



**EXTENDING REACH WITH EVIDENCE: A  
JOURNEY THROUGH A RIGHTS-BASED  
HARM REDUCTION PROGRAM IN PAKISTAN**

**NAI ZINDAGI**

Since 1989

**PAKISTAN**



RIGHTS BASED SERVICES FOR PERSONS  
AFFECTED BY DRUG USE, HIV AND AIDS

We aim to work with people and communities affected by drug use, HIV and AIDS and empower them to improve their knowledge, health, socio-economic well being and access to essential services

# OUR APPROACH

- Evidence and needs based programming
- Real time monitoring and analysis
- Operational research and rapid situation assessments



## PREVENTION

Harm Reduction services to prevent transmission of HIV and Hepatitis B & C



## OUT REACH

All our services are based on reaching out to beneficiaries in their own communities



## TESTING & DIAGNOSTICS

HIV & AIDS related diagnostics, testing, counseling and referral services in the community



- Development and training of human resource to work in challenging environments
- Consistent advocacy for rights based approaches to reduce stigma and discrimination



### SPOUSE PROGRAM

Comprehensive HIV prevention and treatment services for spouses



### LINKAGES

Collaboration and networking with various sectors at all levels



### PSM

Procurement supply chain management of health products and warehousing

## MIS

Management Information System for trends analysis and program planning



## POINT OF CARE DIAGNOSTICS

Mobile point of care  
Viral Load Testing for communities



## IN TOUCH

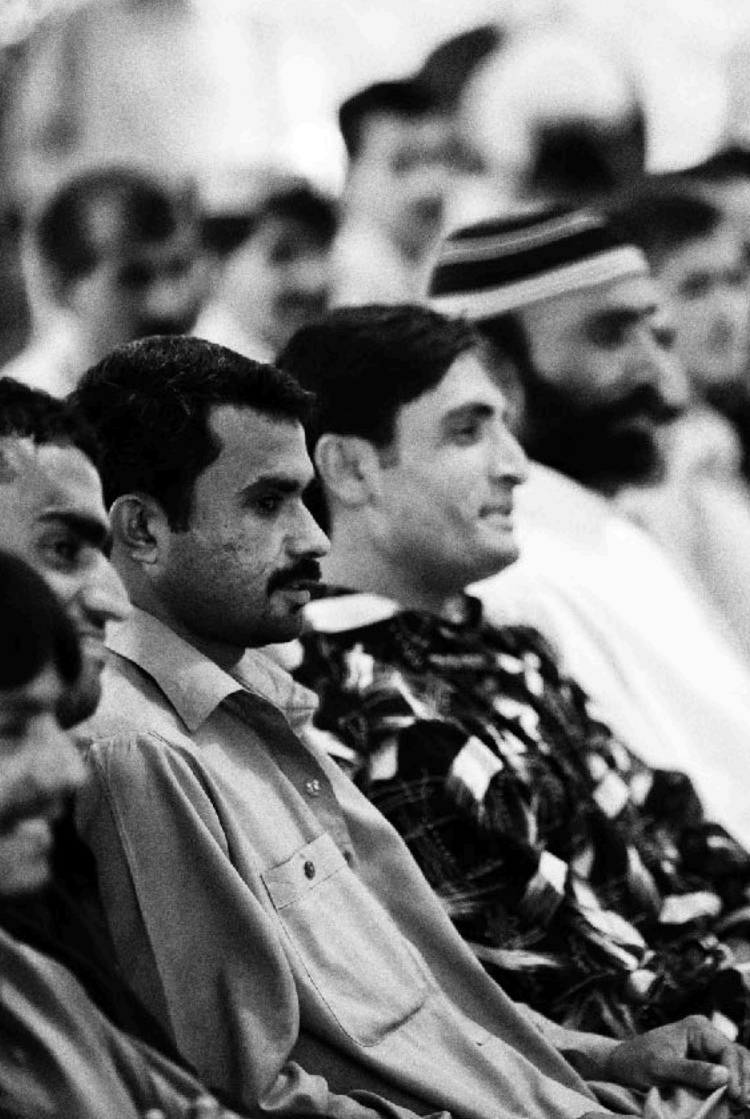
A follow up service through cell phones to monitor adherence of persons on ART



## INNOVATIONS

Pilot innovative interventions to increase accessibility to services among PWID and their spouses





## ART ADHERENCE UNIT (AAU)

The ART Adherence Unit (AAU) is a residential rehabilitation facility for HIV positive persons who inject drugs (PWID) that combines withdrawal management with HIV treatment adherence support.

It aims at stabilising the client so that HIV treatment becomes a realistic and achievable proposition for them.

- Prior to the AAU there was a significant problem with retaining PWID in ART treatment in Pakistan
- AAU attendees were 43-51 times more likely to be adherent in a period of 7-19 months of treatment initiation
- Adherence rates declined overtime much faster , 44.4% for those not attending AAU versus 1.7% for those attending AAU
- Sixty percent of those reporting relapse are also reporting adherence with higher rates among clients of AAU
- In terms of the cascade of services from prevention through to treatment and care, the AAU sits at the threshold of treatment initiation
- Results from the client survey showed an adherence rate of 77.4% for those who had completed residency at AAU

*Based on AAU evaluation by third party and supported by the Global Fund*



# SERVICE DELIVERY DATA FROM 45 DISTRICT LEVEL COPC+ SITES

January 2012 - Dec 2023



- Provide services to around 45,000 PWID annually through multidisciplinary outreach teams in 58 districts of Pakistan
- Distribute 20,000 clean-sterile syringes every day at 500+ hot spots in across Pakistan
- Provide antiseptic dressing and basic medical care to over 3,500 PWID every month
- Reach over 25,000 PWID and spouses with HIV testing & counseling services every year
- Facilitate provision of ARVs to over 6,000 HIV positive PWID and spouses every month through ART Centres in the Public sector
- Monitor adherence to ART



# DATA FROM PRISON INTERVENTION FOR PWUD IN SINDH

Sep 2021 - Dec 2023



- Services in Prisons in Sindh were initiated to address the need for HIV related service delivery for PWUD who end up in prisons
- In Karachi, services have been established in each prison with a team of 2 HTC counsellors, 1 social mobiliser/paramedic and 1 data entry operator
- In the rest of Sindh, services are being provided through existing CoPC+ sites
- Prison services have also been initiated in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa at Central Prison, Peshawar

# DISTRICT AIDS COUNCILS

Dec 2015 - onwards



- District AIDS Councils (DACs) are notified by the District administration and are headed by the Deputy Commissioner of respective districts.
- So far 22 DACs have been notified and most of those are functional and meetings take place where progress is shared by NZT
- The composition includes district administration, health, police, prisons, social welfare, education, local influencers, NGOs and local media.
- DACs help in developing ownership of the HIV response among local authorities and are helpful in seeking their support where required

# POINT OF CARE VIRAL LOAD TESTING

Dec 2021 - onwards



- Point of care viral load testing to monitor treatment efficacy is one of the key components of overall services delivery
- Viral load testing is performed by trained technicians who travel to the intervention districts frequently based on the availability of eligible clients identified through NZMIS.
- 8,140 individual PWID and 720 spouses of PWID have been tested through this approach since the inception of POC VL testing
- Among those tested in 2023, 70% PWID and 77% spouses were found to be virally suppressed

# HEPATITIS C TREATMENT INTERVENTION FOR PWID

Jul 2023 - onwards

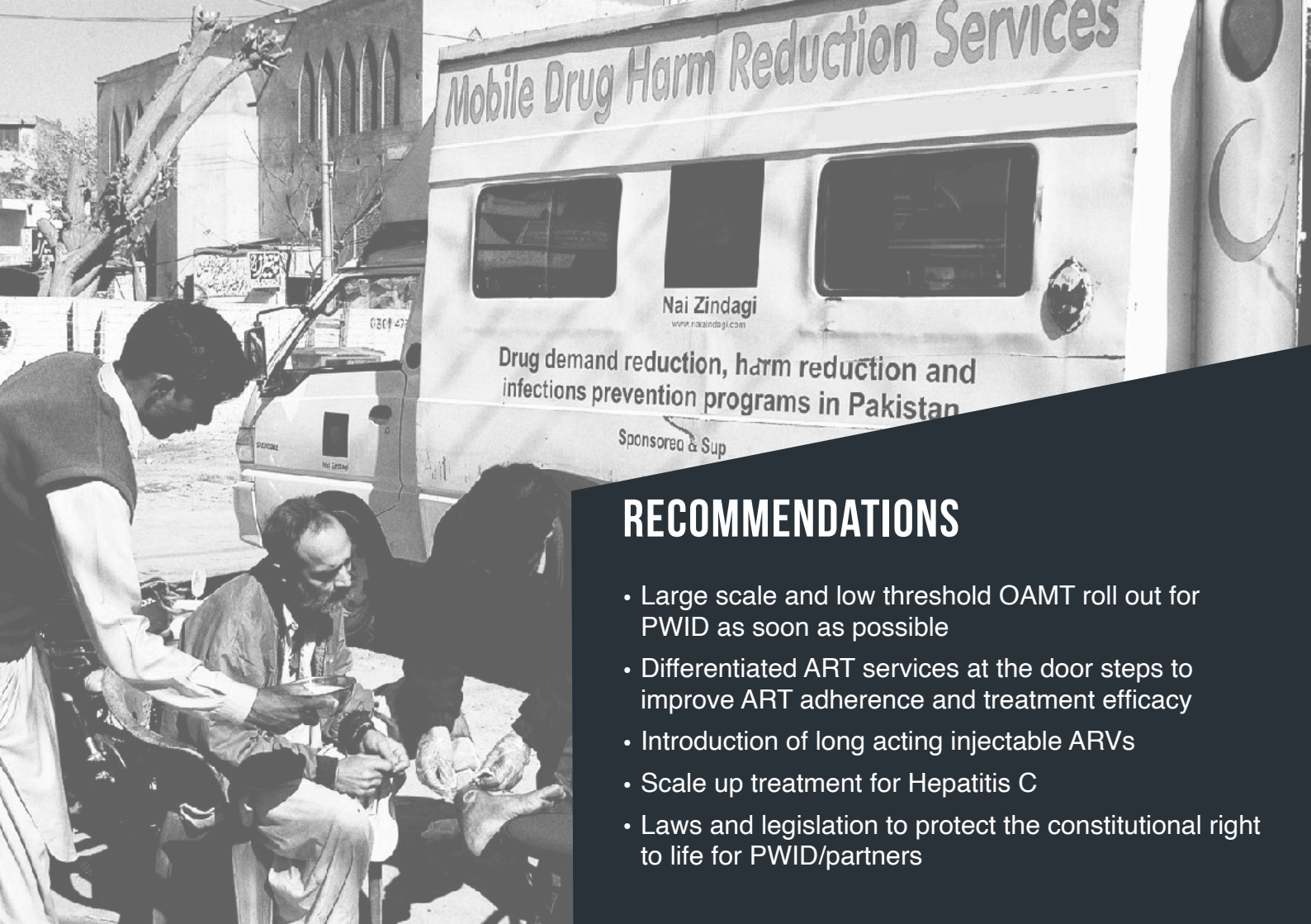
- The majority of PWID have hepatitis C, and access to its treatment is near negligible. An initiative, supported by the Global Fund, has been undertaken to address this concern by providing hepatitis C treatment to a proportion of PWID who are adherent to antiretroviral therapy and therefore have a greater probability of adhering to hepatitis C treatment.
- 784 PWID have been referred for Hep-C treatment, 592 were found eligible for treatment and 573 accessed treatment. Out of 81 clients who were eligible for the post PCR, 70 have been found Hep-C negative.
- We hope that this can lead to packaging Hepatitis - C treatment for PWID at a large scale in the next GF grant cycle (2024-2026)

# DIFFERENTIATED ART SERVICES (SINDH) UNDER C19RM

October 2023 onwards



- In order to ensure better health outcomes for HIV positive PWID who are on ART, differentiated services have been initiated in collaboration with CDC (HIV), Government of Sindh.
- Three trained medical doctors travel across 24 districts of Sindh to examine their health and provide ARV refills at their doorsteps.
- 1,894 medically supervised ARV refills have been made among 754 PWID and 34 spouses through this approach so far



## RECOMMENDATIONS

- Large scale and low threshold OAMT roll out for PWID as soon as possible
- Differentiated ART services at the door steps to improve ART adherence and treatment efficacy
- Introduction of long acting injectable ARVs
- Scale up treatment for Hepatitis C
- Laws and legislation to protect the constitutional right to life for PWID/partners



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