

**EC Partner**

Oxfam

**Facts and Figures**

- EC Contribution: **€3 million** (90% of total) granted **2003-2006**

Between 2004-2005:

- **1685** villages covered
- **24,760** youths treated for STIs
- **1275** health care providers sensitised
- **71** youth centres opened

**Did you know?**

People under 30 accounted for 37% of AIDS cases in India in 2005\*



**EUROPEAN COMMISSION**

# Fight against HIV/AIDS

## Helping rural and tribal youth in India

HIV prevention and care

*"I am able to show the right path to many of my younger friends, those who were unaware like me, before I joined the peer network. I am proud that I am consulted as a credible source of information."*

17 year old female peer educator from Rajasthan, India.



**Context: Reaching out to vulnerable youths**

India's public health system has difficulties addressing the needs of adolescents, particularly those living in rural areas or tribal Indians who do not attend school. The problems that these groups face are further compounded by social factors such as early marriage, repeated pregnancies, poverty, poor health status and violence within and outside of the household. Vulnerability to HIV and other sexually transmitted infections (STIs) in such an environment runs high, while stigma and discrimination is commonplace.

With financial support from the European Commission, Oxfam GB is implementing an HIV/AIDS youth programme in the two Indian states of Orissa and Rajasthan in partnership with 13 local NGOs.

**Objective: A supportive environment for youths**

- To increase access to information and services on HIV and reproductive health for young people (especially girls)
- To promote a supportive environment in which to meet the reproductive, sexual and HIV related health-needs of rural and tribal youths

**Impact: What has been achieved?**

- People living with HIV/AIDS have been empowered through community sensitisation on issues of stigma and discrimination
- Reliable information on sex, gender and HIV/AIDS provided through a network of over 7,000 trained peer educators
- 400 young women/men's support groups formed, including a support group for young sexual minorities such as men who have sex with men and transgender groups
- Capacity building efforts have led to over 132,700 youths being referred to health services for STI testing and treatment since 2003

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#### Rehna's Story

Rehna Begum, a 23-year-old Muslim woman from Rajasthan, knew she had to do something when she discovered that her husband, Rizwan frequently visited sex workers. She decided to become a peer educator after realising how destructive her husband's actions could be for both her and for him. She persuaded Rizwan to stop visiting sex workers and motivated him to join the peer network. He is now an active member of the network and teaches other youths about the risks of unsafe sexual practices.



*A woman receives treatment at a medical camp organised by local NGOs*

#### Kamla's Story



*15 year old Kamla, Rajasthan*

15-year-old Kamla is from a tribal village in the middle of the forest in Chittorgarh district, Rajasthan. Her village does not have road connectivity and the nearest health centre is almost 110 km away. Lack of awareness, limited access to health services, and poor sanitary conditions are some of the reasons why people in her community, especially women, suffer from bad health.

Local NGOs regularly hold medical camps. These camps are organised in collaboration with the Government Health Department.

Treatment is provided for various health problems, such as ante-natal checkups, reproductive tract infections and sexually transmitted infections. Treatment support is also provided to out-of-school youth who cannot afford or access health services for diseases such as tuberculosis and malaria.