



PROJECT FACT SHEET

SUMMARY

EMPHASIS (Enhancing Mobile Populations' Access to HIV and AIDS Services, Information and Support) is a five year project funded by the Big Lottery Fund, UK. The project aims to reduce the vulnerability of migrants to HIV and AIDS along two high mobility migration routes between Bangladesh/India and Nepal/India: (i) from Jessore and Sathkira districts in Bangladesh to Kolkata and Mumbai in India; and (ii) from Accham and Kanchanpur in Nepal to Delhi/NCR and Mumbai in India, by delivering focused interventions at source, transit and destination points. The project also aims to influence national and regional policies relating to safe mobility through evidence generated regionally. With a budget of £4,999,969, the five-year programme will be implemented between 3 August 2009 and 2 August 2014. By the end of the grant, CARE intends to have an effective and integrated cross border model of HIV prevention, care, and treatment, which will be working with and impacting on at least 141,000 direct beneficiaries, with a particular focus on women.

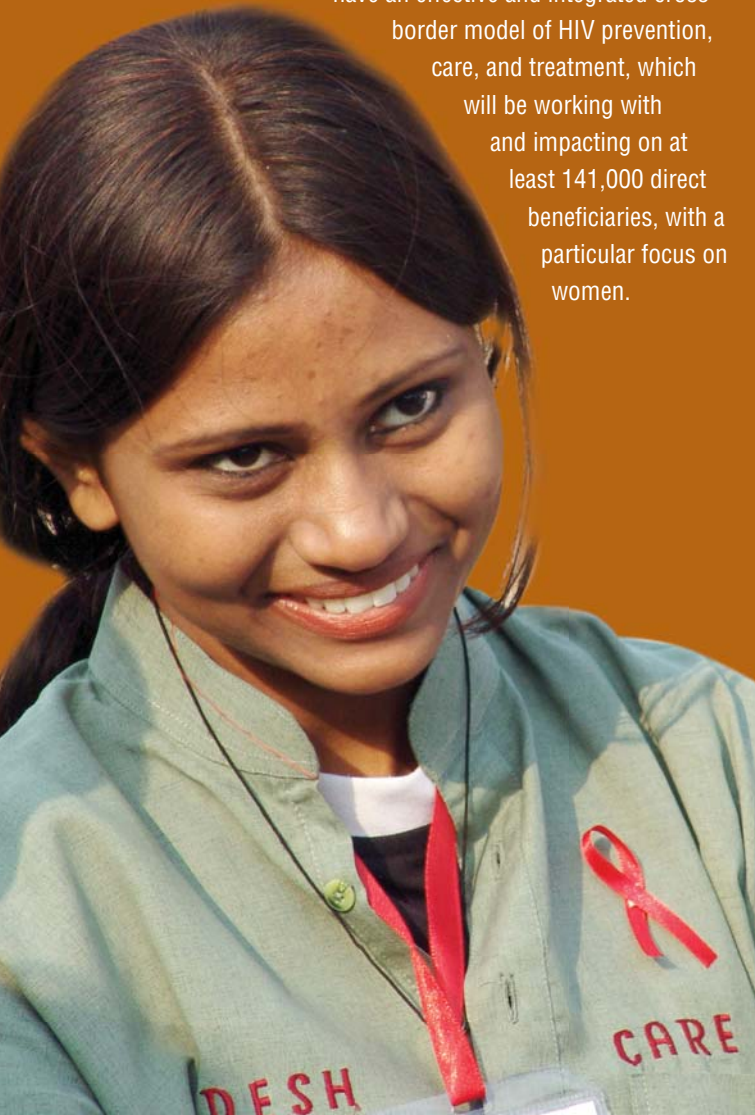


Enhancing Mobile Populations' Access to HIV and AIDS Services Information and Support (EMPHASIS)

Location: India, Nepal, and Bangladesh

AIMS

- To develop an effective and integrated cross border model of HIV prevention, care, treatment and support by working with beneficiaries (consisting of mobile populations and their families and other target groups at source, transit and destination locations) who are vulnerable to acquiring and spreading HIV and AIDS
- To enhance the capacity of at least 30 partner organisations (including regional authorities, government agencies, border police, customs officials, research institutions, NGOs, CBOs and key stakeholders) engaged in the project portfolio by 25-30 percent from the baseline data in order to deliver improved and integrated services to mobile populations vulnerable to HIV
- To clearly understand the vulnerabilities of mobile population and demonstrate ways to address them in source and destination communities so as to inform policies in the area. This will be done by raising awareness of the issue of HIV and AIDS and mobility within the regional policy environment by producing robust evidence based advocacy messages with which to lobby government stakeholders





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SPECIFICS

In the 2001 Census, about 5.1 million people were identified as migrants from across the international border. About 98 percent of them were from the eight neighbouring countries (with the majority from Bangladesh, Pakistan, and Nepal).

CARE addresses the transmitting of HIV and AIDS through the movements of migrants in India from the neighbouring regions of Bangladesh and Nepal. The high mobility across borders increases the vulnerability of mobile population to HIV and AIDS. The transmission of HIV and AIDS among these communities is fuelled by high levels of poverty, low levels of education, and unsafe sexual practices.

Social, economic, and political factors all influence the risk of HIV transmission. These include separation from spouses, families, and familiar surroundings, as well as language barriers, sub-standard living conditions, and exploitative working conditions.

Isolation and stress may lead migrant workers to engage in behaviours which increase the HIV risk, for example, unsafe, casual, or commercial sex. This risk is exacerbated by inadequate access to HIV services and also by fears of being stigmatised for seeking HIV-related information or support.

Women migrant workers are particularly vulnerable to HIV. Many are employed in unskilled jobs in the manufacturing, domestic service, or entertainment sectors, often without legal status or access to health services. They are often susceptible to exploitation and/or physical and sexual violence, in some cases by the employer, and have few alternative employment opportunities.



Women left behind by their spouse also face the same economic challenges, and additional hardships such as food insecurity, which ironically contributed to their husbands' migration. In such circumstances, they may be forced to exchange sex for food or money and are thus at risk of HIV. They may also be at risk if their husbands return having contracted HIV.

The EMPHASIS project works to connect these people to essential services, raise awareness, prevent the spread of HIV and AIDS, and support sufferers with treatment and care.

STATISTICS

People benefited from Drop-in Centres: 18,964

People reached through outreach activities: 160,121

People referred to services and support: 1,225

CASE STUDIES

Basanti (name changed), a determined and bright young woman, came to India a few years ago to build a new life for herself. Migrating from a small village in Nepal where she had been the victim of domestic violence, Basanti wanted to live a life free from fear and beatings. With her hardworking nature and positive attitude, she found a job in an export house. Working there she met and fell in love with her co-worker Suresh (name changed) and soon they had a baby together. Sadly, Suresh met with a fatal road accident. Following his death, the stigma of being an unwed mother in an unsympathetic society soon pushed Basanti out of her job and into sex work to provide for herself and her child.

It was at this difficult point in her life that CARE's EMPHASIS team reached her and helped her to understand how she could protect herself against HIV and AIDS. As a result, today she is a peer educator for the EMPHASIS project. She boldly advocates safe sex practices and strongly discourages other women who are considering sex work. Today, she is an empowered woman and a pillar of strength for many other migrant women, while also providing the best for her family.

Testimony of Neetu, Outreach Worker, EMPHASIS:

"Initially I was apprehensive of talking to the community members, but today, with the support of my EMPHASIS team, I am trained to freely discuss all kinds of important issues including sexual behaviours, HIV, and AIDS." She feels it has been a very enriching experience.



CARE India

E-46/12, Okhla Industrial Area - Phase II, New Delhi - 110020, India

Ph: +91-11-49101100/01 Fax: +91-11-26385291/92

www.careindia.org / Facebook: CAREinIndia / Twitter: CAREIndia