

Srikandi: A co-designed, participatory action research project for women born in Indonesia to encourage HIV testing

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Background:

People from culturally and linguistically diverse (CaLD) migrant backgrounds are a priority population in Australia's HIV response, with migrants overrepresented in national HIV notifications. In Western Australia (WA), HIV notifications are disproportionately high among people born in Indonesia, with women comprising half of these cases.

Methods:

Commencing in 2018, this participatory action research project was co-developed with six volunteer community researchers—Indonesian-born women—who played a central role in shaping the research design, data collection, and analysis. The project comprised two systematic reviews, a review of existing HIV resources, 10 interviews and 21 focus groups with Indonesian women, and three co-design workshops (n=21). A conceptual model for a community-led action group was developed through further co-design workshops (n=18), informed by community researcher insights and a targeted literature review. The model was refined and tested via a community workshop.

Results:

Over four years, more than 70 Indonesian women contributed approximately 591 hours of community input. This collaboration led to the creation of the *Srikandi Women's Action Network*, a community-led initiative designed to build knowledge, reduce stigma, and promote access to HIV-related services. Now housed at WAAC, the project supports quarterly social groups that provide culturally safe spaces for peer support and capacity building. Community-identified action areas have included a presentation on HIV to the Indonesian Consulate and the mapping of migrant- and sexual health-friendly services in WA.

Conclusion:

This project demonstrates the value of community ownership and participatory approaches in HIV prevention and support. By embedding health promotion within socio-ecological frameworks and fostering meaningful partnerships, this model offers a promising pathway for HIV interventions tailored to migrant women. The Srikandi initiative contributes to Australia's broader HIV response, aligning with core principles of equity, empowerment, and cultural safety.

Disclosure of Interest Statement:

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