



TENACITY in ACTION

leaving no one behind activity plan

2018-2020



apcom

Equity. Dignity. Social Justice.



ABOUT US

APCOM works to improve the health and rights of gay men, other men who have sex with men and SOGIESC people across Asia and the Pacific.

Based in Bangkok, APCOM is a not-for-profit organisation representing and working with a network of individuals and community-based organisations across 38 countries in Asia and the Pacific.

APCOM has a primary focus on HIV because it is a key health issue for gay men and other men who have sex with men in the region. APCOM also addresses other related health issues for our communities such as sexual health, mental health and drug use.

APCOM also focuses on improving relevant human and legal rights across the region as discrimination, stigma, criminalisation and exclusion impact on the health outcomes of the communities we serve.

OUR VISION

APCOM wants a world where all gay men, other men who have sex with men and people of diverse sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression and sex characteristics can fully participate in and achieve sustainable development in all aspects of their health, rights and wellbeing.

OUR COMMUNITIES

We serve and represent a range of diverse and dynamic constituents. They include:

Gay men and other men who have sex with men

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SOGIESC people = people and communities of diverse, non-heteronormative and gender-nonconforming sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, and sex characteristics.

ABOUT TENACITY in ACTION

TENACITY in ACTION: leaving no one behind activity plan 2018 – 2020 is a companion document to APCOM's *TENACITY: leaving no one behind strategic framework 2018 – 2020*. It details the activities that APCOM will undertake in pursuit of the broader vision and objectives outlined in *TENACITY: leaving no one behind strategic framework 2018 – 2020*.

APCOM will benchmark and measure the outputs and outcomes of our work against the activities detailed in TENACITY in ACTION.

Both companion documents are available to view and download on the APCOM website:
www.apcom.org/tenacity



TENACITY

To guide our work over the coming years, APCOM has developed *TENACITY: leaving no one behind strategic framework 2018-2020*:
www.apcom.org/tenacity

This framework outlines a series of broad objectives to support individuals, local communities and national governments to end AIDS and promote justice in Asia and the Pacific by 2030, and to realise the human rights of gay men and other men who have sex with men and SOGIESC people.

Designed to guide APCOM's work through 2020, the framework is multifaceted and anchored around three themes:

1. **HIV Is Not Over:** Strengthening the HIV response for gay men and other men who have sex with men
2. **Our Rights:** Protecting gay men, other men who have sex with men and SOGIESC people
3. **Our Strength:** Stronger interlinked communities and broader partner networks

1. HIV IS NOT OVER.

strengthening the HIV response
for gay men and other men who
have sex with men

PREP
ADVOCATE
#PrEPARINGASIA

1.1 APCOM wants no more early deaths from HIV. APCOM believes that gay men and other men who have sex with men in Asia and the Pacific must have timely access to full health services including antiretroviral therapy.

APCOM is committed to the full realisation of rights for people living with HIV and seeks early treatment for all those living with HIV. APCOM believes the science that U=U (undetectable = untransmissible). That is, people who achieve and maintain undetectable viral load from taking antiretroviral drugs pose no risk to their sexual partners of transmitting HIV.

Meanwhile, governments in Asia and the Pacific have adopted laudable and ambitious treatment goals for all through declarations and commitments in inter-governmental fora - that by 2020, more than 80% of gay men and other men who have sex with men living with HIV in Asia and the Pacific will have access to affordable and accessible treatment, care and support. APCOM welcomes this target and stands ready to work with governments to deliver on their commitments.

Presently, these commitments have not translated into domestic action with allocated resources. Without a renewed commitment from governments, they will fail their citizens, leaving them behind and not reaching their own commitments to end AIDS by 2030.

APCOM will work with governments and communities to develop second-generation HIV service responses that include treatment programs that offer accessible and equitable services for those living with HIV. (further details included in Changing Gears <https://apcom.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/2016-Community-Changing-Gears-A-New-Asia-Pacific-Regional-MSM-Framework.pdf>)

APCOM will do this through its existing partnerships including with the United Nations and national governments, as well as through new partnerships at city level.

What APCOM and our Asia Pacific partners want to see delivered:

By 2020, vibrant and re-energised community responses to all the challenges facing gay men, other men who have sex with men and SOGIESC persons in Asia

What APCOM will do:

- Action 1.1.1:** Develop key strategic partnerships with individuals, communities, governments and other entities to scale-up second-generation HIV services for gay men and other men who have sex with men in Asia and the Pacific.
- Action 1.1.2:** Support the development and replication of second generation HIV service responses that include community-based treatment services in key cities in Asia and the Pacific.
- Action 1.1.3:** Document the lessons learned from these responses and further develop models for adoption at community level.
- Action 1.1.4:** Undertake leadership development and mentorship of gay men and other men who have sex with men throughout Asia and the Pacific to support the second-generation HIV service response.
- Action 1.1.5:** Advocate for the use of implementation science in the continuous enhancement of HIV services for gay men and other men who have sex with men in Asia and the Pacific.



1.2 HIV prevention works

APCOM supports evidence-informed actions that reduce the risk of HIV transmission. Presently these actions include use of condoms and lubricants, safe injecting practices, PrEP, PEP and U=U. To effectively implement these actions, increased national and local investments are needed, including building the capacity of communities to deliver results.

APCOM welcomes continued efforts to develop an effective vaccine and other prevention technologies. New technologies will be incorporated into the future work of APCOM as they become available.

APCOM understands and believes the research findings that sexuality education in school settings as well as in the community provides gay men and other men who have sex with men with the information and skills about their sexuality needed to care for their health.

The world has heard that countries will end AIDS by 2030. The time for talking is over; now is the time for action. Gay men and other men who have sex with men in Asia and the Pacific have received commitments from their governments to end AIDS by 2030. This will require prevention programs that are accessible and friendly towards gay men and other men who have sex with men. These programs must be rapidly scaled-up now in key cities and countries in the region.

APCOM will work with individuals, communities, governments and other entities to deliver HIV prevention actions. APCOM will work with national/ local governments to deliver on their HIV prevention commitments to their citizens. APCOM will acknowledge efforts, both successful and unsuccessful, and highlight where there is inaction or responses that harm, discriminate or stigmatise gay men and other men who have sex with men.

Today, evidence-informed combination prevention delivers cost-effective results. APCOM will work with stakeholders at all levels to deliver access to combination prevention for gay men and other men who have sex with men.

APCOM is committed to strengthened communities empowered to respond within the context of their own cultures and societal norms. We reject attempts to derail effective responses because they conflict with traditional values or norms. We are committed to change and to stopping stigma, discrimination, violence and killings.

APCOM welcomes new generations of leaders of gay men and other men who have sex with men within our communities across the region and is committed to developing their capacities and skills. This commitment is reflected in initiatives such as our IGNITE! programme (<http://apcom.org/what-we-do/building-leadership/#building-leadership>).

What APCOM and our Asia Pacific partners want to see delivered:

By 2020, governments in Asia and the Pacific will ensure that 90% of their gay men and other men who have sex with men populations are reached with effective, appropriate and affordable evidence-informed HIV prevention programs.

What APCOM will do:

Action 1.2.1: Completion of community assessments of prevention needs and gaps, along with policy and programmatic barriers to action for gay men and other men who have sex with men.

Action 1.2.2: Implementation of a mentoring program for gay men and other men who have sex with men in the region, building on the lessons to date and the experience available across and within regions.



1.3 APCOM believes Asia and the Pacific must be PrEPed and PEPed. APCOM will work to increase access to PrEP and PEP for gay men and other men who have sex with men who are affected by HIV.

The science is in - PrEP and PEP effectively prevent new HIV infections. APCOM was an early advocate for PrEP and PEP and will continue in this leadership role, working with our communities and their respective governments to ensure the affordable availability and accessibility of PrEP and PEP where it is needed. To help achieve this, we believe that gay men and other men who have sex with men, their advocates and their communities should have knowledge of and access to PrEP as a prevention tool.

UNAIDS has urged increased efforts from governments to ensure that three million people globally are on PrEP by 2020. Furthermore, governments in Asia and the Pacific have adopted the Asia-Pacific Framework for Action to End AIDS by 2030 that highlights the importance of working with communities and affected populations, as well as utilising high-impact prevention technologies that must include PrEP.

What APCOM and our Asia Pacific partners want to see delivered:

By 2020, at least 100,000 at-risk young gay men and other men who have sex with men in Asia and the Pacific are using PrEP consistently and PEP when needed.

What APCOM will do:

- Action 1.3.1:** Work with communities, governments and other entities to achieve PrEP roll-out as detailed in the country specific action plans developed at our PrEParing Asia Consultation (see: <https://apcom.org/2015/07/08/preparing-asia-a-new-direction-for-hiv-prevention-among-gay-men-other-men-who-have-sex-with-men-in-asia/>)
- Action 1.3.2:** Work with communities, governments and other entities to establish PrEP usage baselines and report on the numbers using PrEP by 2020.
- Action 1.3.3:** Train community groups for gay men and other men who have sex with men in at least 10 countries in Asia and the Pacific on PrEP utilising *Changing Gears*.
- Action 1.3.4:** Convene a follow-up workshop to PrEParing Asia to review progress and accelerate roll-out of PrEP in the region.



1.4 Testing. Testing. Testing. APCOM will work to increase access to HIV testing for gay men and other men who have sex with men affected by HIV in Asia and the Pacific.

HIV prevalence among gay men and other men who have sex with men in some cities in Asia and the Pacific is over 20% and, in some situations, rising. This is not only unacceptable but also means that we will not end AIDS by 2030. The only way to address this issue is to get gay men and other men who have sex with men to know their HIV status through regular testing and encourage them to commence early treatment if they test positive.

APCOM advocates for different modalities and options for HIV counselling and testing, including self, mobile, community and rapid testing to 'one-stop' facilities that provide the full cascade of services related to the health of gay men and other men who have sex with men. HIV counselling and testing must be available beyond clinics and health facilities.

One effective option is to position testing for HIV and other sexually transmitted diseases as an important part of maintaining good health, and then create pathways for gay men and other men who have sex with men to access testing. This is the focus of APCOM's successful TestXXX initiative which we believe should be expanded to help make HIV testing accessible, acceptable and affordable throughout the region. APCOM also values the role of social media in providing information about HIV, and related testing, treatment, care and support services. APCOM will maintain and expand partnerships with social media that support HIV testing campaigns.

What APCOM and our Asia Pacific partners want to see delivered:

By 2020, 90% of key populations affected by HIV in Asia and the Pacific – including gay men and other men who have sex with men – will have had an HIV test and received their results at least once.

What APCOM will do:

- Action 1.4.1:** Undertake an evaluation of the TestXXX campaigns to add to our body of knowledge and to inform further scale-up and/or roll-out of TestXXX throughout the region.
- Action 1.4.2:** Work with individuals, affected communities, local governments and other entities to continue to expand the TestXXX campaign to priority cities in the region.
- Action 1.4.3:** Showcase the TestXXX campaign to gain wider commitment to HIV testing for gay men and other men who have sex with men.
- Action 1.4.4:** Convene a regional consultation on scaling up HIV counselling and testing across the region. This meeting will explore counselling and testing strategies from and beyond clinics and health facilities.



1.5 APCOM will conduct and support quantitative and qualitative research to inform our and your programmes and advocacy.

APCOM is a learning organisation that challenges conventions and takes risks. This requires us to have good quality and up to date epidemiological and behavioural data to inform our policy and programmatic decisions. We acknowledge efforts to date but believe that data needs to move beyond conventional data collection to reflect reality in our communities. We need to ensure that programming is science-based and traditional notions of why gay men and other men who have sex with men are vulnerable to HIV are challenged.

Our PULSE project is an excellent example of data collection that combines capacity development of affected communities to deliver informed advocacy (more information available at: <https://apcom.org/2017/03/17/apcom-pioneering-community-research-gain-much-needed-data-improve-access-young-gay-men-hiv-services/>).

APCOM believes that research is needed for young gay men and other men who have sex with men, and older members of our communities. Ethical research is needed in traditional medical research but APCOM calls for increased emphasis on research that addresses issues such as sexuality, culture and ethnicity within the context of HIV among gay men and other men who have sex with men.

What APCOM and our Asia Pacific partners want to see delivered:

By 2020, new and existing research architecture established or strengthened (including researchers and institutions) and producing much-needed research to inform programming and address social and cultural determinants relating to the health, rights and wellbeing of gay men and other men who have sex with men.

By 2020, these efforts will have ensured greater research capacity and expertise in the communities of gay men and other men who have sex with men

What APCOM will do:

- Action 1.5.1:** Work with academic institutions and researchers to undertake new research and build our collective knowledge.
- Action 1.5.2:** Work with governments individually and through intergovernmental fora, the Global Fund and other donors to bring research, experience, lessons learned and evidence to decision making and policy formulation.
- Action 1.5.3:** Create regional architecture where communities can provide feedback and contribute to the programming being designed for them.
- Action 1.5.4:** Explore, in collaboration with a research institution/partner, the factors that enhance and impede self-testing for HIV among gay men and other men who have sex with men.





2. OUR RIGHTS.

protecting gay men, other men who have sex with men and SOGIESC people

2.1 Bad laws cost lives. APCOM will work to decriminalise same sex relations.

There are countries across Asia and the Pacific that leverage their colonial histories or contemporary fundamentalism to deny gay men and other men who have sex with men and SOGIESC people our basic legal protections and fundamental human rights. There are legal statutes across the region that make same sex relations criminal acts and allow emergent religious-based intolerance to undermine societal harmony and, in some cases, urge violence against gay men and other men who have sex with men and SOGIESC people. In some countries, they sanction death for us. This is unacceptable.

These statutes impede efforts for gay men and other men who have sex with men and SOGIESC people to be at the centre of the response to HIV prevention and treatment. The repeal of these laws will allow us to live and love without fear, improving our access to HIV and other health services.

In some countries in the region, APCOM calls out the rise of fundamentalism or religious vitriol directed at gay men and other men who have sex with men and SOGIESC people. This is inconsistent with the commitment of countries to leaving no one behind in our collective efforts to deliver sustainable development by 2030.

What APCOM and our Asia Pacific partners want to see delivered:

By 2020, countries in Asia and the Pacific will have revised their penal codes to remove the criminalisation of same sex relations, and they will have commenced the process of implementing guidance on the changed laws.

What APCOM will do:

Action 2.1.1: Support communities in countries where local advocates are presenting relevant legal arguments at their Supreme/High Courts and mobilise technical support for legal teams in (at least) three countries.

Action 2.1.2: Work with the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM) and other intergovernmental mechanisms to advance legal reform in Asia and the Pacific.

2.2 Human rights are the rights of gay men and other men who have sex with men and SOGIESC people.

In relation to protecting gay men and other men who have sex with men and SOGIESC people, our advocacy agenda is and will continue to be rights-based. APCOM will tackle important issues relevant in the region including (but not confined to):

- Safety and inclusion of gay men and other men who have sex with men and SOGIESC people's concerns, needs and issues in humanitarian settings
- Marriage equality for all
- Sexual abuse and gender-based violence directed against gay men and other men who have sex with men and SOGIESC people

What APCOM and our Asia Pacific partners want to see delivered:

- By 2020, countries in Asia and the Pacific reporting on the UN Universal Periodic Review of Human Rights include how they have addressed stigma and discrimination against gay men and other men who have sex with men and SOGIESC people.
- By 2020, countries in Asia and the Pacific reporting on their response to the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda will include how they have not left gay men and other men who have sex with men and SOGIESC people behind.

What APCOM will do:

Action 2.2.1: In collaboration with other organisations, APCOM will support the development of UPR reports in 4 countries - Fiji (July 2019), Mongolia (Feb 2020), Nepal and Myanmar (July 2020)

Action 2.2.2: Work with governments and community-based organisations to deliver informed reports to sustainable development consultations held in the region and globally.

Action 2.2.3: Build partnerships with relevant gay men and other men who have sex with men and SOGIESC organisations, other non-traditional partners as well as international agencies to promote inclusion of gay men and other men who have sex with men and SOGIESC people and ensure the inclusion of HIV related issues in their advocacy agendas.

2.3 Enough is enough – no more HIV-related stigma and discrimination.

The global community has committed to zero HIV-related discrimination by 2020. While this is an admirable target, it is destined to fail in Asia and the Pacific unless significant resources are committed immediately to address HIV-related stigma in healthcare settings, the workplace, educational facilities and across borders.

APCOM will work to ensure that prevention and treatment programs for gay men and other men who have sex with men and SOGIESC people have effectively addressed stigma.

What APCOM and our Asia Pacific partners want to see delivered:

By 2020, HIV-related stigma and discrimination is eliminated in healthcare settings across Asia and the Pacific.

What APCOM will do:

Action 2.3.1: Work with partners on the development of a shadow report on HIV stigma in countries in Asia and the Pacific to be tabled at the Human Rights Council.

Action 2.3.2: Work with individuals, communities and partners to deliver a true report on progress in the Asia Pacific region on stigma and discrimination at the next UN High Level Meeting on AIDS.



3. OUR STRENGTH.

**stronger interlinked communities
and broader partner networks**



3.1 APCOM will support community partners to improve how they work and deliver.

Strong and resilient communities need to share information, strategies, stories and lessons learned to help address the challenges that we face as communities.

APCOM has been working with communities to strengthen their advocacy skills through actions such as the JumpStart project. To ensure that advocacy is built on evidence, APCOM has been working with a spectrum of actors to improve epidemiological and behavioural data. This data is needed to inform program development, project targeting and generating results that have impact.

What APCOM and our Asia Pacific partners want to see delivered:

By 2020, vibrant and re-energised community responses to all the challenges facing gay men, other men who have sex with men and SOGIESC persons in Asia and the Pacific

What APCOM will do:

- Action 3.1.1:** Deliver training and produce resources that inform gay men and other men who have sex with men and SOGIESC organisations about issues related to their professional practice and organisational development.
- Action 3.1.2:** Develop and implement a technical support plan for gay men and other men who have sex with men and SOGIESC people and their communities.
- Action 3.1.3:** Document and share good practice and lessons learned from communities on HIV prevention.
- Action 3.1.4:** Review new and existing data to inform advocacy for change.

3.2 APCOM will create new opportunities and partnerships that can support the work of APCOM and our community partners.

Funding for HIV and rights programmes targeting gay men and other men who have sex with men and SOGIESC people in Asia and the Pacific is not increasing. In many situations it is decreasing or ceasing altogether. This has produced an urgent need for alternative funding mechanisms to be established.

APCOM sees the opportunity for greater involvement with and by the private sector in the regional response to the needs of gay men and other men who have sex with men and SOGIESC people. These partnerships will be mutually beneficial and leverage expertise from both APCOM and the private sector. APCOM recognises the potential benefits and pitfalls of aligning with the private sector.

What APCOM and our Asia Pacific partners want to see delivered:

By 2020, increased resources available from the private sector for community lead action on HIV, rights and wellbeing for gay men and other men who have sex with men and SOGIESC people in Asia and the Pacific.

What APCOM will do:

- Action 3.2.1:** Convene meetings between the community and private sectors to develop new resource opportunities which leverage the capacities of the private sector.
- Action 3.2.2:** Convene regional meetings and trainings to forge new partnerships for sustainable funding.
- Action 3.2.3:** Develop a business case for an Asia Pacific HIV and Rights Fund that could be both an emergency response fund as well as a provider of seed funding for innovative projects.
- Action 3.2.4:** Operationalise the APCOM Resource Mobilisation Strategy.
- Action 3.2.5:** Organise an annual gala fundraising event that profiles and celebrates the work of HIV, gay men and other men who have sex with men and SOGIESC community advocates and activists.





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