

HIV Risk Behaviors among Japanese Men Who Have Sex with Female Sex Workers in Thailand, Cambodia and Myanmar

Project Staff: Tooru Nemoto (PI, UCSF), Masahiro Kihara (Kyoto University), Koji Sakakibara (UCSF), and Eiko Kobori (Kyoto University)

Project Description: This study, funded by the Japanese Foundation for AIDS Prevention, aims to better understand sexual risk behaviors of Japanese men who travel to or stay for business in Thailand, Cambodia and Myanmar and who engage in sex with female sex workers in these countries. Ethnographical mapping will be conducted to identify target areas where sexual entertainment businesses (e.g., karaoke bars, go-go bars, massage parlors) are concentrated in Bangkok and Chiang Mai, Thailand; Yangon, Myanmar; and Phnom Penh, Cambodia. A total of 200 participants will complete a self-administered questionnaire that asks about drug use behaviors and sexual behaviors with female sex workers and private partners in Japan as well as these three countries.

Significance: Many Japanese heterosexual men are infected with HIV-1 subtype E, which is common in Southeast Asian countries; however, there is no available data identifying the foreign countries where Japanese nationals may become infected with HIV. For this reason, we previously conducted a study that examined the HIV-related risk behaviors of male Japanese tourists in Bangkok, Thailand. The study findings showed that Japanese male tourists in Bangkok engaged in HIV risk behaviors with Thai female sex workers (e.g., inconsistent condom use, sexual practices under the influence of alcohol). In the current study, we will test the hypothesis that Japanese males who have sex with female sex workers in rural areas of Thailand, Cambodia, and Myanmar are more likely to engage in HIV risk behaviors than those men who have sex with female sex workers in the urban areas of these countries, such as Bangkok or Chiang Mai.

Project Recruitment Dates: May 2007 (tentative)

Project End Date: March 31, 2008