



Violence perpetration against female sex workers in Thailand: Contextual data for intervention development and trauma-informed delivery of health services

With support from the SVRI/World Bank Development Market-place: Innovations to Prevent Gender-Based Violence



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Background

- In Thailand and elsewhere, female sex worker (FSWs), suffer high rates of violence and coercive sex from clients, intimate partners, and police.
- It is imperative to understand the contexts in which violence occurs and respond with evidence-based violence prevention programs.
- To date, data are limited, and few violence prevention and response interventions for FSW have been empirically tested.
- Ongoing HIV outreach represents an untapped avenue for violence-related support and safety planning.

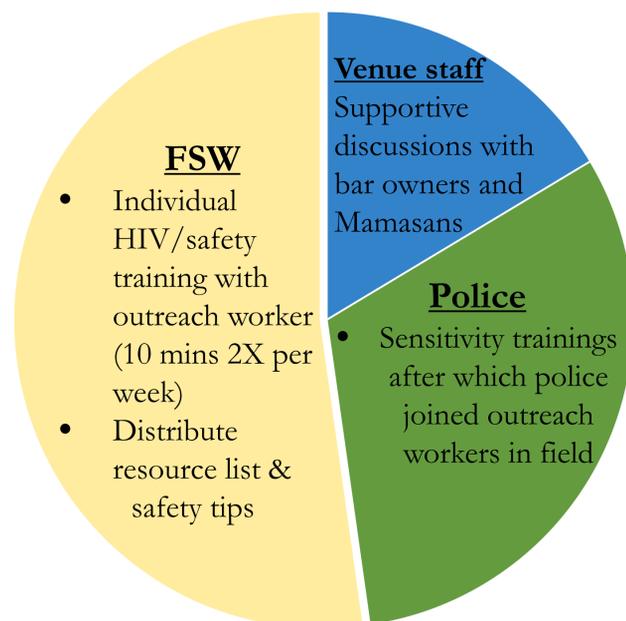


Objectives

- To implement and evaluate a community-designed safety promotion intervention among FSW as part of routine sexual health outreach activities in Pattaya, Thailand.
- To test the feasibility and acceptability of adding a violence component to existing outreach, and identify the potential challenges and refinements necessary for broader implementation.

Intervention Design

This intervention targets violence through an individual safety and empowerment intervention with FSW as well as addresses contexts of violence by reaching venue staff/ “Mamasans” (bar managers) and police with messages on human rights, safety promotion, the health impact of violence, and sexual health.



Methods: Pre-post survey design

Community partner SWING is a leading sexual health and rights organization providing services for FSW in Thailand

May 2017	Baseline survey in intervention region: n=200	Baseline survey in control region: n=200
June – August 2017	Intervention Implementation: Violence intervention + Standard SWING outreach	Control: Standard SWING sexual health outreach
September 2017	Follow-up survey in intervention region: n=200	Follow-up survey in control region: n=200

Study Innovations

- Participants were given a “reward card” at baseline, with a unique identifying code, and given stamps on the card for completing intervention sessions. Cards served the dual purpose of incentivizing completion of intervention and measuring intervention “dose” by participant.
- After multiple sensitization trainings, police volunteers accompanied SWING outreach workers into the field to foster police support and humanize FSW.



Results (baseline)

Safety behaviors used in past three months	Frequency (%)
Make an agreement about condom use before going out with the client	84
Moderate yourself to not drink too much	77
Avoid clients that are too drunk	57
Share the bad experiences you may have with friends or others at the bar to warn them	55
Make an agreement about type of sex before going out with client	53
Let someone at the bar know the place you are going with the client	47
Get more information about who the client is	45
Send message to someone to let them know that you are in an unsafe situation with a client	23

Key Findings/ Intervention Implications

Results at baseline	Implication
Perpetrators	
Clients are a common perpetrator:	Interventions should: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide safety strategies for client interactions and condom negotiation.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 24% experienced any type of client violence (past 3 months) 14% reporting a client has brought more people to have sex than was agreed upon (ever) 	
High condom coercion:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deliver messages around FSW’s right to safety and health to other groups with power: Mamasans, venue staff, and clients.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 23% reporting a client agreed to use a condom but then removed it later (ever) 	
Problems with clients paying:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 23% have had someone require sex for no-pay (ever) 	
Violence Response	
Low knowledge of services:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Opportunity to improve FSW’s knowledge and linkage to available violence services FSW report some trust in disclosing violence to police and Mamasans. These groups should be trained and included in the violence response.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 81% did not know of any organization that offers support for FSW who experience violence 	
Seeking help:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 66% agreed that if they experienced sexual violence they could seek help from the police 89% agreed that if they experienced violence they could seek help from their Mamasan 	
Alcohol	
High alcohol use at work:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Innovative ways to reduce alcohol intake, when desired, should be a part of bar-based interventions. This may include setting signals to bartenders to reduce alcohol content in drinks
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 59% of participants very often or always drink alcohol when working 	
Frequent sex post-alcohol:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 24% of participants very often or almost always have 3 or more drinks before having sex with clients 	