



Reaching the Unreached through the Use of Social Media Apps



About GAURAV

Greater Action for Unity Rights Advocacy and Visibility (GAURAV) is registered, non-profitable community based organization working for Health and Rights of LGBT community since 2010. GAURAV (Mumbai Chapter) primarily involved in improving the health of Men and Trans Women engaged in sex work namely, Male Sex Workers (MSW) by providing myriad of health services aimed at Peer-Led HIV/STI prevention including, condom promotion, , HIV testing, Regular medical checkup, capacity building and community mobilization. Our Community-based efforts with the support from Mumbai Districts AIDS Control Society (MDACS) over many years has helped in control of the epidemic and has created an enabling environment for the community of male and Trans sex workers.

Concept behind Media Intervention

In today's digital world, Internet Technology became a significant part of daily life of everyone including community members of Community members. Social Media and Social Web-based platforms are redefining the perception and availability of sex. A report from the Internet and Mobile Association of India and market research firm IMRB International says that there are nearly 450 million Internet users in the country, 60% of which are based in the Urban India (in cities like Mumbai). The demand and supply have shifted from the more physical solicitation of sex to a more dynamic platform (web-based). The majority of the community members are using social media like networking websites & dating websites for soliciting sexual partners (hook-ups, one night stands, etc.). These Social Media platforms like Grinder, Planet Romeo, etc.. have seen a tremendous surge in the number of people accessing and making their profiles on them. To adapt to the changing times, our outreach has also changed from the typical cruising sites to the virtual cruising platforms.

Why this initiative ???

Under HIV /STI prevention program, it's slightly difficult to reach each and every community members in a stipulated time period with limited numbers of Community Outreach Workers and Peer Educator. Considering this issue and the availability of various modern technology platforms the organization took need based initiatives to develop its outreach strategy. We have initiated the use of What's App application (India is WhatsApp biggest market with 160 million monthly active members) for service delivery especially the dissemination of information which includes behavior change messages, service alerts and friendly places the community can access to avail the services.



Methodology Adopted

Community Sensitization

The first integral part was the sensitisation of registered community members about the WhatsApp application with objective to improve services, Active engagement to increase the utilisation of health facilities provided by District AIDS control society.

Consent

Verbal consent was taken from each WhatsApp users

WhatsApp Group

The purposes of whatsapp group included (1) Coordination between ORWs and community members. (2) Informing community members about organizations activities and health camp schedule (3) personal and humorous exchanges

Broadcast Group

Broadcast group is made twice per each community outreach worker. One group is to inform about their ICTC due and another group for RMC due. The benefit of broadcast feature is that only concerned community member receives the message about ICTC due & RMC due. And the privacy is being maintained.

Data Flow

Community Outreach worker

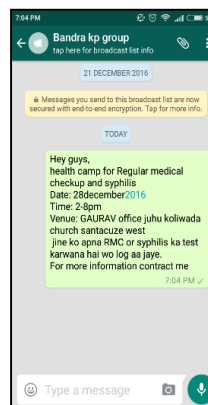
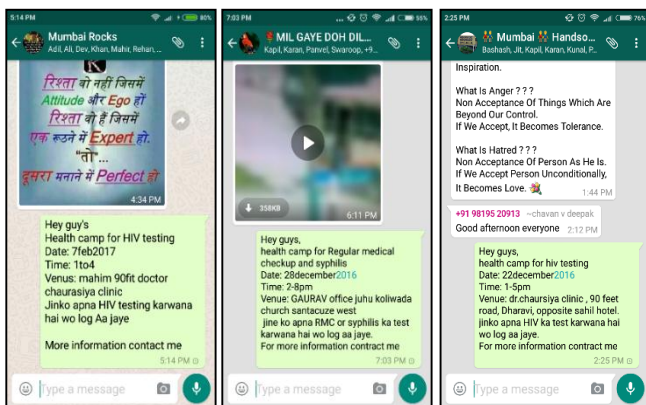
MEA officer

Project Manager

Project Director

WhatsApp Group

Broadcast Group IEC materials



Outcome

- This initiative was started from the month of October 2016.
- Online Whatsapp groups and Broadcast groups are formed as a Platform for Information Sharing and Communication.
- Total 4834 community members approached through WhatsApp application, 407 availed HIV testing service, and 969 availed Regular Medical checkup.
- It has led to increase in the monitoring capacity of the organization in relation to the effective service delivery component.
- Increased the visibility of GAURAV and its services.

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Supported by



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