



## Press Information Note

### Statement on HIV prevalence estimates in India

**Geneva, 8 June 2007** – As part of its continuous efforts to know its epidemic better, the National AIDS Control Organization (NACO) leads an annual process, together with national and international expert groups, including UNAIDS and WHO to estimate the number of adults living with HIV in India (HIV prevalence). From 4-6 June, 2007, NACO convened a meeting of the Core Technical Working Group on Estimates and Projections, which provides guidance on the methods and assumptions used to develop national HIV prevalence estimates. This year the estimates would provide a more accurate picture of the epidemic because of availability of more information based on population based surveys and improved data from high risk groups. The Working Group is still in the process of analyzing the data to develop an updated estimate of national HIV prevalence and these figures will be available by the first week of July.

Some trends can already be identified from the analysis of existing sentinel data. Although prevalence in antenatal clinics has shown a decline in some southern states, high levels of infection among the groups at higher risk, such as Men who have Sex with Men (MSM), and Injecting Drug Users (IDU) are of concern. Similarly, while data does suggest that the HIV prevalence levels are declining among sex workers in areas where targeted interventions have been implemented, particularly in the southern states, yet overall prevalence levels among this group continue to be high necessitating focused prevention interventions. Experience shows that where these groups are themselves engaged in prevention efforts they become strong leaders in prevention. Finally, the 2007 sentinel data clearly validates the prevention strategy being implemented by NACO.

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