and TransitionP 16-17

1. Transition to Domestic Funding for HIV in Vietnam
2. M-Fund: Health Access for Marginalized Populations in Thailand
3. Trends in Equitable HIV Financing in GMS

ClosingP 17

DAY ONE



Programme Overview: The first day featured welcome remarks, two keynote speeches, and four thematic roundtable sessions on tuberculosis (TB), malaria, HIV, and harm reduction in drug use.

Welcome Remarks

H.E. Mr. Jean-Claude Poimboeuf, Ambassador of France in Thailand

- Expressed gratitude for participants' commitment to combating HIV, TB, and malaria.
- Highlighted France's role as a leading donor to the Global Fund, contributing €6.05 billion and saving 32 million lives.
- Emphasized France's commitment to Universal Health Coverage (UHC) and the Global Fund's efforts in health system strengthening, especially in the Greater Mekong Subregion (GMS).
- Noted ongoing challenges, including high TB rates in Southeast Asia and the need for sustainable financing and stigma reduction.

Dr. Sopon Iamsirithaworn, Deputy Director-General, Department of Diseases Control, Ministry of Public Health, Thailand.

- Praised the Global Fund and France for their contributions to health improvements in GMS.
- Discussed Thailand's efforts in addressing emerging diseases through a One Health approach, involving various ministries and sectors.
- Encouraged participants to foster collaboration and solidarity for resilient health systems.

Keynote Speech

Dr. Weerawat Manosuthi, Department of Disease Control, Ministry of Public Health, Thailand

- Provided an overview of HIV, TB, antimicrobial resistance (AMR), and Monkeypox (Mpox) in GMS.
- Highlighted challenges in HIV diagnosis and treatment, emphasizing stigma, late diagnosis, and the need for increased ARV coverage.
- Stressed the importance of TB preventive treatment and the urgent need to scale up TB services to meet elimination goals.
- Raised concerns about AMR, noting GMS's high rates and the region's unpreparedness.

Dr. Patrice Piola, Expert from France

- Advocated for the One Health approach, linking human, animal, and environmental health.
- Discussed the impacts of climate change on health, including increased vector-borne diseases and respiratory issues due to pollution.
- Highlighted progress and challenges in malaria elimination, particularly drug resistance and surveillance in remote areas.
- Warned about the rise of non-communicable diseases (NCDs) in GMS, exacerbated by unhealthy lifestyles and environmental factors.

“Is it really over?” Discussing successes and limitations of the fight against the diseases, while paving the path to more integrated approaches.

SESSION 1

TACKLING TUBERCULOSIS IN THE GREATER MEKONG SUBREGION

Chair: Ms. Veronica Nosedá, Operational Research Manager, L'Initiative, Expertise France

SESSION OBJECTIVES:

- Address specific TB challenges in GMS countries.
- Discuss strategies for preventing and treating latent TB.
- Explore effective and affordable case-finding models.
- Promote people-centered, holistic interventions and regional collaborations.

PRESENTATIONS:

1. OPTICAM Project - Cambodia:

- **Presenter: Dr. Bunnet Dim**, Deputy Head of Clinical Research Group, Institut Pasteur
- **Focus:** Optimizing TB preventive treatment (TPT) initiation among people living with HIV (PLHIV).
- **Findings:** Increased TPT coverage from 15% to 86% in PLHIV attending HIV clinics.
- **Recommendations:** Work with national programs for sustainability and ensure no TPT stock shortages by improving procurement and management systems.

2. CapThai Project - Thailand:

- **Presenters: Dr. Phalin Kamolwat**, Department of Disease Control, Ministry of Public Health, Thailand and **Dr. Tamara Tovar-Sanchez**, Project Manager, IRD, France
- **Focus:** Evaluating a public health intervention package to improve TB control through active case-finding and TPT uptake.
- **Current Status:** Ongoing with site assessments and trial initiation. No quantitative data yet available.
- **Potential:** Serves as a TB prevention model due to its pragmatic design and patient-centered care focus.



3. Zero TB Viet Nam Health Economic and Operational Performance Evaluation (ZTV HOPE)

- **Presenter:** Ms. Nga Nguyen, Associate HIV-TB Programs Director, Freundeskreis für Internationale Tuberkulosehilfe (FIT)
- **Focus:** Enhanced contact investigations and community-based TB screening.
- **Impact:** Contributed to local TB programs through capacity building and community-based screenings. Published three scientific outputs.
- **Challenges:** COVID-19 pandemic caused project suspensions, later integrated TB screening into COVID-19 vaccination events.

Roundtable Discussion:

Panelists:

- **Dr. Patrick Duigan**, Regional Migration Health Advisor, International Organization for Migration (IOM)
- **Dr. Aung Myat Thu**, Deputy Operations Director, Medical Action Myanmar (MAM)
- Presenters and Chair

Key Discussion Points:

- **Community and Migrant Health Workers:** Critical in reaching migrant workers and addressing barriers like stigma, discrimination, language, and legal status.
- **Private and Public Sector Engagement:** Essential for healthcare quality and sustainability in rural and politically unstable areas.
- **Stigma Reduction:** Requires a whole-of-society approach involving governments, employers, and communities.
- **Regional Coordination:** Necessary for addressing social and cultural diversity in TB interventions.
- **Challenges:** TB-related stigma within healthcare settings, negative attitudes of healthcare workers, and obtaining consents for household contact tracing.

Conclusions:

- Emphasized the critical role of community health workers in supporting TB patients and integrating services for diseases like HIV and malaria.
- Highlighted the need for securing additional resources for community-based health efforts.
- Advocated for a more integrated and culturally sensitive approach to TB prevention and treatment in the region.





SESSION 2

SUSTAINING AND INTEGRATING EFFORTS TOWARDS MALARIA ELIMINATION

Chair: Dr. Rattanaxy Phetsavanh, Director General, Department of Communicable Diseases Control, Ministry of Health, Lao PDR

SESSION OBJECTIVES:

- Discuss the urgent need to improve preparedness and response to emerging diseases.
- Explore strategies to sustain malaria elimination efforts.
- Address malaria and other vector-borne diseases within the same ecosystem.

PRESENTATIONS:

1. Sustainable Strategies for Malaria Elimination in GMS:

Presenter: Dr. Pascal Ringwald, Coordinator, Malaria Mekong Elimination Programme, WHO

Key Points:

- The region is generally on track to meet elimination targets, but political instability in Myanmar poses significant risks.

Progress updates:

- *P. falciparum* elimination by 2023, except in Myanmar, where delays threaten regional progress.
- *P. vivax* outbreaks in Lao PDR and Vietnam in 2023; asymptomatic carriers remain a challenge.

Recommendations:

- Establish country reference laboratories for monitoring human and zoonotic malaria.
- Address procurement delays, integrate village malaria workers into primary healthcare, and ensure sustainable funding.
- Emphasize cross-border collaborations and maintain political engagement.

2. Holistic Approach to Malaria and Other Diseases:

Presenter: Dr. Aung Pyae Phyo, Postdoctoral Research Fellow, Shoklo Malaria Research Unit, Thailand

Key Points:

- Concerns about drug-resistant malaria and the efficacy of current treatments.
- Ineffectiveness of conventional vector control methods due to non-compliance and mosquito behavior.
- Need for better detection of hidden malaria reservoirs.
- Potential to use malaria elimination platforms for addressing other diseases like filariasis, intestinal helminths, and scabies.
- Propose scaling up to a mass screening and treatment approach for multiple parasitic infections.

Roundtable Discussion:

Panelists:

- **Mr. Shreeharia Acharya**, Project Manager, GMS Regional Malaria Civil Society Organisations (CSO) Platform, Alight
- **Dr. Jean Popovici**, Head of Malaria Research Unit, Institut Pasteur du Cambodge
- Presenters and Chair

Key Discussion Points:

- **Community and Village Health Workers:** Vital for addressing broader health needs beyond malaria and integrating into community health surveillance systems.
- **Sustainability:** Dependent on the effective integration of malaria efforts into broader health systems and community capacity building.
- **New Technologies:** Emerging treatments and detection tools for *P. vivax* need rigorous evaluation.
- **Political Situation in Myanmar:** Poses a significant challenge, particularly for cross-border infection control with Thailand.
- **Potential for New Outbreaks:** Vigilance needed for imported malaria from Africa in Vietnam and Cambodia.
- **Integrating Dengue:** Constraints due to different mosquito behaviors and the lack of current treatment options for dengue.
- **One Health Approach:** Importance of adapting this approach for malaria elimination.
- **Post-Elimination Sustainability:** Need for measures to support prevention of re-establishment, including financing, human resources, and structural and technical capacities.

Conclusions:

- Emphasized the critical role of community engagement and integration into broader health systems.
- Urgent need for sustainable funding and cross-border cooperation.
- Highlighted the potential for using malaria elimination infrastructure to tackle other diseases.
- Recognized the political and logistical challenges, especially in Myanmar, and the need for a vigilant and adaptive approach to future threats and outbreaks.



SESSION 3

HIV: NEW PREVENTION AND CARE TOOLS

Chair: Dr. Emilie Mosnier, Coordinator for Clinical Research on Infectious Diseases, ANRS-MIE, based at the University of Health Sciences, Cambodia

SESSION OBJECTIVES:

- Discuss the need for new approaches to engage vulnerable and marginalized communities in HIV prevention and care.
- Evaluate the potential of new tools such as long-acting PrEP and community-based treatment strategies.
- Address the emergence of drug resistance, particularly to dolutegravir (DTG).

PRESENTATIONS:

1. Implementing Long-Acting PrEP in Cambodia:

Presenter: Dr. Ngauv Bora, Deputy Director, National Center for HIV/AIDS, Dermatology and STDs, Cambodia

Key Points:

- Current low enrollment in PrEP programs; goal to increase from 12% to 30% by 2026.
- Introduction of long-acting PrEP options: injectable cabotegravir (CAB) and Dapivirine ring.
- Implementation challenges include ensuring safety, and assessing acceptability and efficacy.



2. Community-Based ART Distribution Model (CAD):

Presenter: Mr. Tuot Sovannary, Research Manager, KHANA, Cambodia

Key Points:

- CAD model aims to reduce clinic visits and improve treatment adherence through community action workers (CAW).
- High retention rate (98.2%) but challenges in CAW recruitment, patient travel, trust issues, and hospital policies hinder full implementation.

3. Emergence of Dolutegravir Resistance:

Presenter: Dr. Emilie Mosnier

Key Points:

- WHO recommends DTG as preferred HIV treatment; however, emerging resistance is observed.
- Challenges in monitoring resistance due to limited reporting and logistical issues.
- National pretreatment HIV drug resistance (PDR) surveys initiated in Cambodia to better understand and manage resistance.

Roundtable Discussion:

Additional Panelists:

- **Ms. Rena Janamnuysook**, Programme Manager, IHRI, Thailand
- **Dr. Gonzague Jourdain**, Researcher, Chiang Mai University, Thailand

Discussion Themes:

Post-Project Patient Status and PrEP Usage:

- Continuation of support groups post-project indicates value in community-based approaches.
- Government promotes daily PrEP; adherence and stigma remain significant challenges.

Key Population-Led Service Deliveries:

- Emphasis on capacitating key populations to co-deliver services like finger prick testing and dispensing PrEP.
- Integration of mental health services into HIV services is crucial but requires feasibility and acceptability studies.

Considerations for Non-MSM Populations:

- Need for accessible PrEP for people who use drugs and integration of mental health services.

Integration of Health Services:

- Potential for integrating gender-affirming care, harm reduction, and mental health services alongside HIV prevention and treatment for key populations.

Conclusions:

- The session highlighted the urgent need for innovative HIV prevention and care tools to effectively reach and engage marginalized communities.
- Long-acting PrEP and community-based ART distribution models show promise but face implementation and acceptance challenges.
- Drug resistance, particularly to DTG, is a growing concern requiring enhanced surveillance and management strategies.
- Engaging communities and key populations in health responses is crucial for the success of HIV prevention and care initiatives.





SESSION 4

COMMUNITY-BASED APPROACHES AMONG DRUG USERS

Chair: Mr. Pascal Tanguay, Drug Policy and Harm Reduction Expert, Asia Pacific

SESSION OBJECTIVES:

- Address the impact of the Global Fund's gradual withdrawal from the region on harm reduction and drug policy.
- Explore community-based models and innovations in harm reduction as governments navigate this transition.
- Share good practices and discuss new tools in harm reduction, focusing on evolving drug use patterns and the needs of key populations.

PRESENTATIONS:

1. DRIVE Testing and Integrated Care Model - Vietnam:

Presenter: Professor Duong Thi Huong, Hai Phong University of Medicines and Pharmacy, Vietnam

Key Points:

- Overview of the DRIVE project's success in integrating care for diseases like HIV, hepatitis C, and TB among people who inject drugs (PWID) using respondent-driven sampling (RDS).
- Emphasis on the effectiveness of network recruitment and strong community links to essential care.
- Adaptability of the DRIVE model to various health contexts and its cost-effectiveness.

2. Evolving Approaches to Harm Reduction - Vietnam:

Presenter: Dr. Oanh Khuat Thi Hai, Executive Director, SCDI, Vietnam

Key Points:

- Historical shifts in drug use and the adaptation of SCDI's methods to address changing needs, including the rise of chemsex.
- Introduction of the Saving the Future project, which includes interventions for HIV prevention, drug use, mental health, and support for clients with adverse childhood experiences.
- Importance of donor support and the development of stimulant harm reduction strategies.

3. Operationalising National Policy on Harm Reduction - Thailand:

Presenter: Mr. Promboon Panitchpakdi, Executive Director, Raks Thai Foundation, Thailand

Key Points:

- Discussion on the evolution of Thailand's drug policy and the challenges in implementing harm reduction and human rights-based policies.
- The potential re-criminalisation of cannabis in Thailand highlights the vulnerability of harm reduction policies to political changes.
- The crucial role of civil society, donors, and allies within government in securing harm reduction policies.

Roundtable Discussion:

Additional Panelist:

Dr. Nicolas Durier, General Director, Dreamlopmnt Social Enterprise and Foundation, Thailand

Discussion Themes:

Engagement and Advocacy:

- Importance of involving people who use drugs in designing and implementing interventions.
- Strategies for engaging policymakers and influencers in drug policy advocacy.
- The critical role of donor support in navigating the challenges and adaptations required by changing drug use trends.

Innovative Health Service Models:

- Dreamlopmnt's CFree project as a model for integrated community-based testing and treatment for HCV, HBV, STIs, TB, and HIV.
- High success rates in treatment demonstrate the effectiveness and cost-efficiency of community-level service delivery.
- Ongoing negotiations with the Thai government for integrating the CFree program into national health systems.

Funding and Sustainability:

- Discussion on the ongoing funding gaps in harm reduction, particularly as drug use trends shift toward non-injection and stimulant-based methods.
- Need for responsive changes in donor and program implementation strategies to adapt to these trends.

Conclusions:

- The session highlighted the critical need for innovative, community-based harm reduction strategies that effectively address the changing landscape of drug use and policy.
- Engaging key populations and ensuring robust donor support are essential for the sustainability and adaptability of harm reduction programs.
- Policymakers and harm reduction advocates must be vigilant and proactive to safeguard the gains made in harm reduction against potential political and legislative reversals.



DAY TWO

The program focused on the region in transition and was divided into three sessions: One Health, community health workers, and sustainability and transitions.

The Greater Mekong region in transition: the turns not to be missed

SESSION 5

SHIFTING TO THE 'ONE HEALTH' APPROACH

Chair: Ms. RD Marte, Executive Director, APCASO, Thailand

SESSION OBJECTIVES:

- Explore the integration of the One Health approach in the Greater Mekong Subregion (GMS) which combines human, animal, and environmental health to enhance overall health outcomes.
- Discuss strategies to leverage successes from the fight against communicable diseases like HIV, TB, and malaria to strengthen the One Health framework.
- Share insights on how community engagement and technological advances can support the implementation of this approach.

PRESENTATIONS:

1. One Health: From Concept to Collective Action:

Presenter: Dr. Soawapak Hinjoy, Director of Office of International Cooperation, Department of Disease Control, Ministry of Public Health, Thailand

Key Points:

- Historical perspective on avian influenza in Thailand catalyzing the adoption of One Health.
- Establishment of the Coordinating Unit for One Health (CUOH) to facilitate domestic and international collaboration.
- Future steps include setting up One Health Coordination Units at sub-national levels to enhance local integration and focus on prevention.



2. Integrating Environmental Indicators with Epidemiological Surveillance:

Presenter: Dr. Florian Girond, Advisor, Communicable Disease Control Department, Ministry of Public Health, Cambodia

Key Points:

- Potential of Earth Observation satellites and computing advancements to inform real-time disease surveillance.
- Challenges in integrating health, weather, and climate data into a unified system.
- Advocacy for open-source environments and data sharing to improve disease transmission understanding and surveillance.

3. Role of Civil Society in One Health Integration:

Presenter: Mr. Choub Sok Chamreun, Executive Director, KHANA, Cambodia

Key Points:

- Importance of civil society and community engagement in implementing One Health based on experiences from HIV and TB programs.
- Specific roles for community organizations in risk communication, data collection, and managing health services.
- Emphasis on community-based monitoring and early warning systems to mitigate health threats.

Roundtable Discussion:

Additional Panelists:

- **Dr. André Furco**, One Health Approach Technical Expert, World Organisation for Animal Health
- **Dr. Flavie Goutard**, Senior Epidemiologist, PREZODE focal point, CIRAD

Discussion Themes:

Application of One Health in AMR Context:

- Impact of environmental changes like deforestation on animal behavior and health, influencing AMR development.

- The necessity of addressing complex environmental and agricultural factors in combating AMRs.

Link Between Animal and Human Health:

- Importance of maintaining both domestic and wild animal health as integral to human ecological health.
- Examples from Thailand demonstrating the role of community leadership in monitoring food safety and animal health.

Enhancing Community Interest in One Health:

- Strategies to increase community buy-in and participation in One Health initiatives.
- Importance of integrating population mobility data into health and environmental surveillance for a comprehensive approach.

Role of Technology in One Health:

- Potential of AI and other technological innovations to enhance integrated surveillance systems.
- Challenges and gaps in creating a seamless integration of health, environmental, and population movement data.

Conclusions:

- The session underscored the critical importance of the One Health approach in addressing complex health challenges in the GMS.
- Effective implementation of One Health requires strong multi-sectoral coordination, substantial community involvement, and the leveraging of technological advancements.
- Continued advocacy and capacity building are necessary to sustain the momentum and ensure that One Health principles are deeply integrated into regional health strategies.



SESSION 6

HEALTH COMMUNITY WORKERS: THE CENTERPIECE OF A STRONGER AND MORE INTEGRATED HEALTH SYSTEM?

Chair: Mr. Pascal Tanguay, Drug Policy and Harm Reduction Chair: **Dr. Faisal Mansoor**, Head of Programme Unite, United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS), Myanmar

SESSION OBJECTIVES:

- Highlight the critical role of community health workers (CHWs) in health service delivery, particularly in remote and crisis-affected areas.
- Discuss the challenges and opportunities in integrating CHWs into formal health systems, including training, certification, and compensation.
- Explore strategies for leveraging the successes of CHWs in malaria elimination to strengthen broader health system integration.

PRESENTATIONS:

1. Role of Village Malaria Health Workers in Malaria Elimination:

Presenter: Dr. Faisal Mansoor

Key Points:

- Emphasized the vital role of CHWs in closing the service gap in remote areas, particularly in malaria elimination.
- Discussed the operational challenges in areas beyond traditional healthcare reach, especially during crises like in Myanmar.
- Stressed the need for structured outreach and the effectiveness of CHWs in regions without permanent health volunteer presence.

2. Sustainable and Integrated Approach via CHWs:

Presenter: Professor Frank Smithuis, Oxford University, MOCRU, and Executive Director of MAM, Myanmar

Key Points:

- Described the challenges of healthcare delivery in remote Myanmar and the pivotal role of CHWs.
- Introduced technological support tools like the MAM Health App to aid CHWs in diagnostics and treatment.
- Advocated for expanding CHW roles beyond malaria to include other common diseases, enhancing overall community health impact.

3. Training and Integration of CHWs in Cambodia:

Presenter: Professor Saphonn Vonthanak, Advisor to the Ministry of Health and Rector, University of Health Sciences, Cambodia

Key Points:

- Addressed the complexities of defining training content and certification for CHWs.
- Highlighted the necessity of multi-faceted approaches involving policy reform, stakeholder engagement, and adequate resource allocation for successful CHW integration.

Roundtable Discussion:

Additional Panelists:

- **Ms. Izaskun Gaviria**, Global Fund Senior Fund Portfolio Manager
- **Mr. Viengkhone Souriyo**, Executive Director, Community Health Inclusion Association, Lao PDR

Discussion Themes:

Geographic Reach and Compensation of CHWs:

- Addressed questions on the extent of CHW coverage by MAM and their compensation schemes.
- Discussed the general costs and challenges of integrating CHWs into formal health systems, especially for malaria and TB.

Social Determinants of Health:

- Explored the role of CHWs in mitigating barriers to healthcare access such as discrimination, language, and cultural differences.
- Emphasized the importance of CHWs in addressing gender and legal status-related barriers within community settings.

Funding and Integration Challenges:

- Discussed the critical role of the Global Fund in supporting CHW initiatives and the challenges in securing government acceptance for their integration.
- Highlighted fiscal constraints and prioritization issues faced by governments in integrating CHWs into national health systems.

Conclusions:

- The session reinforced the invaluable role of CHWs in enhancing health service delivery, particularly in under-served and crisis-affected areas.
- Successful integration of CHWs into formal health systems requires comprehensive strategies involving policy adjustments, training standardization, and sustainable funding mechanisms.
- There is a clear need for continued advocacy and strategic partnerships to ensure that CHWs are recognized, supported, and effectively integrated into broader health system frameworks.



SESSION 7

SUSTAINABILITY AND TRANSITION

Chair: Dr. Nittaya Phanuphak, Executive Director, IHRI, Thailand

SESSION OBJECTIVES:

- Discuss the sustainability of health initiatives in the context of transitioning from Global Fund support to domestic funding, particularly for HIV, TB, and malaria programs.
- Highlight effective models and strategies for sustaining health gains and addressing challenges in health care systems, especially for vulnerable populations.

PRESENTATIONS:

1. Transition to Domestic Funding for HIV in Vietnam:

Presenter: Dr. Can Thi Hue Chi, Researcher, Hanoi University of Public Health, Vietnam

Key Points:

- Overview of Vietnam's progress toward the 95-95-95 HIV targets and transition from international to domestic funding.
- Detailed discussion on Vietnam's health system structure, the national strategy for health system strengthening, and the integration of HIV services with social health insurance.
- Future strategies include policy advocacy, expansion of community-based program tools, and scaling up human resource management tools for broader healthcare integration.

2. M-Fund: Health Access for Marginalized Populations in Thailand:

Presenter: Dr. Nyan Linn, Head of Programmes, Dreamlopmnts Foundation, Thailand

Key Points:

- Introduction of the M-Fund, a not-for-profit initiative providing health coverage to migrants, stateless, and marginalized populations along the Thai-Myanmar border.
- Discussion on challenges related to financial sustainability and adaptations for broader health service utilization among enrolled populations.
- Plans for future expansion, financial sustainability, and policy advocacy to ensure free healthcare for all on Thai soil.



3. Trends in Equitable HIV Financing in GMS:

Presenter: Ms. Veronique Collard, Regional Advisor on Equitable Financing, UNAIDS

Key Points:

- Analysis of current funding inequalities affecting the HIV response in the Asia Pacific.
- Highlighting the shortfall in prevention funding and the high dependency on international finance.
- Call for a transformation in approach to HIV response sustainability focused on political, policy, programmatic, financial, and systemic changes.

Roundtable Discussion:

Additional Panelist:

Mr. Allan Nfamba, Fund Portfolio Manager, Global Fund

Discussion Themes:

Political Commitment and Community Systems:

- Concerns regarding the varying levels of political commitment to sustain health initiatives and the passive governmental support for strengthening community health systems.

Safety and Security of Vulnerable Populations:

- Discussions on ensuring access to health services for the most vulnerable and marginalized populations, amidst challenges in political and financial support.

Integrated Health Approach:

- Emphasis on the necessity of integrating HIV services with primary healthcare to address broader health needs, including non-communicable diseases.
- Discussion on the impact of trade agreements and intellectual property rights on medication costs and the potential integration of AI in healthcare delivery.

Sustainability Strategies:

- The need for innovative financing strategies such as blended financing, and collaboration with financial institutions like the World Bank and Asian Development Bank to develop sustainable health responses.
- Urgent call for prioritization of transition and sustainability planning given the high level of donor dependency, particularly for prevention-related activities.

Conclusions:

- The session underscored the critical need for sustainable health financing strategies as countries transition from donor-supported to domestically funded health systems.
- Panelists highlighted the importance of continued innovation in financing and policy reform to maintain and expand health gains, particularly for HIV, TB, and malaria.
- There is a clear need for integrated health approaches that remain people-centered and grounded in rights, ensuring that vulnerable populations are not left behind in the transition process.



Some great, genuine though anonymous quotes

“This meeting was too short. One and half days was not enough for all the interesting discussions that we have been having and want to discuss further. L’Initiative should consider expanding the meeting to two or even three days next time.”

“The high-level of expertise and experience in this room is simply impressive and so enjoyable. Very rarely do we, especially in our region, get an opportunity like this to sit with each other, people from across the three diseases and more, to share, learn, and discuss. It has been an incredible meeting.”

“I truly feel like I have learned something new, not just about the issues I have been working on but also new issues and ideas, through this meeting.”

“I think this is really the first of its kind meeting in our region. I have learned so much about the science and research of the other diseases that I have never thought about; most importantly, to explore ways on how we can support each other, as implementers and advocates, at the country level, across the diseases on issues like community health workers.”

CLOSING

Participants were invited to share their reflections and feedback on the meeting before the official closing of the meeting. Participants expressed their appreciation for the opportunity to gather and carry out cross-learning between the experts and the L’Initiative partners; they also valued the learning within and across the diseases and other relevant health issues. The use of roundtable format was conducive for additional experience sharings from the audience and the balance in technical, practical and conceptual contents greatly facilitated and provided a vital space for critical and reflective discussions.



L'Initiative

Sida, tuberculose, paludisme
initiative.expertisefrance.fr/en

Expertise France

40 boulevard de Port-Royal
75005 Paris
01 70 82 70 82

f [ef.linitiative](https://www.facebook.com/ef.linitiative)
X [ef_linitiative](https://twitter.com/ef_linitiative)
in [linkedin.com/company/ef-linitiative/](https://www.linkedin.com/company/ef-linitiative/)



IMPLEMENTED
BY



FUNDED
AND UNDER THE
SUPERVISION OF



AS PART OF
THE FRENCH
CONTRIBUTION TO

