

Populations at risk...

- ▶ Some groups of people are particularly vulnerable to HIV/AIDS in India. They include sex workers, intravenous drug users, men who have sex with men, street children, migrants, and transport workers.
- ▶ In Mumbai, it is estimated that over 60% of sex workers are HIV-positive.
- ▶ Nationwide, 15–35% of truck drivers are HIV-positive.
- ▶ There are increasing levels of HIV among migrants.

Make it happen...

Many of the groups at highest risk of HIV have limited access to relevant information and appropriate services. There is an urgent need to develop specific programmes with them in order to contain the spread of HIV. NACO is currently funding over 600 NGOs across the country to implement these targeted interventions.

Sex workers/injecting drug users (IDUs)

Several projects reach sex workers and injecting drug users throughout India. They are largely led by the sex worker/IDU communities themselves. They offer a complete range of services including peer education, STI treatment and health care, condoms, clean needles and social support.

The Durbar Mahila Samanwaya Committee (DMSC) programme with sex workers in Calcutta reaches over 5000 sex workers. It has increased condom usage from below 10% to over 92%, and HIV levels among sex workers remain below 10% in Calcutta, compared to over 60% in Mumbai. Sex workers themselves manage the services, buy goods, provide peer education and efficiently manage project funds. Given the spread of the epidemic, there is an urgent need to provide similar programmes for all vulnerable groups throughout India.

- ▶ US\$30 000 would enable 1000 sex workers to be reached with information, condoms, clean needles and sexual health services for one year.

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Men who have sex with men (MSM)

Men who have sex with men are still a hidden community in India. Successful programmes with the MSM community in India have been designed and implemented by the men themselves. They offer information, condoms, and MSM-friendly STI and health services. Sahodaran in Chennai runs a project with men having sex with men. It trains peer educators to reach out to men in cruising sites and provides information on HIV/AIDS and counselling. Condoms, STI services and relevant skills training are provided. The project also links up with other NGOs who work with women to address the needs of female partners of men who have sex with men.

- ▶ US\$30 000 would make it possible to reach 1000 MSM with information and services including STI treatment, counselling and condoms.

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Street children

Street children are particularly vulnerable to HIV infection, sexual exploitation and other forms of abuse because they usually lack any family support or community life. Programmes to reach this group need to be integrated with existing street children projects, which cover a broad range of services. Street children need life skills and access to health services in order to protect themselves against HIV. Prayas in New Delhi runs support programmes for street children, providing information on HIV/AIDS and access to health-care services.

- ▶ US\$15 000 would make it possible to reach 1000 street children with information and services. In-kind contributions could include food, clothes, meeting space and equipment for sports and entertainment.

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