

HIV/STI Risk & Vulnerability Reduction with Truck Drivers - A Workshop Report



Presented by

Center for Human Progress (CHP)

in collaboration with

IKEA, APL Logistics & Albatross

Dadri, Uttar Pradesh

17 December, 2009

With special thanks to IKEA, APL Logistics and Albatross for giving us the opportunity to work together.

HIV/STI Risk & Vulnerability Reduction with Truck Drivers & Helpers

Introduction

A 3-hour HIV awareness and sensitisation workshop was held with truck drivers in Dadri, Uttar Pradesh (U.P) on 17 December, 2009. The workshop was conducted by the Center for Human Progress (CHP) with the invaluable support of and collaboration with IKEA, APL Logistics and Albatross.

Objectives

The objective of the workshop was to engage truck drivers in dialogue-based communication about their HIV risks and vulnerabilities and to identify practical techniques to minimise them. The workshop involved using entertainment education to disseminate basic, technical information about HIV and generate a practical understanding about HIV prevention techniques. A number of interactive tools were designed to support the objectives of the workshop.

A 3-hour workshop agenda (attached) was jointly designed by CHP and IKEA. The workshop itself was led by truck drivers and helpers from the CHP team. The importance of having truck drivers themselves facilitate the workshop was jointly recognised by CHP, IKEA, APL Logistics and Albatross. Participants from the truck driver community would consider their own community more credible and acceptable and would be more comfortable discussing sexual practices and sexuality. Workshop facilitators from the truck driver community would also know the community well and its context specific barriers to reducing HIV- and STI-related risks. Thus, a team of ten members from CHP, including several truck drivers, led the workshop.

WORKSHOP FOR HIV RISK REDUCTION AMONG TRUCK DRIVERS 17 DECEMBER, 2009 11.00AM-2.00PM

- 1) INTERACTIVE SESSION WITH TRUCK DRIVERS USING INTERPERSONAL COMMUNICATION (IPC) FOR HIV & STI RISK REDUCTION – 11:00-11:30**
- 2) WELCOME/INTRODUCTIONS – 11:30-11:35**
- 3) A MAGNET THEATRE PERFORMANCE – 11:35-12:15**
- 4) CONDOM COMPETITION 12:10-12:40**
- 5) HIV QUIZ – 12:40-1:20**
- 6) CONDOM BALLOON CONTEST – 1:20-1:40**
- 7) CLOSING (CERTIFICATES & CONDOM DISTRIBUTION) – 1:40-2:00**
- 8) LUNCH**

Sessions

The workshop commenced with a brief Interpersonal Communication (IPC) session for dialogue-based HIV and STI risk and vulnerability reduction with the small gathering of truck drivers (approximately 30) that had arrived first. IPC tools are useful to stimulate discussion about direct barriers to reducing risky behaviour. A visual representation tool called “*Din Charya*” was used to depict “a day in the life of a truck driver” and to have truck drivers themselves identify when and where



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their HIV risks and vulnerabilities are greatest. The community was asked to identify ways in which those risks could be mitigated (e.g., through use of safe sex techniques). Use of IPC tools, such as *Din Charya* (a day in the life of a truck driver) also helps identify existing levels of HIV knowledge; and creates an opportunity to debunk myths and misconceptions (some examples of myths and misconceptions which emerged through discussions with truck drivers during the session have been listed in Box 1).

Once a number of truck drivers had gathered, the workshop was rolled out. The workshop was initiated by a brief introduction, followed by a Magnet Theatre performance on truck drivers' issues conducted by CHP's truck drivers themselves. Magnet Theatre is a mid-media communication method, which unlike conventional stage theatre and some other forms of participatory street theatre, invites the audience to create and re-create scenarios to solve the dilemma presented in the performance. Messages are not given to the audience through the performance rather discussion encourages the audience to generate practical solutions to their barriers (e.g., about HIV prevention, care) and dilemmas.

As intended through its positioning in the agenda, in addition to generating dialogue, the Magnet Theatre performance also broke ice with the community. This was evident from the growing numbers of truck drivers that joined the workshop – i.e., from an initial 30 to 150-plus by the end of the first session.

Not surprisingly, also, a number of truck drivers joined the workshop as “spectators” by sitting around boundary walls of the venue rather than joining at the venue as such. An estimated 100-plus truck drivers tuned-in to the workshop from around the boundaries.



BOX 1

SOME MYTHS & MISCONCEPTIONS AMONG TRUCK DRIVERS WHICH WERE DEBUNKED DURING THE WORKSHOP



- HIV IS NOT TRANSMITTED THROUGH SMELL AND ODOR.
- HIV CAN BE TRANSMITTED THROUGH UNPROTECTED MALE-TO-MALE SEX.
- URINATING ON ONE'S PENIS IMMEDIATELY AFTER UNPROTECTED SEX, WILL NOT AVOID HIV.

The Magnet Theatre performance was followed by a condom competition. Participants were asked to volunteer to put a condom on a penis model. This session was important to identify and underscore the significance of correct condom use for HIV risk reduction. This session also highlighted a number of issues, including the importance of noting the expiration date on a condom pack before using it; safe and correct removal and disposal of condoms after use; the danger of condom breakage with simultaneous use of two condoms; and the importance of correct use of condoms to prevent HIV and STI.

Only one participant was able to demonstrate correct use and removal of a condom. Two participants could correctly use a condom, but could not remove it correctly (and safely). All three were given prizes for participation. Prizes were items of functional use to truck drivers. The first prize was a sweater, the second prize was a file folder (e.g., to store licenses and other papers) and the third prize was a small carry bag.



The next session involved an HIV quiz competition. Six participants were given three questions each on HIV transmission and prevention (see sample questions in Box 2). Participants that answered all three questions correctly would be awarded prizes. Since only one participant could correctly answer three consecutive questions, he was given the first prize. The other two participants were awarded prizes for participation.

A number of myths and conceptions about HIV transmission among truck drivers became apparent during this session. Facilitators debunked myths and clarified technical information regarding HIV risks and modes of transmission to the participants.

Box 2

SOME HIV QUIZ QUESTIONS

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- 1) I CAN GET HIV FROM SHARING A CUP OF TEA.
- 2) I CAN GET HIV FROM A MOSQUITO BITE.
- 3) I CAN GET HIV FROM BEING IN THE SAME ROOM AS SOMEONE WHO IS HIV POSITIVE.
- 4) HIV AND AIDS ARE THE SAME THING.
- 5) IF I HAVE HIV, I DONT NEED A CONDOM.
- 6) HIV CANNOT BE TRANSMITTED THROUGH ORAL SEX.
- 7) WASHING MYSELF WITH URINE IMMEDIATELY AFTER SEX, WILL AVOID HIV.
- 8) I DONT NEED TO WORRY ABOUT HIV, HIV CAN BE CURED.
- 9) HAVING SEX WITH A DONKEY CAN CURE MY STI.
- 10) APPLYING COCONUT OIL WILL CURE MY STI.

The final session involved a condom balloon contest. Three participants were asked to come forward and inflate a condom by blowing into it. A stop watch was used to time them. The biggest condom balloon blown in 20 seconds would win. The second and third largest

condom balloons would win the second and third prizes, respectively. Prizes were distributed to the participants. The objective of this session was to normalise condom use and to underscore the importance of condom use during oral sex. Participants were explained that lubrication on condoms is safe and not injurious to health; and therefore, use of condoms during oral sex is safe and not harmful.

Facilitators made a condom demonstration to participants. The importance of correct and safe use and disposal of condoms was also demonstrated and explained.

Closing

Following a brief vote of thanks to the participants, IKEA, APL Logistics and Albatross, participants were asked to come forward and collect certificates issued by IKEA for acknowledgment of their participation in the workshop. Condoms were distributed to all participants! Participants were invited to lunch by IKEA.



Participants

1. Truck drivers
2. IKEA (Praveen, Pratik)
3. APL Logistics (Gautam)
4. Albatross (Sunil)
5. CHP (Vishnu, Raj, Puneet, Ashu, Ravi, Mohammed, Sanjay, Harun, Latika, Ash)

About the Center for Human Progress

The Center for Human Progress (CHP) aims to improve the quality of life of individuals and society by supporting, promoting and encouraging knowledge mobilisation for sustainable change.

As an NGO and social entrepreneurship CHP aspires to build knowledge-based leadership and create community empowerment in the process.

To achieve its goals CHP conducts various activities, including:

1. Training & capacity building
2. Education & awareness building
3. Communication & advocacy
4. Research & documentation

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