

EMPHASIS



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Enhancing Mobile Populations' Access to HIV and AIDS Services, Information and Support

EMPHASIS at a Glance

Enhancing Mobile Populations' Access to HIV and AIDS Services, Information and Support (EMPHASIS) is a 5-year regional project implemented by CARE in three countries Bangladesh, India and Nepal to reduce HIV and AIDS vulnerability among cross border migrants from Bangladesh to India and Nepal to India; and to influence national and regional policies relating to safe mobility through evidence generated regionally.

The project is supported by Big Lottery Fund, U.K. Essential preventive, referral and care services to cross-border migrant communities; capacity building of partners and stakeholders, and evidence-based advocacy are some of the core operating portfolios for EMPHASIS.

These portfolios significantly contribute to key strategic frameworks for EMPHASIS such as continuum of prevention, care and support, women's empowerment and ending violence and harassment at source, transit and destination.

Though the project was initially focused on HIV intervention, a comprehensive programmatic approach to migration has created space to touch upon wide ranging development issues such as access to education for migrants' children, initiatives towards safe remittances, addressing issues around domestic violence and harassment at work place and equal wages for labor migrants, rescue and repatriation etc.



Towards the unknown



Where we work:

Source Districts

- Accham and Kanchanpur in Nepal
- Jessore and Satkhira in Bangladesh

Transit Sites

- Gaddachouki, Kanchanpur in Nepal and Banbasa in India
- Bhansar, Dhangadi in Nepal and Gaurifanta in India

Destination Sites

- Delhi, National Capital Region
- Mumbai and adjoining areas
- Kolkata and adjoining areas

RESULTS

at a glance as of April, 2013



Interaction with spouse group by Outreach Workers at source in Nepal

- EMPHASIS designed and tested a service model for a comprehensive program on migration and HIV. Over 300,000 individuals have been reached at source, transit and destination. Of these people, 26% were female and 50% were reached at the destination. Outreach records indicate that Nepalese migrants who were reached at destination through EMPHASIS services were from almost 70 districts at source in Nepal which indicates the comparative advantage and strategic significance of having intervention at destination. EMPHASIS offers a learning opportunity for any HIV programming that works with mobile population.
- Over 13,500 individuals including Peer Educators and health-service providers trained in service provision on HIV/AIDS, life skills, technical skills, gender sensitization, health system strengthening and vulnerabilities of migrant population.
- 13 different MoUs signed with various stakeholders including hospitals and ART sites, transport workers unions and organizations working on migrants which has played a key role in facilitating migrants' access to services, information and support in the continuum of mobility.
- Over 20 migrants have been successfully connected through cross border ART linkages from source to destination countries which offers a practical and efficient model for scale-up.
- 17 Learning Sites have evolved out of EMPHASIS intervention in key thematic areas.
- As women empowerment is one of the key focuses of EMPHASIS, 44 women's group inclusive of migrant spouse, returnee migrant and women migrants are formed at source and destination. These initiatives are evolving as potential platform to enhance women's leadership towards safe mobility at various levels.
- EMPHASIS facilities are located in strategic sites throughout the continuum of mobility. One of the service sites at the transit in Kanchanpur, Gaddachauki, Nepal has reached almost 30,000 migrants during Aug, 2012 to Jan, 2013. Outreach records at transit in Nepal indicate that the migrants who crossed the border through this transit were from 47 districts in Nepal and moved to 27 destination cities including Mumbai and Delhi in India. This indicates the diversity of cross border movement from Nepal to India. This informs if the service site is located strategically, outreach activities could be more efficient.



Meeting with members of a domestic workers' association at destination in Delhi

LEARNING Sites

Learning site in EMPHASIS has been conceptualized as a space for managing, preserving and sharing the knowledge generated from the project. The prime objective of the learning site is to test models, document the on-going process, achievements and challenges.

Women's Empowerment at source and destination, community ownership, HIV outcome and regionality are some of the key thematic areas for each learning site.

EMPHASIS learning sites have led to various successful interventions in realizing the rights of migrant workers. For example, at destination 38 cases of harassment at work place; and 47 cases related to repatriation /rescue were addressed. Similarly learning sites are mobilizing communities on various issues related to domestic violence, linking migrants to employment opportunities, emergency crisis support etc.



Meeting for members of PWHIV networks in Delhi

INTERVENTIONS so far

Prevention and Referral Services:

A core portfolio of EMPHASIS includes effective functioning of 36 service centres that include *Drop-in Centres (DICs)* and *Community Resource Centres* that promote community participation and access to services in source, transit and destinations. A key innovation under EMPHASIS has been the launch of 'mobile DICs' to facilitate access to information, support and services in areas of safe mobility and HIV to Nepali Migrant Population (NMPs) and Bangla-Speaking Population (BSPs). Mobile DICs are especially useful in catering to scattered mobile communities who are unable to access static DICs due to work pressure.

Outreach activities to heighten awareness on HIV/AIDS and safe mobility are ongoing and facilitated through EMPHASIS' vast network of over 700 people in field locations.

Referrals services for HIV/AIDS and STI for migrants is also a critical aspect of EMPHASIS. A key intervention of EMPHASIS has been facilitating cross-border referral to access ART treatment for NMPs which has been acknowledged as pioneering effort in the South Asia region! Our engagement with the impact population indicates a need for the scale-up of cross-border referral mechanism.



Folk media event at Shalimar Garden, Delhi to raise awareness on HIV and AIDS



Women waiting to access HTC services



Training on Peer Education - Peer Educators are developing as community leaders at the local level

CAPACITY building

Capacity building of staffs, partners, and GO/NGO stakeholders remains one of the core intervention areas of EMPHASIS. EMPHASIS' capacity building efforts cover a wide thematic area from gender training to STI management; sensitization of stakeholders, health system strengthening, safe mobility, and HIV and AIDS. Our capacity development efforts are well linked with national guidelines and local contexts.

EVIDENCE based advocacy

EMPHASIS generates, manages and uses knowledge to support evidence-based advocacy. Some of the key achievements have been establishing EMPHASIS as a credible and trusted partner among the development stakeholders including Governments, I/NGOs, civil society, UN agencies, on migration and HIV issues in the region. Our advocacy efforts are inbuilt within our program, research and knowledge management efforts.

HIGHLIGHTS



DIC workers raising awareness among rickshaw pullers

EMPHASIS has supported Government of Bangladesh to set up two VCT Centres in Government health settings. The purpose of this initiative is to support government towards health system strengthening as well as generate evidence for larger policy influence. Altogether 671 people (April 2012-March 2013) were tested at these VCT centres out of which 17 people, with migration history, were found to be HIV positive. EMPHASIS is closely working with government and other agencies to analyze these findings which could possibly impact HIV prevention policies.. Similarly, EMPHASIS is closely working with stakeholders especially the ART sites such as Seti Zonal Hospital and Bayalpata Hospital in Nepal. EMPHASIS partners and cultural groups are linked and coordinating with Gender Resource center and ART sites in India.

- In India, planning and implementation of interventions at Banbasa (Indo-Nepal border) with effective program on the ground as well as advocacy at local levels, is evolving as a potential model to scale up for transit based interventions in the overall framework of cross border migration and HIV risk reduction.
- In Nepal, engaging with private sectors such as hoteliers and transport unions, spouse groups (whose husbands are working in India), Advocacy Task Force inclusive of various stakeholders including District AIDS Coordination Committee, Formation of district level Migrant Network is evolving as an effective approach towards having comprehensive response to HIV and AIDS and cross border migration at source. District Development Committee has allocated resource on HIV and AIDS which was one of the constant advocacy agendas for District Advocacy Task force in Achham.
- EMPHASIS has helped facilitate cross-border referral to access ART treatment in the context of Nepal and India. This offers a new learning for the region and an evidence to scale up referral services.
- After a constant advocacy and engagement with various stakeholders, almost 200 migrant children at destination have been able to access formal education.
- Safer remittance has always been a challenge. With a constant sensitization, advocacy and consultation with various stakeholders almost 160 Nepali migrant families have been able to use safe remittances facilities. These efforts have expanded the scope to scale up these initiatives.

Key advocacy issues for EMPHASIS:

- Ensuring safety and dignity of migrants at source, transit and destination
- Wider recognition of HIV vulnerability of migrants
- Stopping violence and harassment of migrants during travel, at the work place, health centres and in public spaces
- Ensuring access to ART for all migrants in the continuum of mobility
- Ensuring migrant friendly money transfer and banking mechanisms at source and destination
- Recognizing sailors as migrants and their related vulnerabilities
- Wider recognition of the existence of cross border mobility
- Ensuring social security of migrant families at source
- Prioritizing migration as a development issue and ensuring comprehensive program and funding priorities

Creating a knowledge network:

Research generated by EMPHASIS has contributed to the knowledge on migration and HIV in the South Asia region

- Baseline study to understand vulnerabilities of migrant populations and facilitate assessment of gaps in existing policies and service provisions
- Anthropological study to understand the socio-economic and political dynamics of undocumented Bangladeshi population in India
- Study among short-term Bangladeshi sailors who travel to ports in West Bengal, India
- PLHIV study to assess barrier to access services for cross border mobile PLHIV at source and destination
- School Children Study was conducted at source in Nepal to understand the mobility and vulnerability to HIV and AIDS.

EMPHASIS media coverage in Nepal, India and Bangladesh



Upcoming

- Comparative Study on people who have been reached at source and destination and who have not been reached in both places to assess the effectiveness of program.
- Brokers' study: To explore the dynamics of brokers' involvement in cross-border mobility and to understand their role, if any, in exploitation and harassment of migrants.

Nepali PLHIV accessing ART in India:

A Nepali PLHIV migrant who was taking ART from Bayalpata in Achham lost his ART card when he was traveling from Nepal to Mumbai. After reaching Mumbai he came to know about EMPHASIS through his friends and approached EMPHASIS Outreach Worker (ORW). Due to lack of ART transfer certificate, he could not start ART in Mumbai. EMPHASIS partner organization (ARC) in Mumbai contacted EMPHASIS partner organization in Nepal (Achham) and managed to get a copy of ART book from the ART centre in Achham. Currently he is successfully receiving ART drugs from Mumbai. This became possible because of the joint effort of EMPHASIS collaborative linkage with an active chain of partners in Achham (source site) and Mumbai (destination site). EMPHASIS team is providing such support to other PLHIVs as well who are in need of such support.



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