



# SAKSHAM PRAMAAN

## REGIONAL INSTITUTE FOR CAPACITY BUILDING AND EVALUATION

### PROGRESS REPORT MARCH 2025 – MARCH 2026

COLLEGE OF SOCIAL WORK, NIRMALA NIKETAN  
(EMPOWERED AUTONOMOUS)

38, New Marine Lines, Churchgate, Mumbai, Maharashtra, 4000

## Progress Report – March 2025 to March 2026

### Project Brief:

India remains committed to ending the AIDS epidemic by 2030 in line with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the National Strategic Plan (NSP) vision of achieving “Three Zeros” — zero new HIV infections, zero AIDS-related deaths, and zero discrimination.

The ***Saksham Pramaan*** project, implemented by the **Tata Institute of Social Sciences (TISS)** under the Global Fund Grant (2021–2024, extended to 2025–2027), supported by **the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare** and the **National AIDS Control Organization (NACO)** in strengthening India’s HIV/AIDS response. As the Principal Recipient, NACO partners with TISS as the Sub-Recipient to conduct external evaluations of Targeted Interventions (TI) and the Link Worker Scheme (LWS) under the National AIDS Control Programme (NACP). The project aims to evaluate and enhance the effectiveness of HIV prevention and control initiatives nationwide. TISS collaborates with six academic institutions as Sub-Sub Recipients (SSRs), each functioning as a Regional Institute of Capacity Building and Evaluation (RICE) to manage evaluations across six zones: Central, East, North, North-East, South, and West.

During August 2021 to March 2024, a total of 35 SACS/DACS/SAPS were covered under Targeted Intervention (TI) and Link Worker Scheme (LWS) evaluations, which were strategically organized into five zones by the Tata Institute of Social Sciences. All five RICE partners were responsible for empaneling and training evaluators, coordinating with SACS, preparing evaluation calendars, and conducting TI and LWS evaluations within their respective zones.

The College of Social Work (Autonomous), Nirmala Niketan, Mumbai, serves as the Regional Institute of Capacity Building and Evaluation (RICE) for the West Zone, covering Goa, Karnataka, Maharashtra, and the Mumbai District, with responsibilities including independent evaluations, capacity building, coordination with SACS and NACO, and quality assurance.

During the grant period from March 2025 to March 2027, Sub-Sub Recipients (SSRs) manage evaluator payments through funds channeled via TISS as the Sub-Recipient and are responsible for developing state- and region-specific evaluation plans, strengthening evaluator capacity and monitoring systems, and contributing to the achievement of National Strategic Plan (NSP) goals, particularly the reduction of new HIV infections and AIDS-related deaths.

## Project Staff-

- **Principal Investigator** - Dr. Lidwin Dias.
- **Co-Principal Investigator**- Dr. Ronald Yesudas
- **Faculty In-Charge (Program)** – Mr. Anshit Baxi
- **Regional Coordinators**- 1) Ms. Kalpana Gaikwad, 2) Nischita Bhagtani,
- **Finance and Administration Officer** - Ms. Sushma Pagare (March 2025- July 2025), Supriya Ahire (September 2025 onwards)

The project collaborated closely with NACO, TISS, and SACS/DACS offices in various states for multiple activities. These included the empanelment and training of evaluators, scheduling of evaluations, and conducting briefing and debriefing meetings in coordination with SACS. Additionally, the project team undertook monitoring and supervision visits during the evaluation phases and made regular visits to all concerned stakeholders to ensure effective coordination and quality assurance.

## The Total TI and LWS Evaluations Conducted Under Saksham Pramaan-

### In June to July 2025 & Jan to March 2026

State	Total TI & LWS	Evaluators completed the
Maharashtra	150	106
Karnataka	73	64
Mumbai	34	21
Goa	15	12
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>272</b>	<b>203</b>

- The total number of consultants applied to the College of Social Work, Nirmala Niketan, for evaluation- 344
- The initiation of the project experienced a delay due to administrative decisions by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare and NACO. Originally scheduled to begin in March 2024, the project commencement was postponed to February 2025 and officially launched in March 2025. During this period, all Targeted Intervention and Link Worker Scheme evaluations across the country remained pending.
- Upon commencement in March 2025, the project team actively participated in the National Level Training organized by NACO and TISS. During this training, NACO and TISS informed all RICE teams to finalize the pending evaluations by the end of July 2025, marking a clear directive to expedite the evaluation process and achieve set deliverables within the stipulated timeline.
- Following the National Level Training, the project team initiated the empanelment process by advertising and circulating the Expression of Interest (EOI) Google Form to previously engaged evaluators. The call received approximately 300 responses, of which around 200

were from old and experienced consultants and about 100 were from new consultants expressing their interest in participating in evaluation activities across the West Zone.

- A key task during this phase involved updating and verifying the list of empaneled evaluators in coordination with TISS. Each evaluator's profile was carefully cross-checked to ensure accuracy and completeness of information before finalizing the updated list for operational use.
- Simultaneously, the project team organized and conducted a series of introductory virtual and in-person meetings with SACS and DACS officers, with facilitation and support from TISS. These meetings aimed to strengthen coordination, clarify roles and responsibilities, and ensure effective implementation of evaluation activities at both state and district levels.
- Following this, a series of meetings were held for planning the evaluation, preparing the evaluation calendar, finalizing the evaluators, and resolving the concerns raised during the evaluation or empanelment process.
- The details of the meeting are as follows:

Date	State AIDS Control Society.	Mode of Meeting/Purpose
11/04/2025	Goa State AIDS Control Society (GSACS)- Prevention Team	An introductory virtual meeting with SACS officers was conducted.
15/04/2025	Karnataka State AIDS Prevention Society (KSAPS) – Prevention Team	An introductory virtual meeting with SACS officers was conducted.
21/04/2025	Maharashtra State AIDS Control Society (MSACS)- Prevention Team	An introductory In-Person Meeting with MSACS officers was conducted at Wadala
30/04/2025	Maharashtra State AIDS Control Society (MSACS)- Prevention Team	Discussion on the evaluation process. An in-person meeting with MSACS officers was conducted at Wadala
8/ 05/2025	Karnataka State AIDS Prevention Society (KSAPS)	Discussion on the empanelment process, a virtual meeting with KSAPS officers was conducted meeting
20/08/2025	Mumbai District AIDS Control Society (MDACS)	An introductory In-Person Meeting with MDACS officers was conducted at Wadala
10/12/2025	Mumbai District AIDS Control Society (MDACS)	Discussion on the evaluation process, In-Person Meeting with MDACS officers. Wadala
22/12/2025	Maharashtra State AIDS Control Society (MSACS)	Discussion on the empanelment for the evaluation, In-Person Meeting with MSACS, Wadala.

16/01/2026	Maharashtra State AIDS Control Society (MSACS)	Discussion on the finalization of the evaluation calendar, In-Person Meeting with MSACS, Wadala.
16/01/2026	Goa State AIDS Control Society (GSACS)	Discussion on the evaluation process, In-Person Meeting with GSACS Office, Panaji
12/03/2026	Maharashtra State AIDS Control Society (MSACS)	Discussion on evaluation reports, In-Person Meeting with MSACS. Wadala

- After the series of planning meetings with all SACS, the project team received comprehensive strategic information from each SACS regarding the details of Targeted Interventions and Link Worker Schemes. Based on the information provided, the team prepared a detailed evaluation calendar, initiated contact with the identified evaluators, and shared the Terms of Reference (TOR) for empanelment. In alignment with the finalized plan, evaluations were scheduled for two states, Maharashtra and Karnataka, marking the beginning of the structured assessment process, with the evaluation expected to be completed by the end of July.
- Under the *Saksham Pramaan* Project for the 2025–2027 cycle, all project-related expenditures and payment transactions have been managed and disbursed through the Public Finance Management System (PFMS) under the Treasury Service Account. This system ensured transparency, accountability, and compliance with government financial protocols.
- At the commencement of the project, the team encountered several operational challenges. There were delays in salary disbursements, and due to logistical and budgetary constraints, most meetings and training sessions were conducted virtually. Despite these limitations, the team maintained project momentum and ensured the continuity of planned activities.
- Furthermore, even amidst financial challenges, the Regional Coordinators successfully conducted five monitoring visits in Maharashtra and seven in Karnataka during the evaluation period, demonstrating a strong commitment to project objectives and field-level implementation.
- During July and August 2025, the project team was primarily engaged in post-evaluation activities. These included conducting debriefing meetings for the completed evaluations, reviewing and quality-checking evaluation reports, and completing data entry for the evaluation tracker and indicator-wise data entries.
- Post evaluation, the team is primarily engaged in completing financial activities, following up with evaluators for the timely submission of reimbursement documents, and addressing financial queries from the funding agency. This includes discussing issues with evaluators and requesting them to submit appropriate bills and vouchers.
- NACO and the Public Health Foundation of India jointly organized a two-day orientation

meeting on the PFMS (TSA Hybrid New Module) on 17th and 18th August in Udaipur. The team members attended the training program and gained comprehensive knowledge of the PFMS-TSA system.

- Simultaneously, the team coordinated with evaluators to ensure the timely submission of their reimbursement documents. The verification and scrutiny of each evaluator’s vouchers and bills, along with organizing and submitting these documents to TISS, constituted a major administrative task during this period.
- The team conducted virtual interviews with consultants across the West Zone; a total of 132 consultants were interviewed as part of this process.
- NACO and TISS streamlined the empanelment process across India by introducing a standardized matrix-based scoring system for the assessment of consultants. As part of this initiative, the team conducted virtual interviews across the West Zone, during which a total of 132 consultants were interviewed.
- Following the introduction of the new evaluation tool by NACO in October 2025, TISS organized a national-level training programme to facilitate understanding and effective use of the revised tools. The training was conducted in collaboration with SACS, and master trainers also participated in the programme.
- NACO introduced the new TI/LWS Evaluation Tool along with revised Evaluation Guidelines in October 2025. Subsequently, a three-day Training of Trainers on the new tools was organized jointly by NACO and TISS for SSR team members and SACS officers. The training was held in New Delhi in November 2025 and was attended by SSR/ SACS.
- As a continuation of the national training, NACO and TISS recommended organizing zone-wise regional training programmes for academic institutions. Accordingly, the Nirmala Niketan team organized the Maharashtra Regional Training in collaboration with D. Y. Patil Research & Management Institute, Pune, from 16–19 December 2025, with the participation of 65 consultants. In addition, the Karnataka Regional Training was organized in collaboration with the United Theological College, Bengaluru, on 7–8 January 2026, with 27 participants attending the programme. Simultaneously, Mumbai DACS supported the organization of a one-day refresher training programme for 12 newly empanelled evaluators on 25 February 2026 at Wadala. The regional training programmes were attended by a **total of 104 participants**.
- As part of the TI and LWS evaluation, the Nirmala Niketan team, in collaboration with SACS and Mumbai DACS, organized a briefing meeting for all empanelled evaluators before the commencement of the evaluations. After the completion of evaluations in each West Zone state, the Nirmala Niketan team organized and conducted multiple debriefing meetings with SACS and TISS to review findings and address concerns.
- With the completion of evaluations across the West Zone, the honorarium and reimbursement process for evaluators was initiated in February and completed in March, before the close of the financial year.

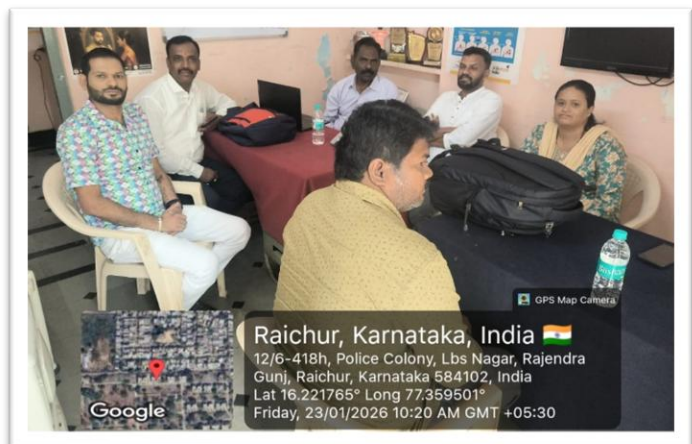
Activities		Description	Number of Participants
------------	--	-------------	------------------------

<b>Virtual Regional Training cum Briefing Meeting.</b>	Maharashtra	10 <sup>th</sup> June 2025 (10.00 am to 6.00 pm)	52
	Karnataka	30 <sup>th</sup> June- 9.30 am to 5.30 pm	55
<b>Total of TI &amp; LWS Evaluated- 119</b>	Maharashtra	58 TI & LWS evaluation in 22 districts.	45 evaluators conducted the evaluation
	Karnataka	61 TI &LWS evaluation in 28 districts.	52 evaluators conducted the evaluation.
<b>Monitoring &amp; Supervision Visits Conducted by Team</b>	Maharashtra & Karnataka	12 visits in June & July 2025	
	Maharashtra, Karnataka, Goa, Mumbai	14 visits in Jan to March 2026	
<b>Debriefing Meeting</b>	Maharashtra	24 <sup>th</sup> , 25 <sup>th</sup> & 30 <sup>th</sup> June 2025	MSACS, evaluators, TIs & RICE team
	Karnataka	14 <sup>th</sup> to 19 <sup>th</sup> July 2025	KSAPS, evaluators, TIs & RICE team.
	Maharashtra	2 <sup>nd</sup> to 5 <sup>th</sup> February 2026	MSACS, evaluators, TIs & RICE team
	Karnataka	29 <sup>th</sup> January 2026	KSAPS, evaluators, TIs & RICE team.
	Goa	21 <sup>st</sup> February 2026	GSACS, Evaluators, TIs & RICE team
	Mumbai	23 <sup>rd</sup> February 2026	MDACS, evaluators, TIs & RICE team
<b>In-person Training</b>	Maharashtra	16 <sup>th</sup> & 19 <sup>th</sup> December 2025	65 Participants
	Karnataka	7 <sup>th</sup> & 8 <sup>th</sup> January 2026	27 participants
	Mumbai	25 <sup>th</sup> February 2026	12 participants
<b>Total of TI &amp; LWS Evaluated – 153</b>	Maharashtra	92 TI & LWS evaluation in 22 districts	62 evaluators conducted the evaluation
	Karnataka	12 TI & LWS evaluation in 29 districts	12 Evaluators conducted the evaluation
	Goa	15 TI & LWS evaluation in 24 districts.	12 evaluators conducted the evaluation
	Mumbai	34 TI & LWS evaluation	23 evaluators conducted the evaluation.
<b>Total Expenditure (March 2025 to March 2026)</b>	Salary &Administrative Costs, Administrative Costs, Institutional Costs, and Evaluator Payments		<b>₹1,65,10,912</b>

National TOT attended in New Delhi in April 2025



Monitoring and Supervision visit to TI & LWS during the evaluation.



3-day Training of Trainers (TOT) on new tools attended by staff in New Delhi in November 2025





Maharashtra Regional Training.



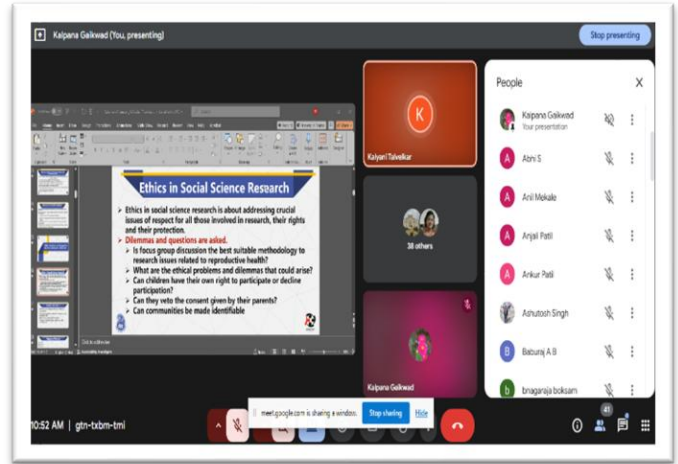
Karnataka Regional Training



Mumbai DACS Training.



The team participated in the National Level Training of Trainers (TOT) program held in Delhi.



A Virtual Refresher Training was organized and conducted by the team before the evaluation.



Monitoring and Supervision visit to TI &LWS during the evaluation.



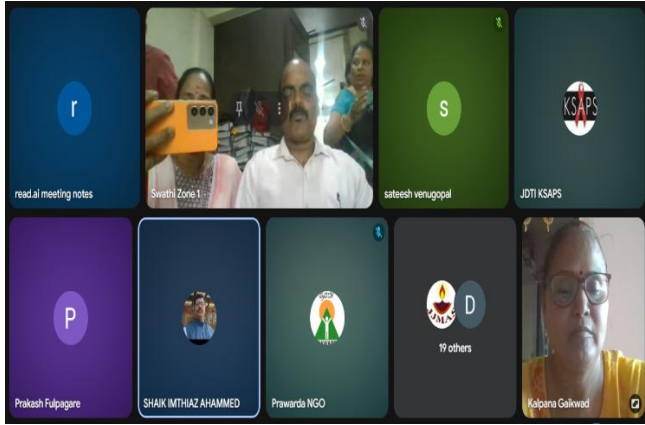
Monitoring and Supervision visit to TI &LWS during the evaluation.



Visit to the ART Center during evaluation



A virtual debriefing meeting with MSACS, evaluators, TI, and the RICE team after the evaluation.



A virtual debriefing meeting with KSAPS, evaluators, TI, and the RICE team after the evaluation



Participated in a two-day orientation meeting on PFMS, organized by NACO and the Public Health Foundation of India.