

RED RIBBON ON THE ROAD: A WORKSHOP AT DADRI

A 4-hour general health, safety, and HIV awareness workshop was held with 150 truck drivers and labor force at Dadri, Uttar Pradesh on February 3, 2015. The workshop was conducted by the Center for Human Progress (CHP) with the invaluable support of IKEA and its partners APL Logistics and Albatross.

The objectives of the workshop were to: 1) Engage truck drivers in dialogue-based communication about their key issues, including HIV-related risks and vulnerabilities, occupational health and safety hazards, harassment by police, and substance abuse to name a few; 2) identify practical strategies to reduce HIV risks; 3) encourage health seeking behaviors among truck drivers, and 4) facilitate a health camp with free access to doctors, counsellors, and treatment.

The workshop, led by a team of 7 truck drivers, embraced various **entertainment education** tools to practically and interactively address community issues. Facilitators finely balanced humor and entertainment with the gravity of community issues being addressed, throughout.

The first session involved a **magnet theatre** performance to address community vulnerabilities such as lack of access to healthcare and sanitation, police harassment, substance abuse, and unsafe sexual practices. The performance focused on HIV risks and vulnerabilities of truck drivers and practical strategies to mitigate them. Next, an **HIV and health quiz** was conducted. Facilitators debunked common myths and misconceptions about HIV and its modes of transmission. Several general health messages were shared. Participants engaged in **Condolympics (or interactive condom games)** designed to normalize condom use, in the session that followed. Winners of the condom demonstration and condom balloon contests were awarded prizes. Prizes were items of utility to truck drivers such as soaps, towels, file folders, small carry bags, torch lights, and condoms. **Two strength endurance games** (i.e., a bucket game and an arm wrestling competition) were conducted next. The objective of these games was to bust a common myth among truck drivers that strong and healthy men are not vulnerable to HIV. The final session involved a **slogan contest** designed to reinforce key messages. Several members of the audience came forward to write on-the-spot slogans (e.g., *Condom Apnao, HIV/AIDS Bhagao*). Three winning slogans were voted in by the audience itself.

At the conclusion of the workshop, participants were invited to visit a **free health camp**. Doctor consultations, counselling sessions and free medication were dispensed to all visiting participants.

The workshop closed with a vote of thanks to IKEA.

