



THE FOUNDATION FOR EDUCATION & DEVELOPMENT [THAILAND]

INNOVATOR & MOMENTUM FUNDING

HIV AMONG BURMESE MIGRANTS

THE FOUNDATION FOR EDUCATION & DEVELOPMENT



POSITIVE ACTION

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POSITIVE ACTION'S COMMUNITY STRATEGIC INITIATIVES (CSI) PROVIDE FUNDING TO COMMUNITY ORGANISATIONS WHO SEEK TO PREVENT NEW CASES OF HIV AND SUPPORT PEOPLE LIVING WITH HIV.

INNOVATOR & MOMENTUM FUNDING

As part of its strategy, Positive Action provides first time investments to test and pilot new interventions through its Innovator funding rounds. Innovator grantees receive up to £100,000 over a two-year period.

Innovator-funded projects that have successfully generated evidence of impact are scaled by Positive Action through its Momentum funding. Momentum grants are a £300,000 investment over three years, that aims to advance existing interventions.



HIV AMONG BURMESE MIGRANTS

People living with HIV who migrate from Myanmar to Thailand face several challenges that affect their ability to access and retain care. Frequent changes to immigration requirements make it difficult for migrants to obtain health insurance, resulting in high out of pocket costs for treatment.¹ For those able to obtain insurance, they are still exposed to stigma, discrimination and language barriers at designated points-of-care.¹

Although available, there are few migrant friendly HIV facilities resulting in long travel times for people seeking testing and consultation.

1. International Organization for Migration. 2007. Assessment of Mobility and HIV Vulnerability among Myanmar Migrant Sex Workers and Factory Workers in Mae Sot District, Tak Province, Thailand. Available at: https://publications.iom.int/system/files/pdf/assessment_of_mobility_and_hiv_vulnerability_myanmar.pdf.

2. Tawaytibhongs, Orawan. "Universal Health Coverage for Undocumented Migrant Workers in Thailand: Challenges in Policy Implementation." Available at SSRN 4012432 (2022).



“FED HAS BEEN INCREDIBLY LUCKY TO WORK WITH THE POSITIVE ACTION PROGRAMME. THE INNOVATOR FUND ALLOWED FED TO PROVIDE COMPREHENSIVE AND FLEXIBLE CARE FOR THE MOST VULNERABLE MIGRANTS. THIS PROGRAMME HAS HELPED US BUILD A REAL COMMUNITY FOR MIGRANTS LIVING WITH HIV HERE IN PHANG NGA, AND WITH THE MOMENTUM GRANT, WE WILL GROW TO INCLUDE NEIGHBOURING PROVINCES.””

– Bob Forrester, Project Manager, Foundation for Education and Development

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PROGRAMME APPROACH

In response to the physical and psychosocial needs of migrants, FED initiated a project funded by Positive Action's Innovator funding round, to help reduce internalised stigma and improve the physical health of migrants from Myanmar living with HIV.

FED's project had three core objectives:

1. **Help improve physical health** through HIV treatment adherence support, health education, and poverty alleviation.
2. **Support empowerment** through life-skills and leadership training.
3. **Decrease experienced and perceived stigma** through community-led anti-stigma campaigns.

COMMUNITY IMPACT

Activities included organising support groups to address internalised stigma.

The team identified a smaller cohort of individuals to receive **leadership training**, to ensure ownership and sustainability of the original support groups. Following their initial training, participants executed an **anti-stigma campaign**.

- Nearly all participants reported that they no longer felt "dirtied" by their HIV status.
- On average, participants disclosed their HIV status to more than 20 other individuals during the project.
- Participants reported that they 'no longer believe others will reject them upon disclosing their status'.

MOMENTUM GRANT SCALE-UP



More migrants are being forced to seek safety in Thailand, resulting in a greater need for HIV treatment and care.

FED received an additional £300k to scale-up its Innovator-funded project. The additional funding from the **Momentum grant** will enable this project to expand to two new regions, Ranong and Phuket, reaching more migrants living with HIV and their families. The expanded grant will also support the facilitation of the Positive Myanmar Migrants Conference, a yearly national conference for migrants living with HIV in Thailand.

