Empowering Communities for Prevention of Drug Abuse and HIV in India

Project G86
Presentation for PAC 17 Oct 05
Northeast component
The project duration of G86 is 36 months, the main focus are the northeastern states and select high prevalence states in India.

The project will:
1. Help to develop a drug awareness programme for schools
2. Help to develop a national drug awareness programme
3. Establish SHGs for young women affected and afflicted by drug abuse and related HIV
4. Document good practices
Main Objective of G 86

- To strengthen the capacity of government and civil society organisations to prevent drug abuse and scale up interventions, which reduce the harmful consequences of drug use, especially HIV
Strategy

- Community mobilisation and social action approach to harness the positive energy and strengths of the vibrant community-based groups to spread awareness among young people.
- Develop information packages that are culture sensitive messages with which the young people can identify.
Output 3

- Establish 50 support groups (1 in each of the 50 MSJE-supported NGOs) in vulnerable states, for the women partners (or surviving spouses) of especially infected and affected partners of IDU and those who vulnerable to HIV/AIDS.
Activities

- 100 Peer educators placed. Each peer educator will initiate 5 Self Help Groups (SHG).
- Establish 50 Drop In Centres
- Support innovative interventions
- Train NGOs and CBOs in micro-credit, micro-finance and revolving fund management
- Support an e-network of peer educators
Activities initiated

- 78 peer educators are ready to be placed
- Proposals for 20 DICs requested
- One State Support person placed, proposals for 7 more requested
Northeast Component

1. To develop awareness campaigns especially among young people in the northeastern states in India for prevention of drug use and HIV.
   - The definition of youth varies from country to country, city to city, and maybe even from neighborhood to neighborhood. The United Nations (UN) defines youth as the group of 15-24 year olds.

1. Exclusive contribution by AUSAID for North East Component
   - Duration: 1 year
   - Fund: US$ 175,150
Youth population Northeast

- **Youth** constitute about 40 per cent of the total population of **India** (Min of Youth Affairs)
- Mizoram total population 8,91,058. Youth would approximately be 3,56,423.2
- Nagaland total population 1,988,636. Youth would be 7,95,454.4
- Manipur total population 23,88,634. Youth will be 9,55,453.6
- Meghalaya total population 23,06,069. Youth will be 9,22,427.6
Meghalaya:

- Drug abuse is on an all time high in the state.
- Teenagers have taken to experimenting with drugs and the age of first usage is dropping every month.
- The age of initiation was 18 years; this has fallen to 12 years in their latest findings 2003-2004.
- The estimated total number of drug users is anywhere between 20-25000. These are not official figures.
- The students are the most vulnerable group. Shillong is the educational hub for the northeast.
- National highway connecting Tripura, Mizoram, Assam, to other parts of the NE, passes through Meghalaya, Truckers and commercial sex workers and migrant labourers are some of the vulnerable groups along the highway.
Drug abuse has plateaued but not reduced.
Women are most vulnerable to contract HIV through their partners.
Drug abuse among women is common, though very few seek treatment, so there is no clear indication of the number of female drug users.
Total AIDS cases reported till September 2004 are 742.
The prevalence rate is 1.28% (NSACS)
During 2003 HIV transmission through the sexual route was 47% as compared to 41% through IDUs, in 2004 show that 73% of HIV infections are through the sexual route and 23% through IDUs. The HIV infection has spread beyond IDUs and commercial sex workers into the general population.
The estimated number of drug addicts in Imphal west is 12000 (RSA, Kripa Society). The estimated number of IDUs in Manipur is a little over 31000(AusAID)

Drug abuse in Manipur is rapidly spreading among the female population as reported by the NGOs.

In Manipur, till November 2004 there were 18,853 PLWA, 3298 AIDS cases as per the Manipur Network of Positive People (MNP+) report.

According to Manipur AIDS Control Society’s official data, in Ukhrul district, 43.26 percent were HIV positive. Other districts in Manipur with high HIV rates are Churachandpur with 32.88 percent, Chandel district 34.26 percent, both Imphal districts with 20.73 percent. Thoubal has 18.85 percent, Bishnupur 20.55 percent, Senapati 24 percent and Tamenlong district has 11.78 percent of HIV positive cases.
Mizoram

- The situation is alarming young boys and girls abuse synthetic drugs and psychotropic substances. The most frightening thing is that most drug addicts are little school children and college students.
- 90 percent deaths reported due to drug abuse were on spasmoproxivon related, which is smuggled into Mizoram from Silchar.
- Estimated number of drug users is between 20,000-23,000.
- There are 10,000-15,000 IDUs in the state as per a survey by the Mizoram State AIDS Control Society.
- There are also an equal number of oral users. According to the survey the age of the drug users is between 14-30 years. There are reports that 8-year-old children are using drugs.
- The latest figures released by Mizoram State AIDS Society in February 2005 state that there are more than 1000 HIV positive people in the state.
- Aizawl, the state capital has 800 PLWAS. 40 percent of those infected are women.
Areas of intervention and partnerships

- The project component is for high prevalence districts in the northeastern states for carrying forward the message on drugs and HIV prevention among their peers.

- Partnerships are fostered with NACO, MSJE, Dept of Youth Affairs and Sports and their state bodies, existing networks thru NSS, NYK, youth groups and NGO infrastructure
Main Output

- A drug abuse prevention awareness campaign for youth is piloted, tested and launched in the NE, as part of similar activity in the main body of the project.

- This will include:
  1. Community based drug/HIV awareness campaign
  2. Media mobilisation
  3. Information and education package for use by civil society, government and stakeholders disseminating in communities
  4. Methodology is evaluated for changed behaviour. Project achievements are documented and disseminated.
Immediate objective

- To strengthen the capacity of government and civil society organisations to prevent drug abuse and scale-up interventions, which reduce the harmful consequences of drug abuse
Drug abuse and HIV prevention campaign launched in the northeastern states of India.
Main Output

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- This will include:
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Activity 1

- Target Selection and material development: Following selection of target audience and a determination of the best method of reaching this target audience, design and produce an information package for use by large networks of youth groups, student groups, women’s groups (especially self help groups), NGOs and CBOs by using consistent messages for drug use and HIV prevention.
Desired outcome

- Awareness and understanding of adolescents on substance abuse and HIV
- Messages developed and tested
- Impact observed in terms of behaviour change (from unaware to aware)
Activity 2

- **Life skills for out-of-school:** Develop information packages for out-of-school children on life skills for prevention of HIV and drug use in regional languages. The reference material will be drawn from the life skills manuals developed by common UN system. These will be disseminated through the targeted interventions supported by State AIDS Control Societies and MSJE supported NGOs working with out of school children.
Activity 3

- Organize four trainings of trainers for coordinators of NYKs, NSS and youth groups from the Northeast in partnership with NGOs currently engaged in drug and HIV prevention work.

- 3. Using the material developed, train a cadre of 2,000 young volunteers on reducing drugs and HIV-related risk behaviours through state-level training programmes.
- Training material drafted and shared with partners implementing the programme
- Master trainers identified and participation ensured with the help of NSS, NYK and youth groups.
- Master trainers trained in participatory methodology and necessary skills. With the help of the master trainers 60 trainings are organised to train 2000 volunteers, identified by NSS, NYK and youth groups.
Activity 4

- Train a group of at least 50 NGOs from high prevalence districts on participatory planning and assessment techniques as well in developing community networks of services through greater engagement with infected and affected communities.
Activity 5

- Identify key influencers and opinion leaders to advocate and lead young people on making informed choices for reducing risk behaviors.
- Develop a common song sheet – or notes for spokespersons – with key messages and supporting evidence base.
Activity 6

- Organize a sensitisation programme for the key influencers and opinion leaders (using ‘song sheets’ described above).
- Organize public events in selected states using messages for healthy lifestyle through sports, music, visual and other performing arts.
Consultative meeting to roll out the Northeast component 2-4 Sept 05

- The NE component of G86 was initiated at a consultative meeting in the first week of Sept. 2005 at Shillong.
- This was the first interaction that the project and most of the NGOs had with NSS, NYK and YMA, and Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports.
- The roles of all the players were well defined so that there is clarity.
Workshop for Resource persons 28-30 Sept 05, Guwahati

- Workshop for identified resource persons from amongst NSS, NYK, Youth groups and NGOs, for uniformity in training master trainers thorough the training of trainers (TOT).
Outcome

- A consensus on the TOT manual and methodologies
- Standardisation of TOT
- Capacitating the known skills with new inputs
Expectations from this component

- Interventions will be part of overall strategy in mitigating impact of HIV/AIDS in the northeast
- Prevention efforts would be made in all states at all levels
- Ensure to reach out to vulnerable sections out of school children etc
- Innovative tools, IEC materials to be developed and promoted, keeping culture sensitivity in mind
- Harness the energies of the youth groups to build a continuum of care and referral.
- M&E component in place
Desired outcome from the NE component

- Awareness and understanding of adolescents on substance abuse and HIV
- Messages developed and tested
- Impact observed in terms of behaviour change (from unaware to aware)
- To develop a cadre of 8,00,000 youth volunteers well versed in prevention of drug abuse and HIV, across the 4 states.
- The volunteers carry information for dissemination among peer groups within their communities.
Additional value

- Inputs will enhance what is already provided by G86
- Will contribute to tools for intervention already supported by AusAID under H13 on prevention of HIV among IDUs in the SAARC countries
- The ground work from this component would be used to scale up the forthcoming Joint UN system projects in the NE on prevention of HIV