

## **ASSESSMENT OF AWARENESS LEVEL ON MAINSTREAMING OF HIV SERVICES IN KEY DEPARTMENTS**

IEC is the face of NACP as it is the key to generating awareness on prevention as well as motivating access to treatment, care & support. HIV/AIDS is not a mere health issue as its occurrence is influenced by a number of socio-economic elements. Health interventions alone, therefore, cannot lead to prevention. HIV prevention requires concerted collaborative efforts from all departments, institutions or organizations in public life through their work and programme. Addressing the various socio-economic factors the response to HIV needs to be multi-faceted and multi-sectorial.

The operational definition of mainstreaming used by NACO is the “Integrated, inclusive and multi-sectoral approach which transfers the ownership of HIV/AIDS issues – including its direct and indirect causes, impact and response to various stakeholders, including the government, the corporate sector and civil society organizations”. The focus of all organizations in mainstreaming is to adapt their core business to respond to the challenges of HIV/AIDS.

Mainstreaming approach gained ground with the realization that the non-health sector can play an important and meaningful role in reducing vulnerability to HIV and mitigate impact of HIV on those infected and affected. It is important to note that mainstreaming does not replace the need for traditional approaches of prevention, care, support and treatment for People Living with HIV; it may instead complement and strengthen the same.

Like the whole country, Chandigarh SACS also has involved all major departments as key stakeholders for creating awareness in their respective departments.

**Partnering with Departments**, like **Chandigarh Police, School and Higher Education, CICTO, CTU, Social Welfare, Punjab University, Departments of Industry, Labour welfare, Sports, CISF, CRPF, ITBP, private Industries, CII, Association of small hotels, Chandigarh Railway, Private construction companies, Private Security vendors, various civil societies, elected representatives and MC office, SCERT**, etc. having a crucial role to spread awareness on HIV and AIDS, and strengthen linkages with available services (ICTC, STI Clinic, ART Clinic etc.) to those who requires and reduce stigma and discrimination against PLHIV and also to reach out to maximum uncovered population by public health system.

So many services/ department have been involved with Chandigarh CSACS.

There is a need to assess/ evaluate the few departments/ organizations what are their real contribution in promoting the HIV/ AIDS Awareness in their own department and in related community. The study will be helpful in getting ground level feedback of mainstreaming activities so that strategies can be developed for strengthening the policies of Mainstreaming and whole IEC activities.