

Glocon

...the Global and Local Community Conversation

WEEK 4
Chiang Mai, Thailand,
February 20th –22nd 2012

Foreword: appreciating, encouraging, and sharing local community story

This is a synthesis from Chiang Mai, Thailand, the fourth location (after 10 local communities) of the Glocon 'story'. Each location will have its own synthesis so we can accumulate insight on local and global patterns of community response and transfer, and organisational adaptation. The 'themes and sub themes that matter to us' are the core of Glocon learning. Sincere thanks to local and country hosts, and to the local communities, for showing the future.

Background: Chiang Mai has been an inspiring example to many communities and organisations for a long time. People living with HIV have been active for both care and prevention, with their families and networks. SALT method has been used here since the mid 1990's within the districts, to help the organisations to keep learning from the communities. Affirm teams have visited over 10 years, to learn, facilitate and reflect on the combination of factors that enhance local and organisational response to HIV.

Interfaith collaboration for community action on HIV has been active since about 2004, and has evolved to include any community issues.

In week 4 the Glocon team visited part of the interfaith network, to appreciate their histories of HIV response and the interaction between families in their homes and changes in the neighbourhood.

Key Sections

- *Glocon visit team members*
- *Process*
- *Where are we now?*
- *Transfer*
- *Going deeper: themes and sub-themes that matter to us*

See www.affirmfacilitators.org; www.facebook.com/glocon.affirm;

See also the facebook group "Glocon participants". By end of February, the first update will be available through the www.affirmfacilitators.org website and the facebook page. The background to Glocon is described in the concept note, on the affirm website.

The Glocon visit team

- Alison Campbell
- Ian Campbell
- Rupal Shah - UK
- Sirinate Piyajitpirat -Thailand

Glossary

GP -Glocon Participants

SALT -Support and Learning Team

CHGN -Community Health Global Network

Process

Day 1 Monday February 20th: Wat Pa Pong

Glocon team met at the temple with monk PraPaNam, and two health volunteers, Sopa and Sangiam. We talked and remembered together about the long journey with HIV. What motivated us to be involved, and what has kept us going?



What have been ups and downs on the timeline?

The history began back in 1991, when some of the volunteers, including Sopa and Sangiam, visited people who were sick from HIV-related illness, though they were not trained about HIV.

Why did you visit people living with HIV when other volunteers would not? *We did this from our hearts.*



Sopa – As Buddhists we believe that when you do good to someone, good will come back to you.

I saw my parents always giving, so I am also giving. I see the benefit. My children are successful – educated and employed.



Sangiam- Love is not in order to gain something, but only because we want to do it.

Alison- It is a heart-to-heart connection. We have the scripture that says ‘where there is love, there is God, because God is love.’ This is something that benefits all of us. When we give, we also receive.

The Glocon team in action



We have to keep working for the young people, as well as caring for the sick. –Sangiam

We must have a special way of engaging young people. We need to listen to the youth, and their ideas about what to do – young people change, and their issues change – we have to follow those changes. – Sopa



The timeline shows many ups and downs over twenty+ years. The coming of treatment is both an up and down, because people feel better, but also are taking risks. So the local team is concerned to engage young people in the response for prevention as well as care.

Transfer between households, between friends, and between communities: There is a bubble across the top that shows a family experience of living with HIV and helping others. We visited this family and another family that was encouraged by their example and visits.

Rupal: *I decided to join one Glocon journey, so here I am in Thailand. This has something to do with my future. I see on this timeline that through hardship and struggle, with love everything is possible.*



What part does faith play, or do we rely mostly on religious structures?

The most important thing is person first. If you can work with someone of different faith, whether we call it love or mercy, it is because the person is first. Structure (of religion) is important, but secondary. –PraPaNom



Home visit to Dara, who has been living with HIV for 15 years, and her 16 year old daughter Suchada:



'I could not wait'

'I could not wait for others to come and do something for us. It was 16 years ago. I had my daughter in mind. I had to act myself. Disclosing helps me, and is also good for others. Hospital staff could not go to homes, so I went, encouraging people and explaining the benefit of disclosure. Then I began the support group.'

Sirinate -We can see from her story that it is no good telling others to do what we do not. We must lead by example.

Ian – This family has influenced many other people. The family living experience gives power to the movement in community.



Dara's daughter, Suchada, is a leader of the young people, who are discussing together and doing activities such as flower making – she showed us this example is from soybean curd paste.

Dara's daughter Suchada joined the visit to their neighbours Panlai and Saokeo, who were encouraged by Dara when they were first diagnosed.

What keeps you going?

Saokeo: *We have to continue fighting for our lives, continue to live for each other and support those who support us: children, grandchildren.*



Panlai: *Now we are just normal people who take ARV treatment. We have the income generating activity of woodworking, making decorative wood items.*



Ian: *We learn to live by listening to each other*

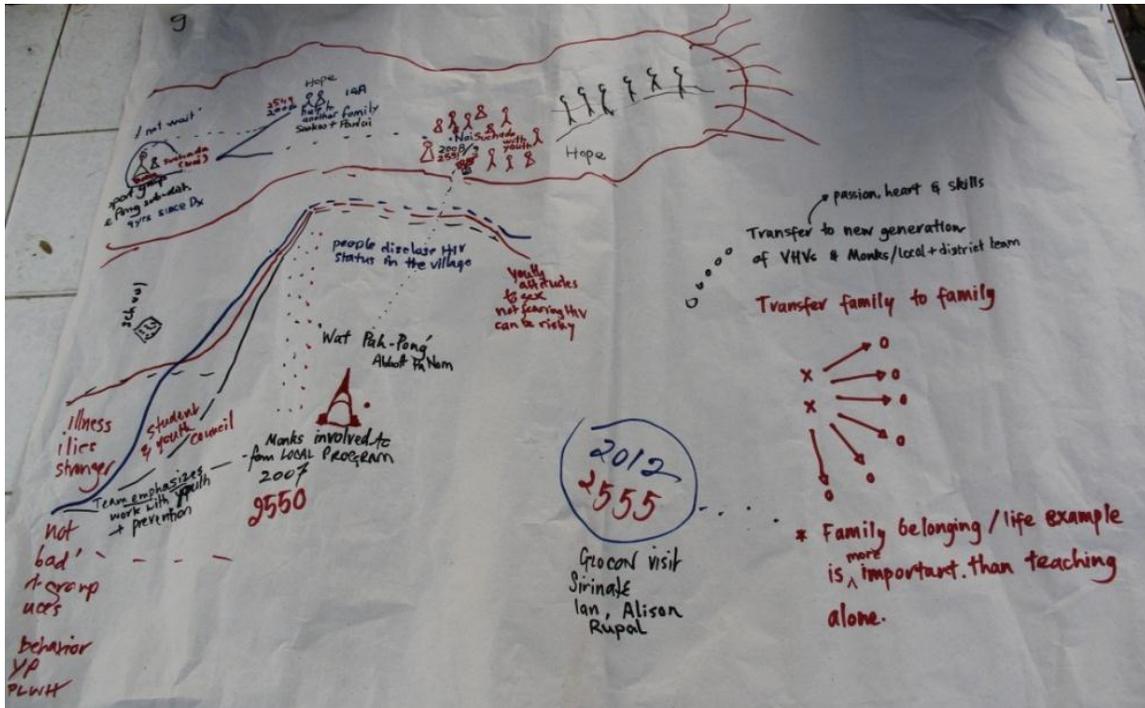


Reflections at end of day:

PraPaNom- *We came naturally and shared from our hearts together. It has been easy conversation, good opportunity to visit those families together, and also to learn to use the timeline.*

Sangiam- *I feel proud that our community is shared to other countries, and very happy for people to see the impact of our work in the community.*

Sopa- *We will keep going – there is still much to do.*



Rupal – *Today I have been seeing persons with the perseverance to live life and work regardless of their circumstances.*

lan – *this is a journey into hope. It takes a few people to take a step, to bring a change.*



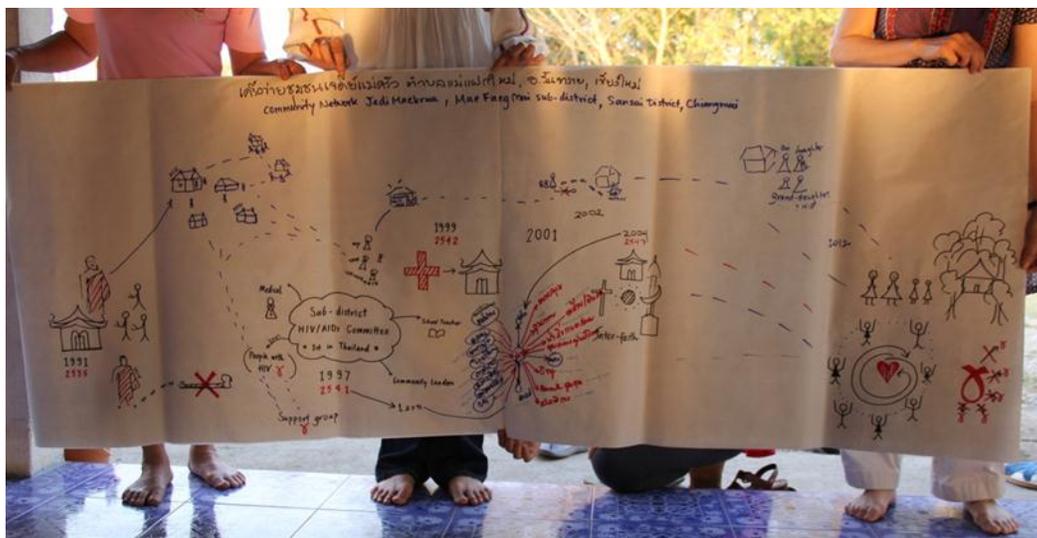
Day 2 Tuesday 21st February 2012 Jedi Maekuna (MaeFaegMai subdistrict of Sansai district)

On the second day, in another district, Glocon team met the local team at the temple compound and began a timeline before going out to home visits. Visits showed family as a source of strength and source of action in the community. Family challenges are intimate and private, and sometimes it is not easy to speak about them, but when challenges are resolved or reconciled, the family demonstrates a way for others to follow.

Story: You are still a Monk...

PraWichian(Abbott) told this story:

'A man was persuaded to try monkhood under my leadership. After a year as novice he wanted to continue, but he began to show symptoms of AIDS. The community insisted that he should be dis-robed. I felt it was unfair but I saw that he would have to leave the monastery. I gave him the orange robe to wear under his garments because in my eyes he was still a monk. He went to his father's house where he died about a year later. I was determined that community attitudes should change so I began to visit the affected families. That was 1991 and the beginning of our response to HIV. Now it is 2012 and HIV is more or less normalised in our community.'



PraWichian: *In this kind of community the family must be the centre of response. We cannot wait for the hospital or government to act when they have budget.*

PraW: *Families with HIV are seen to be a burden on the society but now PiOoi has taken the burden of others' onto herself although she is also affected.*

Ian: *This is significant and spiritual in its meaning. We are together in sharing burdens, together in love, together in God – we see and respect the experience.*

Home visit to PiOoi's home and farm:

'In 2002 my daughter came home with her two children to tell me that her husband had died from HIV. I really wondered why HIV had come into my family after all my hard work as a volunteer.

I decided to be open about the situation. I felt relief and I was better able to reach out to others. I am known as a sincere person so I had to be open about the HIV in my household.'



Ian: *You chose to live truthfully, and so you were reconciled.*



What is your advice to other parents?

PiOoi: *Parents can take care of their own children. I have demonstrated this in my own family. The family encourages the person with HIV to make healthy choices about diet and any other risks. It is better to emphasise the benefit for health rather than lecture about bad behaviour.*

How are the grandchildren, and how do they understand their situation?

PiOoi: *We will talk about it little by little and I will also have help from friends who are psychologists at the hospital. They have worked with many HIV positive children and know how to counsel very well.*

Alison: *Sometimes children already have an idea. We can trust them to show their understanding. I also have friends who are thinking about how to talk with their children.*

Reflections:

Ian: *When we work together as a team it is an experience where we become friends even in one day. That is my feeling about today.*

Alison: *Our hearts have been touched deeply by the home visits.*



Supin (Taw): *I am happy and I have felt very much at ease with the visitors. It's not usually like that with foreigners.*

PraWichian: *Normally visitors come for few hours but we have spent the whole day, talked in depth and learned a lot.*

PiOoi: *This is a very good way of sharing, where we learn together.*

Ian returns the timeline to the community



Rupal: *Ian and I have talked a lot about local neighbourhood response and today I begin to see it. You have been volunteers and also HIV has come into your respective households. When these things happen, it only means that we need to adapt with more love and all good things.*



Going deeper: themes and sub-themes that matter to us

Each visit will contribute to analysis of the themes. All the themes apply to all the visits yet one or more themes will be seen in each place. The experiences in specific communities will accumulate and will help develop the themes over the year.

Indicators of movement(s)

- Local community initiated action, self -assessment, and transfer
- Invitations back home
- Community to community transfer
- Adaptable organizational strategies
- Spiritual and faith motivated initiative

Care to change

- Ownership
- Home, suffering, hope, neighbourhood
- Caring presence which motivates expanding change

Chiang Mai, Thailand-Week 4:

*'Families can care for their own members – I have demonstrated this'
'I could not wait.... Began to visit people who were living with HIV
because the hospital could not do it'*

*'I was determined that community attitudes should change so I began to
visit the affected families. That was 1991 and the beginning of our
response to HIV. Now it is 2012 and HIV is more or less normalised in our
community.'*

Transfer

- Community to community
- Global SALT
- Leadership acknowledgment

Faith foundations

- Caring by being with
- God present in situation in grace

Facilitation team

- Organisation transitions
- Discovering shared concerns with partners (common ground)
- Community as lifestyle
- Mentoring by participating

Learning from local experience (SALT)

- Humility of disposition and character

- Connecting local community and organizations
- Facilitating movements
- Strengths based