



Guiding the Winds of Change

**Proposed Advocacy Strategy Framework for  
Indian Network of Positive people  
INP+**

Supported by: UNAIDS

# **ADVOCACY STRATEGY FRAMEWORK DOCUMENT**

## **“Guiding the Winds of Change”**

### **Addressing Advocacy and Communications priorities of the Indian Network of Positive people**

**INP+**

*January 2005*

#### **BACKGROUND:**

The Indian Network for People living with HIV/AIDS (INP+) comprises of 16 state level networks and 58 district level networks in India. Founded in 1997 by twelve people, INP+ has been advocating on various issues to improve the quality of life of people living with HIV/AIDS (PLHA) and has become the face and voice of people living with HIV in India. INP+ has felt the need for a formal advocacy strategy to better advocate for the issues of PLHA. The formation of the network has provided a visibility to the HIV epidemic thereby beginning the work of personalizing the epidemic for the general public. As people living with HIV become more mobilized through out India, the network brings to the fore perspectives of people living with HIV and a high degree of motivation, dedication and compassion into the current scenario of HIV/AIDS. Networks are formed at the national, state and district levels and working groups have been promoted in order to work towards a unified vision on diverse yet interrelated and pertinent issues of women and children; IV drug users, MSM etc. All the various state level and district level networks are mandated to coordinate advocacy action on matters of concern to people living with HIV as well as build skills among individual advocates to the changing needs of people living with HIV/AIDS.

However, while many efforts are succeeding some critical and major challenges continue to remain. Confidentiality of HIV positive people is often not maintained in the health setting (private or govt. operated) or at work place. There is still a separation of wards, beds and toilets and the practice of marking them as HIV+ continues in many health settings throughout the country. Human rights are violated both overtly and covertly and moral dilemma's guide actions of many working for the prevention of the spread of the epidemic including counselors who have been seen advising HIV + couples to not have children – creating a pressure for abortion when an HIV positive couple conceives. There is also an underlying social pressure for PLWHA to not marry. This causes a lot of emotional trauma and stress. While the national policy for providing ARV drugs has been rolled out there is discrimination against people living in low HIV prevalent states. There continues to be a lack of information and understanding of life after HIV infection and a dearth of positive images of people living healthy and meaningful lives with the virus.

Recognizing the need for a greater and consolidated effort towards creating a bigger and more effective wave of change in the policy, media and social environment as well as for

creating a clearer internal understanding of how some of these challenges can be addressed, INP+ has developed this advocacy strategy paper. This paper is an outcome of a strategy workshop where PLHA leaders from various parts of India and advocacy officers of INP+ and its affiliated networks came together to brainstorm and identify some of the lacunae in the existing efforts towards creating change as well as providing guidelines for future work.

#### **MANDATE:**

This advocacy strategy design process is mandated to review the existing advocacy activities of INP+ thus far; identifying what worked and what did not work and the lessons that have been learnt by the networks in the process; identify gaps and suggest a framework for advocacy for the next phase of the INP+ efforts. This document and the framework detailed there in is flexible to new challenges and priorities that may emerge while exploring possible advocacy plans, priorities and activities that are needed given the present context.

This document focuses on communication and advocacy activities, that is, events, publications and forums aimed at advocating for INP's position and work. The main objective of the proposals formulated in this paper are to promote synergies and complementarities within the INP+ structure and between INP+ and its key stakeholders; and to improve the effectiveness of communication and advocacy activities undertaken by the INP+ secretariat, the various state and district level networks and its partner organizations. While recognizing that there has been a considerable change since the time of inception till date on the level of information about INP+ it is felt that this is not always managed in the way that can produce the desired effects. In other words, the information on INP+ needs clearer and measurable goals which are tailored to the needs of a specific target and includes indicators for success. The present document intends to suggest a framework that is generic at the national level and can be adapted at a specific state or district level for enhanced and more effective advocacy and communications to support the overall goals of INP+.

The document is predicated on the belief that the various stakeholders, the Government, NGOs and affiliated networks within the INP+ umbrella can be convinced regarding the usefulness and necessity of a long term approach for sustained implementation of an advocacy and communications agenda. This document therefore makes an effort to identify some of these target audiences and it provides some pointers on how the advocacy and communications activities can be organized. However, it does not go as far as proposing specific strategies for each of the identified components of the advocacy while clearly enunciating what the basic communication goals ought to be at all levels.

The document also provides the framework for implementation containing a series of activities connected with measurable goals and objectives. It is thus expected that INP+ and the state and district level networks will be able to adapt many of these suggestions for their respective areas of specialization tailored to the needs of each specific context.

## **THE NEED FOR A STRATEGY:**

Communications and advocacy is very often confused with other activities of an organization since these need to be mainstreamed along with all the major goals and priorities. However, for advocacy to be effective, there need to be a defined set of advocacy goals that while corresponding to the overall goals of the organization are distinct and clearly defined for the purposes of advocacy.

The need for an advocacy strategy therefore cannot be overemphasized. INP+ is undertaking numerous projects and activities in the pursuance of its goals for creating an environment that is free of stigma and where people living with HIV enjoy equal rights – but the vision and the achievements need to be adequately disseminated in a way that it would resonate within the priorities of each state based network as well as at the National level. A communication and advocacy strategy would guide changes that are required in the overall policy and social environment of the country as well as reduce the prevailing lack of understanding about INP+ and what it stands for – increasing knowledge about the priorities of people living with HIV and their concerns with major stakeholders.

A strategy would also help bring together all the networks of positive people - at the national level, the State level or the district level - who are logistically located in different specific contexts but who could through the adoption of a common advocacy strategy begin to identify with an overall context. By so doing common communication goals would be set, with a message that would also be shared by all networks and partners so that there would be fidelity in the messages that are going out from all the bases of INP+ operations. This way information presented would be tailored to specific goals of the programme and specific goals of the advocacy campaign. A common message being disseminated at all levels of INP+ campaigns would inspire a sense of purpose and would facilitate well-coordinated INP+ programming at all levels of implementation.

Similarly a communication and advocacy strategy would help prepare the networks for an action plan that would show how the programme would benefit all stakeholders, by outlining objectives, activities and events that would showcase INP+ as a capable vehicle set to succeed and by providing visibility to its priorities.

## **EFFORTS THUS FAR:**

Some of the advocacy activities undertaken by INP+ in the past have included

- Establishing and running Positive Speakers Bureau: The bureau has helped individuals in the networks share their lives and experiences and provided the much needed face and voice to positive people
- Conducting national conference and consultations of people living with HIV. These conferences have helped create a platform for sharing within the network as well as provided a space for discussion and dialogue for members

- Documentation of human right violations and other issues. While rights violations still continue to take place , documenting them has created a space for challenging them
- Legal literacy and Public hearing on issues affecting women living with HIV. In the early years of the epidemic its gendered progression was neither understood nor talked about. The process of involving women and organizing public hearings has helped raised awareness about the issue
- Organizing rallies for treatment. These public activities bringing issues of treatment to the fore has helped create a dialogue and invited people to join the cause of provision of treatment for HIV positive people.
- Working with media. INP+ has made efforts to involve media , some of which have been successful and others not consistently so, however the efforts to involve media is an important component of harnessing public attention for issues

Some of the challenges that have been identified in the advocacy process are:

- Advocacy efforts undertaken have little or no shared ownership or participation by the communities or even by affiliated networks
- Advocacy efforts at prevention of HIV or reduction of stigma etc taken up by other agencies do not recognize the importance of involving people living with HIV
- Advocacy efforts in the past have not prioritized mainstreaming HIV prevention into other development efforts
- Advocacy strategies thus far do not have a long term vision
- Strategies do not lay a clear networking, communication and implementation plans for the INP+ network

### **THE NEED FOR INTERNAL ADVOCACY EFFORTS:**

One of the key areas identified as a priority for concerted and long term advocacy efforts was internal advocacy. While INP+ secretariat has established a national presence and is continuously evolving its strategies etc the affiliate networks at the state, district and taluka levels do not share a consolidated vision.

The state, district and taluka level networks feel left out of the planning phases of the INP+ annual programmes and priorities. There is also a sense of frustration given limited donor support and the constant need for funds for various activities. A shared vision and concerted efforts to build internal consensus, partnership and ownership will go a long way in curtailing the sense of exclusion and feeling of 'being sidelined' that the affiliated networks are currently feeling.

It is important therefore to create an image of INP+ as a network that is sustained because of the efforts and credibility of its grassroot affiliates. This requires a consistent and organized response to showcases the capabilities of the state and taluka level members, and their capacity to create, manage and sustain new initiatives and actions.

Some affiliate networks consider the secretariat as a funding partner rather than a secretariat supporting the overall activities of the networks. Other state level networks feel that the particular contexts in their state are too different and specific for them to agree to or follow an overall plan of action. Certain specific groups like MSM groups feel that particular issues for eg. Issues of positive people with alternate sexualities do not find a place in the overall focus of INP's activities and advocacy efforts.

This strategy framework document therefore outlines some action plans that need to be undertaken for internal advocacy

## **OBJECTIVES OF THE ADVOCACY:**

This strategy document sets out the specific objectives for a proposed INP+ communication and advocacy plan, and suggests some activities that would activate those objectives. The advocacy objectives stated in this strategy document are derived from the strategic objectives and goals of the network and its basic principles of justice, equality and human rights. All of INP+'s activities and programs are geared towards fulfilling the following overall strategic objectives.

- To facilitate and improve access to treatment for people living with HIV
- To provide access to information to people living with HIV
- To promote and protect the human rights of people living with HIV
- To promote involvement of people living with HIV at all levels of decision making
- To promote social acceptance of people living with HIV and to end stigma and discrimination
- To provide opportunities for networking for people living with HIV

During the advocacy strategy development workshop, members of the network worked in groups to draft key advocacy goals that were in keeping with the overall strategic objectives of INP+. Given below are the goals that were developed by these working groups. Each advocacy goal defines what is desired and why that is desired

### **Key Goals identified for advocacy**

- All people living with HIV in India live a life of dignity, free of stigma and discrimination
- All people living with HIV in India have social and legal recourse to human rights violations
- All people living with HIV in India who require treatment have access to drugs including ARV and have access to lab monitoring tests to improve their quality of life
- All sectors involved in implementation of programmes for HIV prevention, care and support fully understand and operationalise principles of GIPA (Greater Involvement of People Living with HIV)

- All HIV positive people have the opportunity to dialogue and network

The advocacy objectives derived from these goals need to clearly “sell” each of these agenda’s to the specific target audiences identified. The implementation of the objectives will result in the attainment of advocacy goals listed above, which are derived directly from the INP+ strategic objectives. It is important, therefore, to note that each of the advocacy objectives would be implemented as a phase - starting with creating awareness for and ownership of INP+ and its priorities.

**The following, therefore, are the advocacy objectives:**

**1. To create awareness for and ownership around the concept of a network of positive people:** This objective seeks to demonstrate that the formation of networks is an effective means by which strategic goals of HIV positive people can be achieved. In this advocacy phase, all programmes and events would be focused towards informing the entire or specific target audiences about the existence of the network of positive people and its different affiliates. This phase would also seek to create the perception that INP+ is completely conducted by people living with HIV, and also that there is support from people not living with the virus; and that this cooperation is a reinforcement of people’s involvement in the issues of positive people. The objective is to create awareness around local initiation of INP+, the roles played by positive women, people with alternate sexual preferences and other groups who have thus far not been visible as members of the network as a whole. The objective also will be to showcase the enormous efforts at building capacity that are being undertaken at the state, district and Taluka level. This advocacy phase would also seek to persuade varying sectors of the Indian society to support INP+ as an initiative and participate in its programmes. In one line: **This advocacy phase seeks to create INP+ as a positive brand image.** Therefore all advocacy activities in this phase will concentrate on informing and educating specific and general target audiences about what INP+ stands for and what its strategic goals and objectives are. While these have been clearly defined within INP+ they now need to be announced and given wider acceptance and dissemination to other stakeholders.

**Phase Implication:** This objective would require the development of a clear, concise and precise message that sums up the image of the network of positive people and it must be conveyed simultaneously and consistently by all INP+ advocates, communicators and promoters and affiliated networks and its members. This could be brand slogan; a byline for the network’s efforts; a couplet or creative brand visual that will be the mark of the network of positive people in all its activities and advocacy efforts and it should be adopted by all the affiliated networks as well.

**2. To build credibility for INP+, its partners and its projects with special reference to GIPA**

Under this objective, an effort will be made to create the perception, and the belief that INP+ and the approach of GIPA would be successful where other similar programmes for HIV prevention have been unsuccessful in the past. Clear, concise information with examples of the success of GIPA will be used as the fulcrum around which advocacy is

conducted with the various target groups. This will also be a process of building credibility for the GIPA principle especially with target audiences who have thus far either ignored the principle or maintained tokenistic approval of its tenets. This persuasion of the target audiences will be done through a showcase of GIPA programmes, projects and events that emphasize the involvement of positive people at the decision making levels.

***Phase Implication:***

**A. Perception is the key to credibility.** The crucial element in this second phase is to build credibility of the network and its partners. Problem areas-specific and general-would have to be identified and special events, public forums and seminars could be organized to discuss the challenges identified. (For instance for issues around treatment and drugs that are perceived merely as issues that relate to HIV positive people, GIPA principles can be used to focus on how a critical understanding of drug laws and policies, and agreements by people who are most affected, can help chalk out strategies that could benefit a larger community of people who will also be impacted by the same laws and policies for generic drug manufacture.) On another note, the ongoing public campaigns that stress stigma and discrimination - rather than the positive facets of living with the virus or positive images of people in interaction with HIV positive people - are creating the perception that while it is correct not to condone discrimination, this is what happens in reality. Practically, this means even people who have not experienced the virus first hand are experiencing the concept of stigma first through these campaigns - and this perception can become counter productive

**B.** Also at this phase, best practices would begin to be showcased in how INP+ has succeeded with its campaigns and brought about change

It will become important to document (using creative means and media whether audio or visual or ICTs) success stories as they become key in creating the desired perception and also maintaining the interests and support of the public and the donor community by showcasing success stories of how the network has impacted the life and the choices available to positive people. Lessons learnt could then be disseminated to enhance the effectiveness of the advocacy

**3. To create a perception of leadership and capacity of People living with HIV and their network as opposed to NGOs working on HIV/AIDS issues.** Government and donor support for HIV/AIDS programming still concentrates on civil society partnerships. It will be integral to attaining the strategic objectives of INP+ if the perception that the network of positive people can deliver results on programme goals as well as and more likely better than other organizations since there is greater ownership of the problem and clearer and more comprehensive understanding of the epidemic amongst those affected and living with the virus.

Here while the advocacy activities will strive to showcase the ability of positive people to direct and implement complete programmes both technically and intellectually, it will also build a case for the network as a contributing partner to national programmes for HIV/AIDS prevention. There will therefore also be a need to strengthen and enhance capacity of members of network in programme implementation as well as in articulation

of issues in a manner and in a language that is understood within development circles and national programmes. This might involve institutionalizing and expanding activities like positive speakers as well as creating new institutional frameworks for training network members in policy implications and current international dialogues and understandings on the various issues around HIV and development.

**Phase Implication:** It is at this phase that leaders, politicians, intellectuals, technocrats, including women groups, and activists etc at home and abroad can begin to be used as INP+ image makers, drawing on their contributions and future potentials. The INP+ principle of ownership, participation and leadership by positive people would come into active play here.

#### **4. To mobilize the target audiences for action:**

Having built credibility and a positive perception for INP+, mobilization for specific action on the part of the target audience, at the various levels now comes to play. Mobilization is at the core of advocacy and the ultimate outcome of effective communication.

Mobilizing domestic and international support for the implementation of GIPA principles, mitigating impact of stigma and discrimination and creating an environment that enhances availability of drugs and ART to positive people is the purpose here. One of the goals of the advocacy campaign in this phase could be to mobilize different segments of societies in India, including parliamentarians, civil society organizations, the private sector and ordinary citizens to support INP+ and its affiliated networks. Support also needs to come from the INP+ partners in the national and international community, by getting them to make certain commitments and take steps towards realizing those commitments.

**Phase Implication:** This is where activities, events and programmes of INP+ and its affiliated networks would focus on organizing the target audiences, INP+ partners and the entire gamut of audiences related to the networks of positive people in India around taking particular action including but not limited to institutionalizing and operationalising GIPA in national as well as donor driven programmes, emphasizing on concrete deliverables like allocation of government budgets for provision of free ARV and OI drugs in at least all district hospitals through out India in another three years, scaling up of the ARV roll out programme, creating separate and clear provisions for addressing issues of marginalized sexual groups, women and children including guidelines for their drug regimens, amendments in legal provisions that allow exploitation that increase vulnerability to HIV etc.

(For example, for demonstrating support at the national level key constituencies can be encouraged to press their Governments and their MPs to incorporate INP+ objectives and goals in their national budgets and their national development plans especially with reference to the State AIDS Control Societies and NACO. This would imply that specific

messages would be prepared for this specific advocacy goal and can be implemented under a direct advocacy activity with NACO for NACP III) )

### **EXPECTED OUTCOMES:**

The objectives stated can and would be realized by undertaking activities and events that would be listed later in this document. The activities would be tailored to specific objectives and will be undertaken in a phased manner to correspond to the overall design of the advocacy strategy

### **Therefore some of the expected outcomes include but are not limited to:**

- Greater understanding among HIV positive people that positive people themselves are capable of addressing and confronting the virus and the development issues around the spread of the HIV epidemic
- Increased knowledge and understanding among the general populations as well as key stakeholders that the network of positive people is the vehicle designed to achieve the above goal.
- Acceptance of INP+ as a network that stands for *all* positive people and that takes active consideration of specific and contextual problems of certain groups that may not be part of the mainstream and their realities including IV drug users, sex workers, men who have sex with men or people with alternate sexualities. This also will have to include positive people from States in India that have markedly challenging political, social and cultural contexts like the north eastern states.
- The creation of a general perception of credibility for the networks and the process of their networking, partnership and implementation including fostering of an expectation of success for the idea and realization of INP+ goals and objectives.
- Increased awareness, credibility and acceptance by HIV positive people of INP+ objectives and programmes and those of its affiliated networks
- Strengthened leadership potential and political support for INP+ in India especially for the State and district level networks
- Increased sustained funding for INP+ and for networks at the State, district and Taluka level from in-country national programme sources and from donors;
- Increased consensus between government and civil society on the implementation of INP+ models like GIPA, involvement and empowerment of positive women etc for relevant HIV programming
- Enhanced participation of the private sector in capacity building within the network of positive people in recognition of long term gains of supporting the networks
- Demonstrated ownership of the network by all HIV positive people through a 20-30 percent increase in network membership across the board

## **MEASURING THE IMPACT OF ADVOCACY AND COMMUNICATIONS EFFORTS:**

Feedback in terms of evaluation, measurement and reviews is crucial. This is a function that would be used to gauge the attainment of the objectives. This could be done through the adoption of at least one of the suggested measurement techniques listed below. The feedback function should pervade each phase, as an-ongoing continuous activity under the advocacy strategy.

1. Tracking studies
2. Time analysis surveys
3. Focus groups
4. Opinion polls
5. Content and thematic analysis of the news and opinion articles published in the media

Adoption of any or some of these scientific measurement techniques would require training of available personnel or recruitment of experts in the field to conduct the assessment. . Ideally principles of GIPA should be followed in the evaluation process as well.

These assessments can be used at any point during the campaign as decided by the networks. It can be used at the beginning, and at the end of phases, or any time in between.

A pre-test is also suggested, using any or some of these measurement techniques just before the commencement of the first phase of the advocacy strategy to determine the current status and establishing a benchmark with which the phases and the objectives could be measured in the future as the activities come into play. Again the role of experts and professionals or in-house training is important for this purpose.

Feedback is a crucial component of communication in that it is the response that comes in during the entire communication flow, and becomes the basis needed to take decisions regarding the way forward. Feedback would include internally generated responses through the holding of meetings, workshops and conferences by all those involved in the communication process; a continuation, for instance of the kind of advocacy workshop held in November 2004. A sustained advocacy and communications campaign in support of networks of positive people can only be achieved through enhanced coordination of all the networks and their affiliated agencies and partners, civil society and government programmes. Many members will be required to meet regularly to plan advocacy activities and to assess their challenges and progress.

## **COORDINATION MEETINGS:**

For the purposes of Internal advocacy as well as to help with the coordination for the implementation of the advocacy strategy plan, it is suggested that at least four all networks meetings be held annually that would involve representative members of the national state and district levels members. A second tier should be instituted where a similar process is repeated with representative members from the state, district and Taluka levels. These meetings should be designed to fulfill objectives outlined in 1 and 2

above as well as to enhance the levels of information sharing and coordination presently practiced by the networks.

### **TARGET AUDIENCES:**

This strategy can work and provide guidance to all four levels of the PLHA network in the country: National, State, District and Taluka levels. Each level would focus on the audience specific and relevant to it and adapt the activities as necessary in order to elicit support and action. Target audience tiers and demarcation would be established according to identified priorities.

For clarity, our target audience or the object of communication for this advocacy strategy are both the internal, namely HIV positive people and the external, namely partners of the network of positive people including Government programmes and bodies like SACS, NACO, various ministries donor agencies and bilateral agencies and the UN.

Therefore for the internal audience, the aim would be to articulate in the communication campaign the concrete results that INP+ is looking for and the actual impact of the achievements of INP+ on the daily life of people living with HIV in India. For the external audience, the advocacy strategy is focusing on an external public and the partners of the networks of positive people, showing the effectiveness of the various partnerships of positive people and the successes of the network.

But it should be noted that the identification of who is to be reached by the advocacy and communications programme is one of the most important parts of this strategy. Any campaign undertaken must aim at specific arms of the society. Experience has shown that it is not cost effective, nor is it easy to maintain the impact of an advocacy campaign for a long time if it is directed to all audiences with a message that is not specifically designed and targeted at them..

For this reason, key groups should be strategically identified, groups that have both the structure and capacity to reach or exert influence on their wider memberships and others in society. That way, the groups can help to expand the campaign by encouraging public debates, promote policy change and sustain public and donor interest in INP+.

The following groups are identified as strategic audiences for the INP+ Advocacy efforts:

#### A. Media Groups in India

The media is a crucial partner for building mass public support for positive people and the PLHA networks. The investment made in building relationships with editors and journalists could lead to the publication of articles that will inform a wider general public, including some of the specialized interests within national programmes. Media advocacy groups like CFAR, PRIA, Breakthrough etc as well as Press clubs and the institutes where Mass communications and journalists are trained as professionals are important entry points into the media community. Journalists Association, editor's guilds,

associations of newspaper publishers, and similar groups both national and vernacular should be brought in as strategic partners by INP+. These efforts should not be one off as in the past but rather should be conducted in an organized and consistent manner over a period of time. One of the best ways to establish this kind of relation is to arrange special briefings not only with reporters and journalists, but also exclusive briefings with media executives who call the shots inside the newsrooms on a fairly regular basis. Some of the reporters, journalists and media executives could also be invited to INP+ communication workshops to tap ideas from there on an on-going basis. Another way to ensure media coverage that may not be a true partnership but ensures that issues remain on top of people's minds is to invite and enroll well known figures as ambassadors for INP+. Film personalities and public figures may be invited to be INP+ Ambassadors and their presence at events will ensure media coverage.

There need to be two strategies that have to be followed for the media: One that will result in building capacity within the media and inculcating long term partnerships with members of the media community. This may include repeated and sustained activities like exposure visits, one on one conversation, media consultations and conferences. The other strategy will be to keep the media abreast of and feed it regularly with stories of success as well as information about activities of INP+.

One of the ways of undertaking the above in a concrete and impactful manner could be setting up effective and well staffed **media cells** within the District, State and National level network bodies.

#### B. INP+ Partner networks and PLHAs

INP+ and its affiliated structures at the state, district and taluka levels are allies and key in the popularization of the network as a concept and to an effective implementation of the INP+ advocacy strategy. They also serve as a depository of INP+ information and experience and are well placed to work closely with national media organizations, planning interviews with government and donor community and organizing public forums. This constituency is also the ideal target audience for INP+ internal advocacy messages. INP+ needs to give out a clear mandate for all its internal members and office bearers as to how they need to take forward the external advocacy.

#### C. Clergy and Religious Groups

Religious leaders have access to and exercise moral authority with large numbers of people with whom they could advocate on behalf of INP+. Therefore, the INP+ Secretariat and the various structures at the country level, need to make a concerted attempt to brief (and gain the support of) religious leaders. A plan could also be devised in consultation with each major religious group for spreading the word on INP+ as well as about issues of involving positive people in decision making roles. If possible religious congregations should be impressed to create examples by upholding the principles of rights and equality and GIPA as part of their ongoing activities. In some states like the North East certain religious groups play a very critical role in how the overall population reacts to particular issues and in these states this target audience needs to be treated as most important and be given the greatest priority while designing activities and messages.

Working with religious groups could also have the advantage of raising awareness among some congregations in donor countries who could also become advocates for positive people in their respective countries.

#### D. Think-Tanks /Civic and Professional Organizations

INP+ advocates and communicators should seek to maintain regular contacts with academia, professional organizations and think tanks, to assist them by providing accurate information regarding global and regional trends in the epidemic as well as in learning lessons from other countries. A continued interest by this group of organizations may also help to maintain at least at the intellectual level a sustained campaign in support of INP+. During the advocacy workshop the teams came up with an observation regarding a lack of urgency about HIV issues among the general non HIV positive population and especially among the professional community. It was also noted that HIV positive people who were professionally qualified and economically independent were not part of the network and its regular programmes. It will therefore be necessary to design an innovative plan to involve the professional community for example by creating an honorary membership and creating opportunities for them to get involved and contribute to the programmes of INP+. A well publicized award for the “Friend of INP+” or “Friend of the positive network” can be instituted and well publicized on a monthly basis. Personal testimonies of professionals who are involved with the issues of positive people and how this has changed their own understanding and commitment to the issue is another way of creating an environment that is more inviting for participation by professionals, both who are HIV positive and those who are not.

#### E. Business Groups including pharmaceutical companies

While recognizing that attracting the support for INP+ in business groups would require concrete actions beyond advocacy, efforts should be made to provide relevant information and gain their attention. In India INP+ has gained considerable ground with the business community by involving the confederation of Indian Industries and other such business group. Businesses are guided by their own profit making strategies and it will be important to peg advocacy on both fronts for the business community: Urging their participation under their corporate social responsibility umbrella as well as providing them with cost benefit analysis of the cost of inaction. It will be important to create an economic argument that shows businesses that their non involvement in the care and support agenda of INP+ would cause them greater damage due to loss of manpower in the long run.

It is also important to work with pharmaceutical companies especially the larger companies that are guiding the generic drug agenda in the country and can impact the decisions that India takes under the WTO.

The above advocacy would need the preparation of key advocacy technical papers that provide a clear direction and show the long term impact of decisions that are taken now.

These papers should be given out as part of an advocacy tool kits especially prepared for heads of business houses and pharmaceutical companies.

Simultaneously it is important to involve the media regarding the role that businesses and pharmaceutical companies can play-this will create a second tier of pressure group and indirect advocacy with Pharmaceuticals and businesses.

#### F. Politicians and political bodies; Policy makers and key Government programmes and ministries:

Policy advocacy is a specific niche but a very important component of advocacy. However in order for political advocacy to be successful there needs to be a strong fact based focus to the messages that are delivered as part of the policy advocacy programme. This requires research and critical analysis of existing policies and programmes of the Government as well as a proactive approach that provides alternative and operational suggestions. So if the advocacy message is that a particular law needs to be changed the follow up message also needs to contain answers to why the law needs to change, what precise changes need to be incorporated and how this can be done. This is one of the reasons that policy advocacy is the hardest to show impact and results but when it does it is the most far reaching and impactful advocacy component of all. It is important therefore to incorporate certain guidelines for policy advocacy within the advocacy and research wing proposed as part of this document. For example during the advocacy workshop it was discussed that the distribution of resources particularly with regard to the ARV roll out between so called low prevalence and high prevalence was not in keeping with principles of human rights and equity. Also the lack of guidelines on ARV drug dosage regimens for children – paediatric dosages – was a cause for concern. There were also issues pertaining to policies and laws that impact women and MSM community that need to be addressed.

This is especially significant in light of the design and implementation of NACP III. Identification of key lacunae in the National programme and specific inputs that need to contribute to the INP+ agenda need to be isolated. These need to be written out as technical handouts and position papers for discussion with NACO director and Joint Directors. This strategy papers suggests holding round table meetings with heads of NACO and SACS to lobby for changes in the NACP III document especially focusing on drug availability and roll out, drug regimen and regimen guidelines for different segments of the PLHA population and GIPA implementation.

Most important under policy advocacy is to ensure that denial by authorities regarding the extent of the HIV epidemic ends. Over the last 10 years, there has been constant battles over numbers between the non government community , the health Ministry and NACO. It is important that INP+ brings out regular updates on the situation of the epidemic and simultanepously works with leaders to allow for a larger understanding of the epidemic that does not focus on numbers and is not in denial of the enormity of the issues and the challenges before the country.

#### H. Pressure groups and lobby groups including activists

This is an important target group that can be a good ally for INP+. Groups that lobby for certain issues like environment or legal reform can be co-opted for advocating on behalf

of HIV positive people and their issues and concerns. This would provide both visibility as well as validate the cause that the networks are fighting for.

Other groups to be targeted include:

- Parliamentarians and various committees that are constituted especially those that impact issues around HIV
- State level governments, assemblies, offices at the district and Taluka levels
- Indian academia and intellectuals
- Media-in a general sense, including the traditional media
- Traditional and Community leaders
- Students and young people including youth groups and college bodies like DUSU etc
- Women groups
- Business community from small scale traders to big business houses and pharmaceutical companies including the chambers of commerce, associations like the FICCI and the CII
- Politicians and Technocrats
- Military and para-military organizations
- Educational leaders and administrators

**RESEARCH:**

The strength of any advocacy campaign or communication programme is the research and the data that can be provided to validate the messages that the advocates are propounding. In order that research and documentation is available to those taking forward the advocacy it will be important to develop a research agenda for INP+. Project proposals for programming and funding should in principle include a research component that fuels necessary participatory action research studies that can provide advocates with success stories. It is important therefore **to set up a research and monitoring wing** within the proposed advocacy cell. If funds are a challenge, INP+ can partner with other research organisations so as not to require large fund allocations and yet be able to develop some research based advocacy papers. One of the first activities that this research cell might undertake is to provide ethical guidelines for research studies on PLHA and marginalized groups. If the research and monitoring wing will provide the data and the stories to go with them it will be simpler and more effective for network advocates to talk about increased allocation and funding for advocacy programmes and capacity building within the networks for effective advocacy etc.

Capacity building for networks on conducting research will be an important component of the research process, and in many ways will lay the foundation for a successful execution of the research design.

**THE MESSAGES:**

The messages to be communicated have to be succinct, concise and concrete. They must be easily understandable, brief and tailored to the specific objective and the phase of the advocacy.

The first thing is to come up with a succinct vision and disseminate it widely. The vision statement and document should become part of every advocacy package to every target audience.

During the advocacy workshop the participants came up with a draft vision statement :

*All people, adults and children, living with HIV in India, live a life of dignity, free of stigma and discrimination and have access to social and legal recourse for violations of their human right including their right to access drugs and treatment and are involved in keeping with principles of GIPA in all prevention, care and support programmes and activities in the country.*

It is also useful to develop short slogans and taglines that become part of the core identity of INP+ and the various programmes and principles it stands for. Some of these could focus on:

- INP+ needs your support. INP+ could support you too.
- The network is about you – It is your strength and your tool.
- When you support the network you are implementing GIPA.

Creative professionals should be involved in detailing how the message would be presented and the various ways it can be fashioned. At each level of implementation, different messages can be developed by different state level or district level networks.

Essentially however the messages should include:

- INP+ and networking of HIV positive people is the only way to get the critical issues addressed.
- Networks are a support structure for positive people and it is the only way to address GIPA as well as combat stigma and discrimination.
- HIV positive people all over the country including women and the MSM community understand and are willing to live by the principles that can make a change in the overall quality of their lives
- Professionals and other intelligentsia support INP+ efforts by contributing time and resources
- Treatment is a prime concern and concerted efforts need to be made to come up with consensus solutions for equitable access

There is need for clearly defined messages and there should be fidelity in the content of the message as different levels of the network operators begin to campaign and advocate.

### **PROPOSED ACTIVITIES:**

This list of activities can by no means be exhaustive, however some of these suggestions can easily be adapted at various levels (national, state and district) for INP+

- a) Enhancing the capacity of the advocacy cell within INP+ and expanding the same to be a generic feature of all networks at the state, and district levels. The advocacy cell need to produce an annual advocacy tool kit that addresses the key

- focus identified within the overall advocacy framework. The tool kit can be generic with specific insert elements that are pertinent to individual target audiences enumerated above.
- b) Creating a research and monitoring wing within the advocacy cell that feeds into the advocacy
  - c) Setting up awards and announcements around *Friends of positive people* structure to involve professionals who are not positive
  - d) Strengthening the positive speakers bureau and enlarging the bureau activities into an institution that also trains positive advocates in talking about HIV issues within the framework of national and global policies. The institute will impart current up to date information on how certain policies are being formulated and how they impact the situation of HIV positive people
  - e) Documenting on a continuous and consistent basis and then circulating widely, the formation of INP+ and its history, preparation of fact sheets, frequently asked questions with answers, and in particular wide circulation of a popular version of INP+ strategic objectives and goals and vision statement
  - f) Arranging lobbying meetings with consortiums of business houses including pharmaceutical companies together with Government officials
  - g) Establishing a training of trainers programme to train a pool of personnel who can run treatment education centers to be established alongside care and support centers
  - h) Presentation cum review workshops involving all stakeholders at regular intervals to discuss key updates and inputs into revising overall national programmes including ARV roll outs, GIPA implementation etc.
  - i) Establishing a long term sensitization and training programme for SACS personnel and other nodal Government bodies
  - j) GIPA campaign. This needs to be at the heart of the advocacy programme. A multi media campaign involving print television and various other media creating succinct and attractive information packs highlighting how GIPA impacts the overall effectiveness of HIV programmes providing success story examples. Integrating positive speakers bureau with this activity would also benefit the overall impact of the GIPA campaign
  - k) Advocating for policy change: Apart from meetings and consultations with key officials and policy makers, it is important also to generate advocacy materials that are easy to read and comprehend. The advocacy cell together with the proposed research wing will need to identify key policies that require modification along with a clear definition of the desired changes. These need to be succinctly enunciated as part of an attractive yet concise element of the overall advocacy tool kit.
  - l) Identify and promote HIV positive people with technical expertise in the various areas of INP+ programme in a bid to demonstrate capacity within INP+ to manage its execution effectively. This can be achieved through the building, development and maintenance of a database of experts
  - m) Organize Indian intellectual capacity forums that will debate, promote existing blueprints for sectoral cooperation needs, and issue new ones as necessary.

- n) Sponsor and encourage the writing of scholarly essays, dissertations, doctoral thesis on Networking for HIV + people , organizing seminars in schools, colleges, research centers, universities and so on across the country
- o) Regular press briefings, question and answer sessions, Video News releases, press statements to announce new projects, answer questions and special media executive sessions including heads of governments, ministers and leaders.
- p) Sponsoring conferences and workshops on INP+ for members of the public and specific target audiences including some that would be conducted in local languages.
- q) Using local festivals in the rural areas across the continent in order to engage the skill of interpersonal communication. Local musicians, artists, actors, comedians community leaders, traditional rulers, religious leaders have to be brought to play as well in ensuring that the INP+ message gets to as much people in the grassroots as possible.
- r) Using sports as a vehicle of interpersonal communication, sporting events, tournaments, marches, games can be organized at various levels to create awareness on HIV positive people, their network and their issues and to also launch particular INP+ projects and activities since sports is a symbol of well being and the use of the medium will re emphasize the way in which positive people can contribute to development issues
- s) Create specific forums of partnership with NGOs and other civil society working on HIV/AIDS to ensure that GIPA is not being a tokenistic addendum to their programmes but can be truly operationalised through a concerted partnership between NGOs working on HIV and the network of HIV positive people.
- t) Establish an activist wing that responds proactively to incidents of human rights violations faced by PLHA in various states in India or for eg to policy changes that are detrimental to the well being of HIV positive people
- u) Increased alliance building activities. These need not necessarily rely on one on one meetings or conferences and seminars but can be effectively achieved using ICT solutions with web based chat rooms and email groups
- v) Identify a popular media figure, film star, Television personality, sports star etc as an ambassador for INP+ who will be present at all INP+ events and who through regular public statements will ensure that key issues remain in the public eye.

### **THE MEDIA AS A CHANNEL OF DISSEMINATION:**

Although media can be effectively used as a means of strategic influence, it is essentially a means of delivering the messages.

The following then are the exact means of delivering the messages of INP+:

1. Documentation: Fact sheets, press releases, press statements, press briefings, interviews, newsletters, documents, publications etc
2. Creating and maintaining database of any kind of information needed for now or future.
3. Video News Releases ( VNR)

4. Airtime on Radio and TV
5. Internet Web sites
6. Arts and Culture: Plays, drama, comedy, local festivals, and movies
7. Sports: Games, tournaments, matches are powerful tools of creating awareness and building credibility
8. Seminars, conferences, workshops, briefings, community meetings, forums, panel discussions, outreaches, and evaluation meetings.
9. Open campaigns, rallies
10. Writing and essay competitions
11. Academic presentations, dissertations, thesis etc

### **PLANNING THE PROGRAMME OF ACTIVITIES:**

This should be an important aspect of the advocacy action plan especially because one is dealing with a changing environment, there has to be a capacity to re-adjust to new circumstances and keep the group of advocates and communicators coordinated and focused.

In planning, the operators, communicators and advocates would consider the following:

- Planning should allow the organizers to identify how best to communicate this message and who can help to communicate it. The *one size fits all* policy does not work and other assumptions initially made can be proven wrong.
- Identifying a niche, and value additions if there are varying efforts being carried out to pass on the message and how to build synergies with other players.
- Testing ideas with others who are carrying out similar work as well as with members of a target audience.
- Defining contingency planning to deal with unforeseen circumstances.
- Defining what the target audience should do. This is important because one should not make people guess what they should do. They need to know exactly what is expected of them.
- Since passing different or inconsistent messages will not work. Joint planning is very important.
- Mobilizing resources
- Agreeing on the type of material that is necessary for objectives of a given phase of the campaign.

### **ADVOCACY AND COMMUNICATION MATERIALS:**

The first task of a communications and advocacy campaign is the definition of a message and also the adoption of slogans and catch-phrases. Also advocacy and communication would require specific material to communicate the intended message.

In addition to the media package listed above, material could entail posters, flyers, briefing packages, speeches, etc. From the onset it would be necessary to decide what type of material is required to address a specific target audience; and who is best placed to produce such material.

## Types of Material

### **1. Slogans**

At all stages, the advocacy efforts need to identify clear information goals and a “message” that can be incorporated into the materials used to support outreach activities. A slogan of some kind would be useful to complement visual presentation of materials. A slogan must be catchy so that people everywhere can quickly grasp its essence, which makes INP+ an accessible and visible network of positive people. In order to support communication activities (speaking to leaders, briefing the press, attending a workshop, etc), the programme needs to have information materials and messages that will meet the special needs of specific audiences.

### **2. Specialized material :**

Certain groups will require more detailed and technical information. A roundtable of business people may have more specialized interests than a group of high school students but it has been found that, working on a limited budget in given circumstances, it is possible to use a single set of information materials for a range of audiences. These can take the form of press releases, backgrounders, pamphlets, etc but if they are written at a level that a well-educated 15 year old can understand they will work for most audiences. However, working with Radio and Television would require different approach in preparing material for broadcasting for millions living in rural community who cannot read.

### **C. Reports on the network and its activities:**

Issuance of new reports could be publicized and made available on request. However, it is important that all materials comprise a consistent messages. This implies that the identification of challenges faced by INP+, what needs to be communicated to different target audiences and the purposes of this communication needs to be done together with all the various networks and affiliated partners.

### Preparation of material:

The preparation of advocacy materials requires expertise and skills. There are professional organizations that provide communication services and support for developing advocacy and communication materials for development needs. One of the tasks therefore will be to identify such organizations and utilize their skills. Some partners and stakeholders may be in a better position to assist INP+ access these organizations and their services, so it would be advisable to discuss this in a joint stakeholder meeting. UN organizations could also provide technical assistance to INP+ in preparing programmes and materials since various UN agencies have different mandates and these could be tapped for support.

## **COORDINATION MODALITIES**

### Coordination structures:

The fact that the communication and advocacy programme is to be implemented at various levels (national, state and district level) by several network partners and affiliates

at different locations and is aimed at reaching various audiences in each of the locations, presupposes the existence of a flexible and effective coordinating structure; flexible enough to allow partners' initiative in preparing and conducting their specific programmes in accordance with specificities of the target audiences and the environment in which they operate and effective enough to ensure consistency of the campaign.

To achieve such flexibility and consistency, the INP+ secretariat will need to plan a structure that allows for continued coordination between the secretariat, the state and district level networks, as well as INP's operational partners - those who would implement or facilitate the implementation of the communication and advocacy campaigns. A calendar of activities, a division of labour and time frame needs to be agreed upon. Clear benchmarks would need to be identified and agreed upon from the beginning, and monitoring mechanisms would be required. Joint planning, assessment and coordinated implementation would help to address the issue of coherence, consistency and timing of messages as well as assist in monitoring the progress being made.

To achieve such coordination, an effective management structure and a clear system of communications among all the stakeholder agencies and INP+ needs to be developed and agreed to by the participating members. An important step to consider in this respect may be the formation of an **advocacy working group** within the INP+ secretariat, with representation from the state level networks

### **THE WAY FORWARD**

A dissemination workshop and consultative meeting is proposed to discuss and create a workable agenda that follows the advocacy strategy document, so that all network members, and partner organizations are involved and take ownership of the process of advocacy. This process of consultation will also build consensus within the network and will impact how the advocacy strategy is implemented in future.



**ACTIVITY LOG FRAME****Key Goals identified for advocacy**

- All people living with HIV in India live a life of dignity, free of stigma and discrimination
- All people living with HIV in India have social and legal recourse to human rights violations
- All people living with HIV in India who require treatment have access to drugs including ARV and have access to lab monitoring tests to improve their quality of life
- All sectors involved in implementation of programmes for HIV prevention, care and support fully understand and operationalise principles of GIPA (Greater Involvement of People Living with HIV)
- All HIV positive people have the opportunity to dialogue and network

<b>Objectives</b>	<b>Activities</b>	<b>Target Audiences</b>	<b>Key messages</b>	<b>Partners</b>
To create awareness for and ownership around INP+	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Development of key brand message</li> <li>- Development of a vision statement that will be ratified by all network partners and affiliated organizations</li> <li>- Development of advocacy tool kit</li> <li>- Fact sheets and FAQ sheets about INP+</li> <li>- Development of audio and visual campaign materials and partner with channels for broadcast eg STAR Care</li> <li>- Invite public figures like film stars, sports stars and television personalities as INP+ ambassadors</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Media groups</li> <li>- INP+ partner networks and affiliates</li> <li>- PLHAs</li> <li>- Clergy and Religious Groups</li> <li>- Think-Tanks /Civic and Professional Organizations</li> <li>- Business Groups including pharmaceutical companies</li> <li>- Politicians and political bodies; Policy makers and key Government programmes and ministries</li> <li>- Pressure groups and lobby groups including activists</li> <li>- Young people and general population</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- INP+ and the network of positive people is a strong and coordinated platform for working with HIV positive people and issues that impact their lives</li> <li>- HIV prevention is not going to be effective without meaningful involvement of HIV positive people</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Media advocacy groups like CFAR and PRIA</li> <li>- Creative content development groups to assist in developing advocacy materials</li> <li>- PLHAs and affiliate networks</li> </ul>

<p>To build credibility for INP+, its partners and its projects with special reference to GIPA, human rights and access to drugs (with special reference to NACP III)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Institute and build capacity of an advocacy and media cell at the secretariat as well as at the state and district level</li> <li>- Create a research unit within the advocacy media cell</li> <li>- Develop position papers on key issues within the themes of access to drugs, GIPA and Human rights and stigma</li> <li>- Collate a best practice document on each of these thematic issues</li> <li>- Arrange lobbying meetings through consortium of business groups to advocate with pharmaceutical companies</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- National Programme including NACO, SACS and UN agencies</li> <li>- Donor Agencies</li> <li>- Pharmaceutical Companies</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Collaboration with the network of positive people will result in more effective and relevant policies and programmes for HIV prevention and care and support</li> <li>- The network has useful insights and plans to offer strategies for ART availability and roll out</li> <li>- The network is able to provide critical and useful inputs for various components of NACP III</li> </ul>	<p>Media communication ---</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- organisations who will provide capacity building workshops and trainings</li> <li>- National research organisation for resource sharing and partnership</li> <li>- NACO and health ministry</li> <li>- NGO partners</li> <li>- International NGOS working on HIV prevention like FHI, Gates Foundation, Population Fund etc</li> <li>- Business coalitions like FICCI and CII as well as individual pharma companies like Ranbaxy</li> </ul>
<p>To create a perception of leadership and capacity of People living with HIV and their network (as opposed to NGOs working on HIV/AIDS issues)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Round table meetings and seminars with media practitioners</li> <li>- Development of innovative and concise <i>How to</i> and <i>how not to</i> advocacy cards</li> <li>- Create regular activity update that showcases individual and collective achievements of the network and its members at the national and</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Media groups</li> <li>- Donor community</li> <li>- Heads of National programmes- NACO and SACS</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The PLHA groups has leadership qualities and capacity to articulate key national and global issues</li> <li>- Better learning is possible if the trainers are practitioners and those affected and living with the issues that those who do not</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Media advocacy groups like CFAR</li> <li>- Innovative communication material design groups</li> <li>- Network members</li> </ul>

	<p>international arena</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Establish a sensitization programme for new SACS officials</li> </ul>			
<p>To mobilize the target audiences for action</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Institute a Friends of Positive people award</li> <li>- Create an advocacy event around the award ceremony</li> <li>- Create lessons learnt conference and felicitate Government departments and programmes who have in the past been instrumental in creating supportive policies. Use the event for advocating for change in existing policies and providing key people with technical position papers</li> <li>- Strengthen positive speakers bureau</li> <li>- Provide regular press briefings and media notes to key media organizations, newspapers and electronic media</li> <li>- Establish different commemorative days to provide varying platforms for advocacy some examples may include positive</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- General Populations</li> <li>- Student bodies in schools and Colleges</li> <li>- Govt. Partner organisations and programme departments</li> <li>- Media and Press Bureaus</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Support to the network of positive people is not supporting an isolated community but supporting everyone's future</li> <li>- Global experience of GIPA shows better results in overall HIV/AIDS policy and programme</li> <li>- Strengthening the network amounts to strengthening the overall response to the epidemic</li> </ul>	<p>Radio and Television channels</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- International funding and implementing organisations like the Richard gere Foundation</li> <li>- Training organisations that offer public speaking and personality enhancing courses</li> <li>- Network affiliates and state level networks</li> </ul>

	<p>women's day, Equality in Access to drugs day etc.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Contribute to celebrations of other commemorative events like Human Rights, labour day etc</li> <li>- Establish and activist wing</li> </ul>			
Internal advocacy for greater synergy in advocacy goals and network objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Organize coordination meetings (At least four all network meetings are suggested annually)</li> <li>- Hold a dissemination and ratification meeting to ensure ownership and buy in of the advocacy strategy by all members of the network and its affiliates and partners</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- All PLHAs and members of state, district and Taluka level network members</li> <li>- Members of affiliated organizations and partner networks</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The network is a platform for all positive voices</li> <li>- While there may be different priorities regionally of smaller communities the joint goal is to achieve greater visibility for positive people and their concerns within the overall response to the epidemic</li> <li>- Unless all positive people speak with one voice the goals will not be realised</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Facilitators with experience in participatory policy and planning for not for profit organisations and networks</li> <li>- State and district level PLHA networks</li> </ul>

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**Comments and queries to:**  
**Venu Arora/N.Ramakrishnan**  
**Ideosync Media Combine**  
**Mobile: 9810731552/9810273883**  
**Email: [varora@ideosyncmedia.org](mailto:varora@ideosyncmedia.org)**  
**[nram@ideosyncmedia.org](mailto:nram@ideosyncmedia.org)**