



Joint Press Release
The Ministry of Health Kingdom of Cambodia,
World Health Organization (WHO) and the Joint United Nations Programme on
HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS)

24 February 2016

HIV cases in Sambuor Meas commune, Kandal Province

The Ministry of Health (MOH) of the Kingdom of Cambodia and partners reported 14 new detected HIV cases since January 2016 in Sambuor Meas commune, Kandal province. There were concerns among the community and from the national AIDS programme and on request of the concerned community of Sambuor Meas commune, the National Centre for HIV/AIDS, Dermatology and STD (NCHADS) in collaboration with local authorities and NGOs offered further voluntary HIV testing and counseling to investigate the situation.

Four out of 279 self-referred people from the community tested on 22 February 2016 had a positive test result. Among the 279 individuals tested were 112 children, none of them had a positive HIV test result.

The findings were reviewed jointly by NCHADS, World Health Organization (WHO), UNAIDS and US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (US CDC). The data are not indicative of an HIV outbreak. In a context of increased HIV awareness and promotion of HIV testing in this community, more people came forward for HIV testing which led to an increase of HIV case detection. This highlights the importance of increasing awareness for HIV testing in the community, as a critical way to increase numbers of people who know their HIV status. Indeed, a significant number of people living with HIV (PLHIV) remain unaware of their HIV status. Promotion and uptake of voluntary and confidential HIV testing services recognized by the Ministry of Health is an essential component of the national strategy. Early detection will enable people living with HIV to access HIV treatment and care in a timely manner increasing the effectiveness of treatment and preventing transmission of HIV to others. This strategy will improve the health and quality of life of people living with HIV and contribute to achieving the national objective of eliminating new HIV infections by 2025. The Ministry of Health confirms that free of charge voluntary, confidential and quality HIV testing, counseling and HIV treatment services are available at public health facilities.

The Minister of Health H.E. Dr. Mam Bunheng reiterated that 'the government commits to provide essential HIV prevention, treatment, care and support to all people in need in a stigma and discrimination free environment and would like to encourage anyone who wishes to know his/her HIV status or may have been exposed to HIV to undergo HIV testing and counseling and if necessary, access HIV treatment without delay.'

Further assessment and close monitoring of the situation by the national AIDS programme and partners will continue. The Ministry further asks that the public respect the rights of all people living with or affected by HIV and recognizes their right to confidentiality and a life of dignity free of stigma and discrimination.



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