

Các dịch vụ chăm sóc sức khỏe tâm thần	
3 courses Basic mindfulness-based in Hanoi with 55 participants, with an average of 8 - 10 sessions/course, each session lasting 120 minutes	48 sessions Sharing circle for clients in Hanoi, Hai Phong, and Ho Chi Minh City with 207 participants, each session lasting 90 minutes
6 sessions Intensive circle intervention with 30 participants, each session lasting 150 minutes	9 sessions Art-based and play-based therapy with 22 participants, each session lasting 90 minutes

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Mr. Nguyen Thanh Cuong, National Program Officer on HIV, Drugs and Prisons, UNODC Office in Vietnam

Vietnam is one of the world’s hot spots for drug use, especially synthetic drugs. There is no single intervention program that is effective for all youth who use substances. Therefore, we need to develop different intervention packages based on the specific needs of each individual and each problem they encounter.

“A model that I find to be quite comprehensive, relatively suitable for the Vietnamese context as well as consistent with the recommendations of the United Nations is Saving the Future – a project implemented by SCDI for young people who use drugs.”

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“My office has a scale. When the clients came back and gained 1-2 kilograms, we were very happy. Because they gain weight, it proves that our substance use harm reduction interventions are effective.”

(CBO team member in Ho Chi Minh City)

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“Before, my drug use frequency was 4-5 times/week. Since joining the project, I have reduced my frequency of drug use. I have also gained the weight back.” (N., 23 years old, Hanoi)

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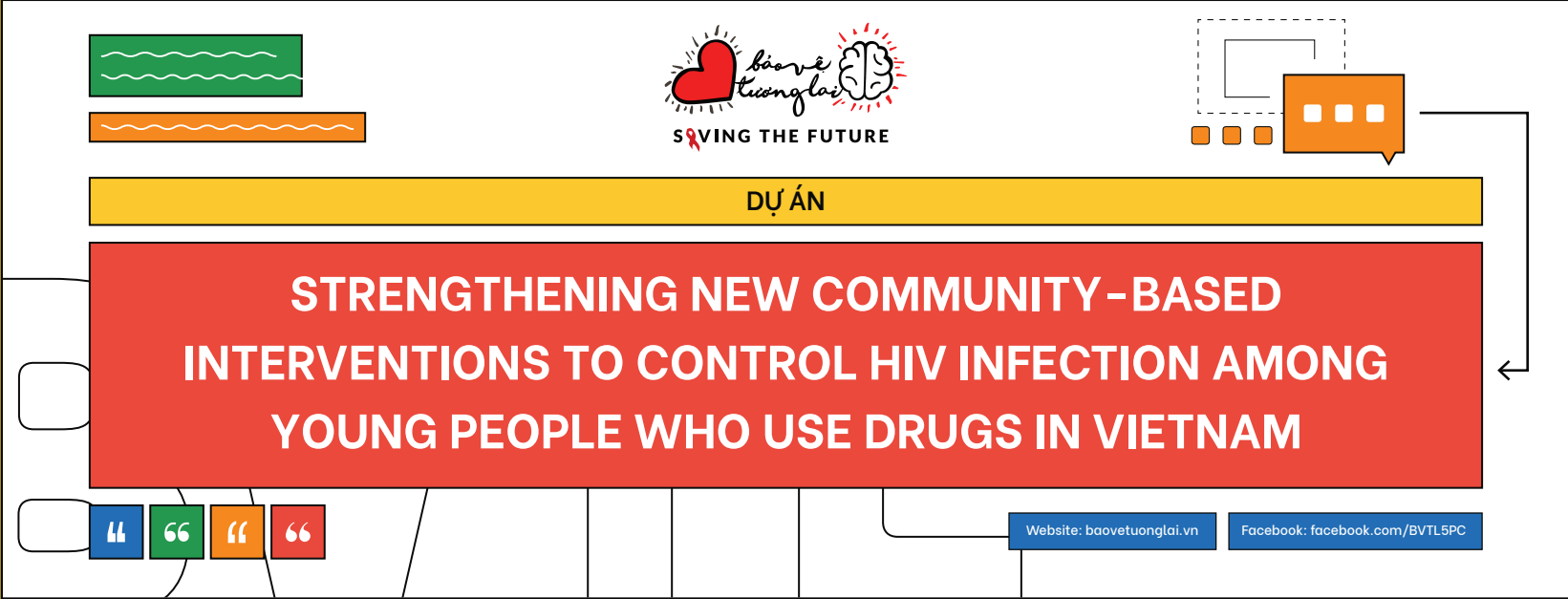
“I was tested for HIV, now I know how to protect myself by using condoms, something I have never done before” (H., 23 years old, Hanoi)

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“I want to change myself since participating in the project. I have become more willing to communicate with people; my health has been gradually improving, and I have become less worried and less overthinking... There are people who listen to me. That has made me feel like I’m not alone in this world” (T., 21 years old, Ho Chi Minh City)

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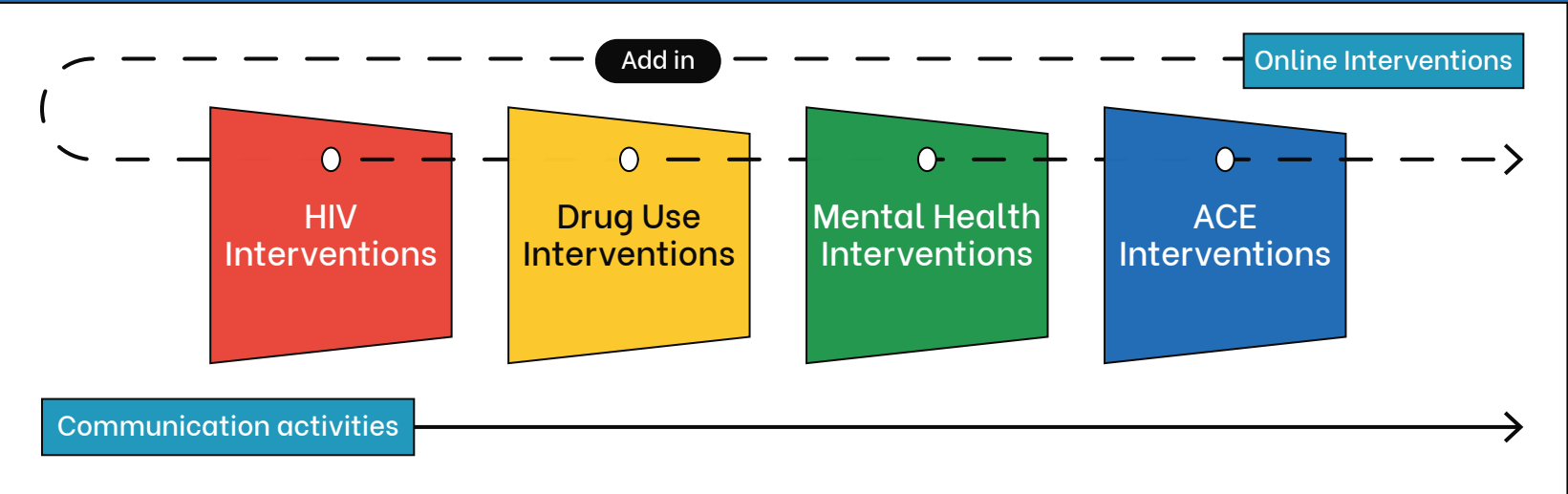
“The connection of community groups has created a closed circle between clients – CBOs – medical staff. The CBOs understand and refer clients based on individual needs, such as STIs, mental health, etc., to help make treatment more effective“ (Medical Officer, Ho Chi Minh City).



Saving the Future project includes 02 phases, and the focus of each phase			
Phase 1		Phase 2	
2016 - 2019: The project focuses on approaching and understanding the unique characteristics, problems, and needs of young people who use drugs.		2020 - 2023 (Saving the Future 2.0): Based on the results achieved in the first phase, the Saving the Future 2.0 project develops specific interventions and separates them into individualized intervention packages to address the problems/needs of groups of clients.	

About the Saving the Future 2.0 project	
Objective: Enhance the quality of HIV intervention for young people aged 16-24 who use drugs through multidimensional and creative interventions.	Target Beneficiaries: The Saving the Future 2.0 project reaches young people aged 16-24 who use synthetic drugs – a group at high risk of HIV infection and relatively difficult to reach, including specific communities such as young sex workers, men who have sex with men,...
Project area 7 provinces: Hanoi, Hai Phong, Quang Ninh, Thai Binh, Ninh Binh, Nghe An, Ho Chi Minh City	
Total number of project outreach workers: 113 people	

Why does the Saving the Future 2.0 project target young people who use drugs, mostly synthetic drugs like methamphetamine between the ages of 16-24?			
HIV ARV	16 24	The 16-24 age group is a special period when young people have many desires to try new activities. Therefore, the risk of using synthetic drugs in this age group is very high.	25 25 25
		Synthetic drug use affects the user’s behavior, leading to risky sexual behaviors and increasing the risk of HIV infection. At the same time, synthetic drug use affects adherence to HIV antiretroviral (ARV) treatment, causing loss of control of viral load below the undetectable threshold and increasing the risk of drug resistance.	
		The human brain often develops fully until the age of 25. Early drug use can cause irreversible damage, leading to problems such as reduced learning ability, cognitive decline, memory loss, etc.	
		Early intervention not only increases the effectiveness of drug use harm reduction, helps prevent the risk of drug addiction, but also contributes to HIV prevention and mitigates other long-term harmful effects on the health of young people.	



CORE INTERVENTIONS

2

Drug Use Interventions

Aiming at a harm reduction approach instead of cessation of use to ensure pragmatism and appropriateness, the project implements communication activities about the harms and safe practices - harm reduction of methamphetamine use. Through individual consultations, clients share problems encountered due to substance use and discuss with project outreach staff to come up with a personalized and feasible intervention plan for each situation.

The project implements referrals to methadone treatment for clients who use opioids.

4

Support interventions for clients with multiple adverse childhood experiences

The Saving the Future 2.0 project implements interventions to address the negative effects of adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) through art therapy and play therapy, mindfulness-based courses, and healing circle activities, to create a safe and friendly space for clients to share, communicate, and connect, thereby responding to more effective interventions on substance use and HIV infection prevention.

1

HIV prevention interventions

Clients are given a rapid HIV test during project screening. In case of being HIV positive, clients are referred for ARV treatment and have their viral load checked periodically.

The project implements consultation and referral to use PrEP (Pre-exposure prophylaxis for people with negative HIV status but with high-risk behaviors). Clients are provided with information and knowledge about HIV prevention and are distributed HIV prevention materials and items, such as condoms and lubricants, ...

3

Mental health interventions

The project implements mental health interventions at two levels

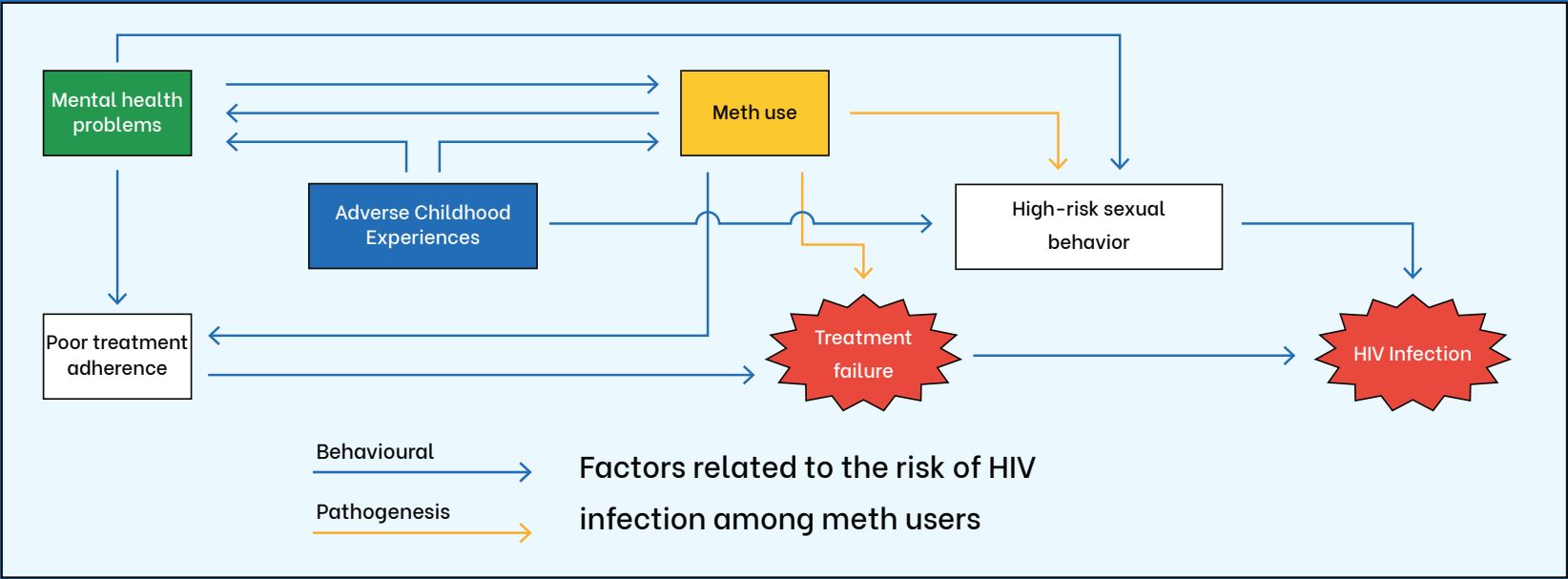
Intervention at the community level: Community outreach workers provide primary information and knowledge to clients to help reducing their stigma against mental health issues, identify the issues they are facing and raise their demand for mental health care.

Refer clients to medical facilities for examination/treatment with supervision and support from a psychiatrist.

5

Communication interventions

Communication activities through online channels and personal consultation sessions are carried out throughout. The project designs age-appropriate activities as well as develops communication materials/messages that are familiar and easy to apply, suitable to the interests and concerns of clients.



Play therapy and art therapy

Common psychological characteristics of young people who use drugs include many risky behaviors, suffering one or more psychological traumas, feelings of loneliness, isolation, and difficulty communicating with family and society.

The tendency to isolate themselves and limit contact with family and society among young people who use drugs is the result of one or more personal psychological traumas, combined with social prejudices and stereotypes.

Therapy activities help clients connect with their own deep traumas and express them through physical activity games, or art-based practices such as painting, clay modeling, etc. This is the touch point to understand each individual's problem and develop personalized interventions with realistic, achievable goals.

Mindfulness-based activities and healing circles

The activities are designed with four practical topics, including love, family communication, handling loneliness and strong emotions, and personal core values.

Mindfulness-based activities support clients to connect with the present in a safe space, guided by psychologists so that the clients become more aware of their emotions, thoughts and behaviors in interpersonal relationships.

In addition, healing circle is an group-based intervention to have a connecting space to share personal stories, to be listened to and express emotions, to understand other people's stories, and to share strategies to cope with negative experiences in life.

Young Leadership Development Program – Saving the Future project

Through training and capacity building, young leaders have opportunities to implement individual/group projects to raise community awareness about drug use, HIV, mental health, and ACEs with consultation and support from staff and experts of the Saving the Future 2.0 project. In addition, there is an opportunity to participate in consultation workshops with affected communities on HIV/AIDS prevention, which plays a fundamental role in developing creative interventions based on the needs of the community. Equipped with knowledge and skills, young leaders can continue to develop into community leaders, spread positive values, and contribute to the goal of HIV/AIDS prevention among young people, especially those who use drugs.