

## HIV/AIDS Targeted Interventions for Migrants: National AIDS Control Organisation (NACO)

Evidence gathered from assessment studies clearly indicate that migrants are among the high risk HIV/AIDS groups, inducing NACO to devise a dedicated document “Policy, Strategy and Operational Plan - HIV Intervention for Migrants”. As per the Targeted Interventions under National Aids Control Programme (NACP III) Operational Guidelines document, migrants and truckers are addressed as ‘bridge populations’, forming a link between core transmitter groups and the general population (NACO, 2007). NACP III in particular strategically focuses on short stay migrants who represent approximately 9 million (UNGASS, 2010). Data from the national HIV Sentinel Surveillance (HSS) in 2008-09 and the Behavioural Surveillance Survey (BSS) in 2009 indicates that single male migrants form a significant clientele of sex workers.

As a priority, NACO has scaled up migrant interventions, targeting migrants at destination as well as at origin and transit locations. These interventions provide information about risks, and counselling and treatment for sexually transmitted infections, including information on HIV testing and Antiretroviral treatment (ARV). The interventions at the origin target potential migrants, returnees and the spouses of migrants through services including communication campaigns and the provision of treatment for Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs) and linkage with Antiretroviral Therapy (ART). Transit interventions at important railway and bus stations focus on awareness generation activities for out-migrants.

Destination interventions include: outreach practices involving recruitment of peer leaders from source states; use of Information, Education and Communication material (IEC) in the local language of the migrants and creation of safe spaces (Drop In Centres) accessible to the community. Over time, on realizing that interventions reaching migrant populations at their place of origin and destination had low impact, the programme has shifted focus to behavioural change, communication and education in sex work hot spots, besides increasing supply of condoms in districts that have HIV prevalence. The coverage of migrants under NACP III however remains low at 34 per cent (UNGASS, 2010).

Besides targeted interventions led by NACO and State AIDS Control Societies (SACS), there exist other non-targeted migrant HIV programmes implemented by NGOs, such as: Avert Society in Maharashtra; REVAMP: Reducing Vulnerability of AIDS in Migrant Populations, a CARE India initiative, in Uttar Pradesh and Delhi; and HAMARA HIV/AIDS initiative in Rajasthan, Gujarat and Maharashtra.

Source: NACO (<http://www.naco.gov.in/NACO>); UNGASS (2010)  
Social Inclusion of Internal Migrants in India, UNESCO, 2013

