

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

This Memorandum of Understanding (MoU)

Signed on

6th Day of August, 2013

Between

Department of Higher Education,
Ministry of Human Resource Development
Government of India

&

Department of AIDS Control
Ministry of Health & Family Welfare
Government of India

INTRODUCTION

India has one of the largest numbers of population living with HIV/AIDS in the world. Given the prevalence rate of 0.27 percent, 21 lakh people are estimated to be living with HIV/AIDS in the country¹. HIV is driven by a number of socio-economic factors; therefore, health interventions alone are not sufficient to address causes and consequences of the epidemic. It requires a multi-faceted and multi-sectoral response. Mainstreaming approaches to HIV have increasingly gained ground with the realization that the non-health sector can play an important and meaningful role in reducing vulnerability to HIV and mitigating its impact on those infected and affected.

Department of AIDS Control (DAC), Ministry of Health and Family Welfare and Department of Higher Education, Ministry of Human Resource Development are hereinafter referred to together as "the parties"

Article 1

1. DEPARTMENT OF AIDS CONTROL

- 1.1 Department of AIDS Control is nodal agency for coordinating response with respect to Human Immune Deficiency Virus (HIV) and Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS) in India. Department of AIDS Control has initiated several measures towards mainstreaming and partnership with various Ministries.
- 1.2 The National AIDS Control Programme is implemented through 38 State AIDS Control Societies (SACS)/Municipal AIDS Control Societies. NACP places importance for mainstreaming HIV/AIDS by a) enhancing coverage and reach by information on STI/HIV prevention and services b) Integration of STI/HIV related services through existing health infrastructure available in Ministries/Departments and PSUs c) Facilitating schemes for Social protection of people infected and affected with HIV/AIDS.

Article 2

2. DEPARTMENT OF HIGHER EDUCATION

- 2.1 Department of Higher Education is responsible for creating a robust and vast system of higher and technical education in the country. This responsibility includes university education, technical education, distance education, language education and copyright issues.
- 2.2 The Department of Higher Education is responsible for the overall development of the basic infrastructure of Higher Education sector. Under a planned development process the Department looks after expansion of access to higher education and qualitative improvement in higher education through world class universities, colleges and other institutions.
- 2.3 Higher Education sector has witnessed a tremendous increase in its institutional capacity since independence. The Sector consists of 44 central universities, 286 state universities, 111 State Private Universities, 129 Deemed universities, 33 Institutions of National Importance (established under acts of Parliament) and 4 Institutions (established under state legislation).

¹ HSS NACO, 2011

The numbers of colleges have also registered manifolds with 578 in 1950 to more than 35,000 in 2011.

Article 3

3 RATIONALE FOR MAINSTREAMING HIV

- 3.1 The total number of people living with HIV/AIDS (PLHA) in India is estimated at 21 lakh in 2011. Despite the reduction in the overall prevalence, there are emerging vulnerabilities which need to be addressed. The epidemic in the country is changing according to emerging vulnerability factors related to poverty, migration, marginalization and gender. As per HSS 2011 report, 86% of those infected are in the age group of 15 to 49 years, which is one of the most productive segment of the society irrespective of the sectors, in which, they have engaged. The halt & reverse of the epidemic, which is goal of National AIDS Control Programme, is only possible with active and meaningful involvement of all stakeholders.
- 3.2 Vulnerability of HIV cannot be completely ignored among young people. In the absence of right guidance and information at the young age, they are more likely to have exposure to sexual experiments which may lead to high risk behaviors. The prevalent social stigma and discrimination is another challenge. Though National AIDS Control Programme Phase III has an excellent example of developing appropriate strategies in reaching out high risk, vulnerable groups and youths to reduce the HIV, the further focus on national programme is to strengthen response to HIV with no incidence of any sort of social stigma and discrimination to people infected and affected with HIV.
- 3.3 Department of Higher Education can play a crucial role in awareness generation among students and therefore the youth. It will also support to reduce any incidence of stigma & discrimination against People Living with HIV primarily in higher education settings. Formation of Red Ribbon Club in colleges and universities initiated by Department of AIDS Control in partnership with Ministry of HRD can address the vulnerability of youth towards HIV/AIDS. Red Ribbon Club can play a crucial role in creating awareness on blood donations, drug abuse etc. Red Ribbon Club program is being implemented across the country through SACS.

Article 4

4 SCOPE OF MAINSTREAMING HIV

Department of Higher Education can support the objectives of Department of AIDS Control by a) enhancing coverage and reach of HIV prevention messages amongst the students in higher and technical education sector, b) enhancing coverage and reach of HIV prevention messages amongst its employees, c) Reducing social stigma and discrimination against people living with HIV in education settings, d) and increasing awareness amongst the students and the employees on voluntary blood donation.

Now, therefore, in consideration of the foregoing rationale and scope, the parties i.e. Department of Higher Education, Ministry of Human Resource Development and Department of AIDS Control, Ministry of Health & Family Welfare agree to cooperate and collaborate in the overall goal of halting and reversing of HIV epidemic in the following areas

Article 5

5 OBJECTIVE OF MOU

- 5.1 Reaching out to the large number of students on HIV/AIDS prevention and treatment information and knowledge and importance of voluntary blood donation through Red Ribbon Club programmes in Central Educational Institutions and Deemed to be Universities.
- 5.2 Reduce social stigma and discrimination against people living with HIV in Central Educational Institutions.
- 5.3 Exhorting State Higher Education Departments to undertake HIV/AIDS prevention and treatment in State Educational Institutions including private universities with technical assistance from State Aids Control Societies.

Article 6

6 KEY DELIVERABLES

- 6.1 Issue advisory from Department of Higher Education to all States and UTs for implementing Red Ribbon Club Programme on HIV/AIDS and voluntary blood donation in colleges, universities and institutions providing technical and higher education.
- 6.2 Inclusion of content on STI/HIV in health related courses.
- 6.3 Inclusion of information on STI/HIV prevention & services in all departmentally printed materials for dissemination
- 6.4 Inclusion of HIV related questions in competitive examinations conducted at all levels
- 6.5 Inclusion of HIV/AIDS topic in the induction/training program of employees in Department of Higher Education.
- 6.6 Reduced or no incidence of social stigma and discrimination against People Living with HIV/AIDS in Central Educational Institutions.

Article 7

7.1 ROLE OF DEPARTMENT OF HIGHER EDUCATION: -

7.1.1 Directives & Advisories

- Directive to Central Educational Institutions to form/ strengthen Red Ribbon Club (RRC), with the activities listed below, and promote HIV/AIDS awareness activities with deputation of a nodal teacher as RRC coordinator.
- Advisory to UGC and AICTE for inclusion of HIV/AIDS as one of the component in all the vocational course/ skill building programmes under their aegis.
- Advisory to Government and UTs for implementing the HIV/ AIDS prevention program with technical assistance of State AIDS Control Societies. The State Higher Education Departments would be requested to include information on STI/ HIV prevention & services, voluntary blood donation and prevention of intravenous drug use, in health related courses and printed materials of Higher Educational Institutions. They would also be requested to include HIV related questions in competitive examinations conducted at all levels.

Activities of Red Ribbon Club (RRC)

- Prioritizing HIV/AIDS awareness activities, including importance of voluntary blood donation, in various College/university/institution activities like annual function, Annual festivals, competition etc amongst students Higher and Technical Education level etc.
- Screening of movies on HIV/AIDS in the colleges and universities to sensitize them on issues related to HIV/AIDS.
- Involvement of College/university/institution students in observation of World AIDS Day, Voluntary Blood Donation Day, Voluntary Blood Donor Day to strengthen national response against HIV/AIDS.
- Introduce "Best Donor Award" at college and University level.]

7.1.2 Trainings

- Inclusion of HIV/AIDS topic in the induction and training program of employees under Department of Higher Education.
- Inclusion of content on STI/HIV in health related courses (through UGC/AICTE).
- Designing and planning of short term courses on prevention and management of HIV to develop local resource pool (through UGC/AICTE)

7.1.3 Stigma and Discrimination Reduction

- Discourage any incidence of social stigma and discrimination to students affected or infected with HIV in higher educational institution setting.

7.1.4 Sharing of Information

- Sharing of information on HIV/AIDS activities with Department of AIDS Control or State AIDS Control Society in State.
- Reflection of activities on HIV/AIDS carried out by Department of Higher Education in annual report and Department's website. Provision of sharing of web links of Department of Higher Education in DAC portal for sharing of information and vice-versa.

7.2 ROLE OF DEPARTMENT OF AIDS CONTROL

- 7.2.1 Provide technical support to implement Red Ribbon Clubs and IEC activities in the colleges/Universities in states.
- 7.2.2 Provide technical support for capacity building of employees under Department of Higher Education by including HIV/AIDS topic in their induction and training program.
- 7.2.3 Provide technical support in developing courses on prevention and management of HIV/AIDS under UGC & AICTE.
- 7.2.4 Representation of DAC/SACS officials in the meeting of Department of Higher Education at the National and State level.

Article 8

8. EXECUTION OF MOU

8.1 Parties will set up a joint working group, with the officials of the level of concerned Joint Secretaries and below in the two Departments and their autonomous bodies, for implementation of the MOU.

8.2 The Joint Working Group meetings should be held bi-annually.

8.3 This MOU will be operative with effect from the date 6/8/13 and any alteration / modifications can be carried out with the consent of both parties.

The parties herein have appended their respective signatures the day and the year above stated.

SIGNED FOR AND ON BEHALF OF
DEPARTMENT OF AIDS CONTROL



SHRI LOV VERMA
SECRETARY,
DEPARTMENT OF AIDS CONTROL,
MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY
WELFARE,
GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
SIGNED on 6th AUGUST 2013

SIGNED FOR AND ON BEHALF OF
DEPARTMENT OF HIGHER EDUCATION



SHRI ASHOK THAKUR
SECRETARY,
DEPARTMENT OF HIGHER EDUCATION,
MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE
DEVELOPMENT,
GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
SIGNED on 6th AUGUST 2013

List of Acronyms

AICTE	All India Council for Technical Education
AIDS	Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome
DAC	Department of AIDS Control
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
HRG	High Risk Group
IEC	Information, Education, Communication
MoHFW	Ministry of Health and Family Welfare
MoHRD	Ministry of Human Resource Development
NACP	National AIDS Control Programme
PLHA	People Living with HIV/AIDS
RRC	Red Ribbon Club
SACS	State AIDS Control Societies
STI	Sexually Transmitted Infection
UGC	University Grant Commission
UT	Union Territory