



LINKAGES INDIA

QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER: APRIL-JUNE 2018



VISITORS

Ms. MaryKay Loss Carlson,
Deputy Chief of Mission

visited LINKAGES site in
Mumbai on June 7, 2018.

During her visit she said "I
am impressed with the hard
work and commitment of
everyone present here. The
personal stories have
touched our hearts and
given us a lot to think
about". She was joined by

Dr. Shobhini Rajan
(Additional Director General,
National AIDS Control
Organization), Ms. Henita
Kuntawala (PEPFAR
Coordinator India), Mr.
Xerses Sidhwa (Director of
Health Office, USAID) and
Mr. Edgard Kagan (Consul
General, US Consulate).

UNIQUE SOLUTIONS TO ADDRESS HIV

RETHINK HIV Grand Challenge was launched in April 2018 to identify compelling and unique solutions from agencies with technical solutions in the virtual space to reach high-risk populations with HIV services. LINKAGES India finalized three innovators providing solutions to reach hidden high-risk populations in the virtual space with information and to generate demand for HIV related services through: chatbots using artificial intelligence, a healthcare communication platform, and games on dating applications. Read more at: [HTTPS://WWW.RETHINKHIV.IN/](https://www.rethinkhiv.in/)

INDIA GOES ONLINE

LINKAGES India launched YES4ME, an online platform to reach and test key populations (KP) and priority populations in May. Clients can go through a short risk assessment and book an HIV test appointment through a listing of private laboratories in Mumbai and Thane. 1,682 individuals completed risk assessments, 146 booked appointments, 62 completed HIV testing and 3 tested positive from April-June 2018.

[HTTPS://YES4ME.NET/](https://yes4me.net/)

THE NATIONAL COMMUNICATION STRATEGY

Communication needs assessment (CNA) field work was completed across 10 states covering 1033 respondents from key population service providers and stakeholders. The CNA findings will help develop the national communication strategy on HIV in India for KPs and bridge populations.



LINKAGES Pride Walk on Section 377

TRAININGS

STIGMA AND DISCRIMINATION

LINKAGES, in collaboration with India HIV/AIDS Alliance, conducted a health care providers' sensitization workshop in the districts of Krishna, Guntur, East Godavari, Mumbai and Thane in which more than 500 healthcare providers were oriented. The participants were from ART Centers, Integrated Counseling and Testing Centers, Prevention of Parent to Child Transmission program, District STI/RTI Centres and the Revised National Tuberculosis Control Program. They were oriented on key issues related to stigma and discrimination faced by KP at HIV health facilities.

VIRAL LOAD TRAINING

LINKAGES India is undertaking community mobilization activities and trainings for increasing access to viral load testing for KPLHIV on treatment. Data across Targeted Intervention (TI) and ART centers was validated and microplanning was conducted to link KPLHIV to ART centers. Peer navigators are providing enhanced adherence counseling to key populations living with HIV (KPLHIV).

VISITORS

Dr. Meena Shrivastava from USAID Washington D.C., along with USAID India mission team (Ms. Saathi Devanand, Ms. Neeta Rao and Mr. Subrato Mondal), visited Andhra Pradesh on May 21-22 to discuss Orphans and Vulnerable Children (OVC) activities and observe LINKAGES activities such as Index Testing, Enhanced Peer Outreach Approach (EPOA), and Peer Navigation.



Stigma & Discrimination Training

LINKAGES

MUTLIMEDIA:

Informational video on LINKAGES India project activities across the cascade:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jyVAPN9Yesg>

COMMUNITY LED APPROACHES

COMMUNITY BASED TESTING

LINKAGES is supporting the national program in Targeted Testing through TIs to enable TIs to screen KP at the community level for HIV. LINKAGES also initiated community-based testing in non-TI settings to implement the test and treat approach in areas where KP were scattered and TI services are not available. The approach aimed at identifying, testing and linking positive KPs to care and treatment services through volunteers. The approach was implemented across 13 sites in three districts of Maharashtra.



Rural outreach: One to one session in Maharashtra

COMMUNITY EVENTS

LINKAGES organized 16 community events where KP were provided with HIV testing and counseling in coordination with staff from Integrated Counseling and Testing Centers. From April through June 2018, 329 KP were provided with HIV testing and counseling services and 10 tested positive through these events.



LINKAGES Community Advocacy Event in Maharashtra

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

LINKAGES is implementing a community-led engagement approach with India HIV Alliance to reach and test KPs in partnership with Humsafar Trust, Aastha Parivaar and four other KP-led community based organizations.



LINKAGES Test and Treat Workshop

WORKSHOPS

TREAT AND TEST: BANGKOK, THAILAND

LINKAGES India was represented by four senior management staff at the Treat and Test workshop on network testing for accelerated epidemic control. The workshop was organized by LINKAGES headquarters with an aim to analyze the history, evolution and evidence of index testing. The LINKAGES India team members presented on their experiences and achievements with virtual engagement, referral strategies and the combination of EPOA and Index Testing.

ABOUT US:

LINKAGES India, funded by USAID, partners with KP, civil society, and government stakeholders to improve the impact, quality, and efficiency of HIV services being delivered under the National AIDS Control Program IV. LINKAGES aims to strengthen India's TI efforts while engaging new and non-venue-based KP individuals facing the greatest HIV infection risks.

LINKAGES India: H-5 Garud Marg Road, Green Park Extension, New Delhi, India 110016

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President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR). The contents are the responsibility of LINKAGES do not necessarily reflect the views of USAID, PEPFAR, or the United States Government. LINKAGES, a five-year cooperative agreement (AID-OAA-A-14-00045), is the largest global project dedicated to key populations. LINKAGES is led by FHI 360 in partnership with IntraHealth International, Pact, and the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.



2018 INTERNATIONAL SBCC SUMMIT: NUSA DUA, INDONESIA

LINKAGES India was represented at the Social and Behavioral Change Communication (SBCC) summit, which aimed to improve international development efforts by better understanding shifts in social norms through the use of social behavior change communication tactics and technologies.



2018 International SBCC Summit

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