

## SOMA - Track Record

### Introduction

SOMA offers management services to programmes and projects in Development (Social Sector). We started our work in Kerala state in 1992. From that point, our work has expanded and till now we have provided services in 15 states of India. Our Mission is to 'Transform Dreams into Deliverables'. Our role is to create programme and deliverables that feed into shared Developmental Vision.

### Track Record

As mentioned above, we provide services to programmes and the projects nestled within programmes. We have provided services to all stages within Programme Cycle Management (PCM). The track record listed in this document covers one or more of the stages within PCM.

- Scenario definition
- Programme design & development
- Implementation (with monitoring & control)
- Evaluation

The track record is composed of assignments implemented through institutional contracts of SOMA and individual contracts of SOMA executives.

Track record is categorised as follows.

- Services provided within Kerala state
- Services provided in other states of India
- Services from a national perspective

### Services provided within Kerala State

- **Setting up supports to AIDS control programme in Kerala:** Formal AIDS Control Programme was initiated in Kerala state in 1993. During the early years of the programme, SOMA provided services mainly in the stages of Scenario definition, Programme design & development. In addition to a wide range of support services as and when needed, our services to the early phase of AIDS Control Programme include
- **Setting up a networking mechanism for Kerala response to HIV epidemic:** SOMA conceptualised and initiated AIDS Circle Meets (ACM) in collaboration with Government of Kerala. SOMA designed, developed and implemented this service. Networking meets were conducted initially only for institutions and individuals in

the capital city. Soon the networking meets brought in partners from all over Kerala and key institutions from across India (e.g. UNICEF, WHO, NACO, CMC Vellore, European Union etc.). During these meets, papers were presented and discussed. Key officials in Department of Health were fully involved in these meetings.

- **Development of the first HIV/AIDS IEC strategic plan for Kerala state:** SOMA was part of the 5 member core team set up to develop the strategic plan.
- **Capacity building:** SOMA provided capacity building to NGOs and health personnel in Government service on various aspects of AIDS Control Programme. This included basic of HIV epidemic, counselling and development of systems for HIV response.
- **Innovations in political advocacy:** A political advocacy initiative on an election platform (first of its kind in Kerala and probably for India) was designed by SOMA in mid 90's. SOMA developed a communication package which was published in local newspapers for three days in succession. This communication package targeted candidates who were contesting in state elections. It encouraged citizens to ask candidates what they would do to control HIV if they came to power. Follow up showed a number of instances where citizens asked this questions when candidates came to them requesting votes. Some of the candidates approached State AIDS Cell (formation of AIDS Control Societies happened later) to find out how they should answer the question. The campaign also invited candidates to send in their suggestions to control HIV. Prizes for winning entries were distributed by Government of Kerala.
- **65 cities High Risk Behaviour (HRB) Assessment study by WHO & NACO:** This is the first large scale behavioural assessment study connected to HIV in India. The study aimed at conducting HRB assessment in 65 cities in India. SOMA conducted the study for Trivandrum city.
- **AIDS hotline services:** The first AIDS hotline service in Kerala was set up by SOMA. This category of service was later adopted and expanded by Government.
- **First initiative with Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRI):** SOMA designed, developed and implemented a two year HIV response in collaboration with a rural panchayat in Kerala. The usefulness of this early intervention was demonstrated when the community workers trained during this initiative responded when there was a stigma related in the local community - almost a decade after the formal initiative concluded.
- **Management of Jalanidhi project around Calicut city:** SOMA successfully managed two Jalanidhi projects. The objectives of these projects to set up Community based drinking water system. This involved working closely with panchayat (local elected

body) and the local community. At the end of the project a drinking water system along with community led management of levying fees, collecting fees and managing infrastructure and supply were set up. Our Calicut project was rated as the best project in this category.

- **Facilitation of Project Preparatory Phase for Targeted Interventions:** Services were provided to DFID India to set up the first batch of Targeted Interventions in Kerala state. This pilot project was the first DFID initiative in their support for Targeted Interventions in India. The facilitation period was one year. The projects set up during this period were transferred to State Management Unit which was later set up.
- **Study on Knowledge, Attitude and Practice of elected representatives in Kerala:** This study looked at the KAP of elected representatives towards HIV response (note: this was not a KAP study on HIV. It focused more on the perceived role that the elected representatives could play in HIV response). The study was done in collaboration with KILA and RCSHA<sup>1</sup>.
- **Project management support to Information Technology (IT) project:** SOMA provided Project Management support for implementation of an Information Technology project. This project focused on promoting ICT based enterprises and provision of support to enterprises set up. The project was implemented by SPACE which is playing a lead role in promotion of Open Source Technologies in IT (<http://www.space-kerala.org/>).
- **Partnerships with Private sector:** SOMA has collaborated with different private sector institutions on various initiatives. Examples include support of Penpol (for AIDS Circle Meets), support to Apollo Tyres (for research study) and support to Johnson & Johnson (for educational programme).
- **Participatory Micro level planning for addressing non-sexual health needs:** This one year initiative involved sex workers populations in cities of Trivandrum, Ernakulam and Calicut cities. The output of the exercise was a community owned plan.
- **Development of NGO accreditation manual:** This was developed for Kerala State.

### Services provided in other states of India

- **Facilitation of Project Preparatory Phase for TIs<sup>2</sup> in Gujarat State:** Work on this

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1. RCSHA - Resource Centre for Sexual health and HIV/AIDS. Now closed.

2. TIs - Targeted Interventions

initiative was done in close collaboration with AIDS Control Society, Government of Gujarat. This one year initiative was based on the successful experience in Kerala state. In addition to the lessons learned from Kerala, new approaches were also introduced in Gujarat. The projects set up during this period were transferred to Project Support Unit which was later set up. Some of the projects set up during this time have become national Best Practice initiatives.

- **Facilitation of Project Preparatory Phase for TIs in Andhra Pradesh State:** Andhra Pradesh was the third and final state where facilitation services were provided to set up Targeted Interventions. The lessons learned from Kerala and Gujarat permitted rapid approaches in project generation like batch processing of proposals and batch allocation of projects. This resulted in quick and efficient setting up of a larger number of projects. The support was provided for one year and at the end of the assignment, the projects were transferred to State Management Agency which was set up to scale up Targeted Interventions.
- **Capacity building of Project Support Units:** Project Support Units (aka<sup>3</sup> State Management Agency, Technical Support Unit): Capacity building services were provided during the initial setting up period and at various points later to these units in Gujarat and Andhra Pradesh.
- **Technical support to Project Support Units:** These supports included problem solving initiatives, design and development of new initiatives and leading small teams set up for the purpose. Technical support was provided mainly to Project Support Units in Gujarat, Andhra Pradesh and Orissa.
- **Evaluations of individual Targeted Interventions:** These evaluations have been conducted in Gujarat, Andhra Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, Karnataka, Nagaland, Maharashtra, Jharkhand, Goa, Rajasthan, Chandigarh, Haryana and Kerala state. Total number of interventions evaluated would be around 400.
- **Strategic plan development:** We have provided strategic planning support to institutions. E.g. Uttar Pradesh AIDS Control Society, Government of UP, Technical Resource Unit - Andhra Pradesh.
- **Research study on impact of Tsunami:** This study looked the impact Tsunami had on vulnerability to HIV/AIDS and trafficking: This study was done in selected Tsunami affected locations in 5 states.
- **Training of Trainers for facilitating HIV response at Panchayat level:** SOMA in

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3. aka - also known as

collaboration with Kerala Institute of Local Administration (KILA - [www.kilaonline.org](http://www.kilaonline.org)), provided training of trainers. The trainers came from state level apex institutions responsible for capacity building of local bodies (e.g. State Institute of Rural Development). Participants came from 6 states.

- **Support to Project Implementation Plan of State AIDS Control Programme:** Support was provided during National AIDS Control Programme (NACP) - Phase II and Phase III. During Phase II of NACP, support was provided to Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat State and Ahmedabad Municipal Corporation. For Phase III, support was provided to Pondicherry.
- **Support for district planning process:** Support was provided to Tamil Nadu state for the district planning component of NACP III planning initiative. In addition to this, support was provided during district planning process in Namakkal district of Tamil Nadu. This support focused more on planning for care and support of People Living with HIV/ AIDS (PLHA).
- **Development of Minimum Standards:** Minimum standards for Operational Procedures were for interventions for High Risk groups: These standards were developed for Karnataka State.
- **Samaikyatha programme:** An initiative for strengthening of Community Based Organisations in AP state.

### Services from a national perspective

- **Consultancy to strengthen Targeted Interventions:** Services were provided to UNAIDS, India and National AIDS Control Organisation (NACO) over a period of one year to strengthen Targeted Interventions across India.
- **Support to national evaluation of Targeted Interventions:** Provided lead consultancy to SHRC<sup>4</sup> for design and execution of the first national level evaluation of Targeted Interventions. These evaluations were done in selected states and interventions sampled in those states. The findings from this study contributed to many measures to strengthen systems associated with Targeted Interventions. A fresh set of tools and techniques were developed and used for this study.
- **Support to Targeted Interventions Profiling Study (TIPS):** Provided lead consultancy to RCSHA3 for design and execution of this initiative. It covered all interventions in 14 states of India and prepared a report on its findings. Specific tools needed for

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4. SHRC - Sexual Health Resource Centre: A project supported by DFID. Now closed.

the study were designed and developed. A unique feature of this study was the deployment of web based processes at different stages of this initiative. This pilot attempt showed that it was possible to reduce time and cost of similar operations by using web based services.

- **Virtual conference systems:** Provided lead consultancy to RCSHA to share proceedings of a research conference online. Designed and developed the systems needed for this initiative. This was the first attempt of its kind in India.
- **Development of Costing Guidelines for Targeted Interventions:** Provided lead consultancy to SHRC for design and execution of this initiative. The Costing Guidelines was published by NACO for use across India.
- **Visiting faculty status:** Content development and training on Programme and Project Management in Sree Chitra Tirunal Institute of Medical Sciences and Technology (<http://www.sctimst.ac.in/>).
- **Support to Panchayati Raj Institutions for HIV response:** SOMA developed a module 'Courage to Face Reality' which is a primer meant for leaders at Panchayat level. This module is available in 7 languages and can be found in [www.pri365.org](http://www.pri365.org).
- **Manual on organisational governance of PLHA organisations:** A detailed manual for use by PLHA organisations was produced.
- **Support for development of Partners Forum:** Support was provided to NGOs implementing Targeted Interventions for setting up and management of Partners Forums. This support was provided in Bihar and Andhra Pradesh (AP).
- **Development of strategy for mainstreaming HIV response:** This initiative supports Caritas, India and its partners in developing strategies for mainstreaming HIV response in their existing interventions.