

A C C O M P L I S H M E N T S



Mentoring of 1080 clients in collaboration with various hospitals and diagnostic centers for a variety of purposes ranging from pre-ART assessment to ART refills to different medical reviews. During this time, Sahara Aalhad also facilitated client referrals and provided transport, such as to government ART and HIV testing and counseling services and to local hospitals when advanced care was required. Collaboration between Sahara Aalhad and the doctors and laboratory professionals in both the public and the private sector reached new heights with co-operation from physicians and department heads for tests, medication, and advice, and from private laboratories subsidies, quick turn-around time for reports and preferential treatment for Sahara Aalhad's clients. 1197 new clients registered in the year 2016 in Sahara Aalhad of which 318 sero-positive. 4363 home visits and phone follow-ups conducted that contributed to a high percentage of retention and adherence within the program. There were 3293, and more community people referred to a partner organization for skills development, micro-financing, job placement and other economic support. 2505 out-patient reviews done in 2016 till date including health camps and outdoors health clinics.

The Sahara Aalhad Care Home provides round-the-clock clinical HIV care and psychosocial services to 399 inpatients at the Sahara Care Home, including 57 children under 18 years. The team of professionals – a clinical neuro-psychologist/counselor, a dietician cum nutritionist and a psychiatrist provided high-quality care to buffer the medical management of HIV. The clinical neuropsychologist/counselor has seen 624 beneficiaries for brain injury rehabilitation, to assist in managing life's stressors and in treatment literacy. The dietician cum nutritionist developed patient specific diet plans and overall menus for the Care Home and during the year provided nutrition advice for 483 clients. The psychiatrist addressed issues ranging from anxiety and depression syndromes to bi-polar disorders to alcohol detoxification. He saw and treated 403 people in 2016 thus far.



The 100 Good Deeds project did amazing work during the year 2016; there was a total of 17 orders placed and 4,172 bracelets made by 13 women. During the process of making the bracelets and fulfilling the order 24 more women trained in the art of making the 1 GD bracelet. The quality control department commended the women of the Pune wing on the excellent level of quality attained whereby every single bracelet was accepted and put up for sale. A total of \$ 4, 172 (Rs. 2, 50, 320/-) earned through the 100 GD Project, and this ripple effect told on the overall improvement in the quality of the lives in all areas – physical, mental, economic and emotional.

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Sahara Aalhad has continued to take its partnership with the Revised National Tuberculosis Control Program (RNTCP) to a higher level with a diagnosis of drug-resistant tuberculosis (CBNAAT) and access to drug-resistant tuberculosis becoming problem free and client friendly. The RNTCP has also aided in the management of adverse events in tuberculosis and in supporting treatment of pediatric disease. In 2016, Sahara Aalhad has seen around 116 patients co-infected with HIV and Tuberculosis from the point of diagnosis to the end of therapy including complicated drug-resistant treatment.



Sahara Aalhad has also engaged with the South-East Asia Hub of International HIV/AIDS Alliance in a 6-month pilot project that will address gender-based violence perpetrated against women who inject/use drugs and other women with substance use issues. The project is a precursor to a potential longer partnership that would possibly involve a full-fledged 5-year project that would provide research data. An important part is a component called the 'safety plan' where women in an abusive relationship or who experience community abuse given tools to cope with such situations.

The South-East Asia Hub conducted a 3-day training with the Sahara Aalhad staff where trainers from England and Kyrgyzstan took the team through gender-based violence and intimate partner violence. The training went off very well, and there was much learning by all those who were involved. In all, 20 staff across all Sahara projects attended the training.



The Maharashtra State AIDS Control Society renewed its contract with Sahara Aalhad for the year 2016 -2017 for its Drop-in Centre for street-based injecting drug users. Oral Substitution Therapy, Needle Syring Program, and other harm reduction services are some of the activities. The Sahara Aalhad DIC voted as the best in the state of Maharashtra for the year 2015-2016. The National Accreditation Board for Hospitals & Healthcare Providers (NABH), a constituent board of Quality Council of India, set up to establish and operate accreditation program for healthcare organizations certified Sahara Aalhad's services as meeting all the criteria, standard operating procedures, and guidelines.



Sahara Aalhad mediated between the Wageshwar Nagar community and Steria India Foundation to install a water filtration plant in July 2016 in Wageshwar Nagar slum. A community outreach site of Sahara Aalhad is where upwards of 10,000 members received potable water; a boon to the people of Wageshwar Nagar as they previously had to buy water unfit for human consumption. Besides providing protection against water-borne illnesses, the community was empowered to stand up to the water mafia and assert themselves.

The Proctor & Gamble safe water project beneficiaries numbers increased by 190 new registrations, resulting in an overall total of 1,500 families, 6,453 individuals, who, till date, received sachets that purified 94,62,900 liters of non-potable water and made it safe for human consumption.

Sahara Aalhad, in 2016, collected Rs. 6.75,155 through its Income Generation Activities. The money earned through the sale of products designed and manufactured two professionals and supported clients of Sahara Aalhad. Outlets ranged from a stall in IT Parks, high-end hotels, and different events. There is also a dedicated space in a 5-star hotel which displays Sahara's products and banks the proceeds directly as well as Café 1730. Besides bulk sales, individuals place orders especially in the tailoring of garments and other utility products.



In the year 2016, Sahara Aalhad collected rations to the tune of Rs. 78,539. Besides this, Well-Wishers donated Rs.10,229,80, which helped to alleviate some of the non-budgeted expenses like rebuilding homes, education support, long distance travel of patients, and anything that could range from a pair of spectacles to a pair of garden shears.



The staff of Eaton Technologies Sahara Aalhad has put three youth going students back in school/college after they dropped out due to non-payment of fees.

Sahara Aalhad began trials in partnership with a start-up called Embryo that is by two electrical engineers and entrepreneurs. The trial will involve utilization of a device that tracks adherence and health behaviors of people on government-sponsored anti-tuberculosis treatment. Sahara Aalhad will give 20 of these devices to its clients and monitor them till their treatment is over.

The Sunshine Support Group for Adolescents Living with and Affected by HIV attracted a lot of attention and praise for its useful outdoors work as well as its resolute activism. The Sunshine Support Group is 72 members strong today and has a vibrant core group of 15 youngsters equally divided between boys and girls who manage the affairs of the group. They visited hospitals and advocated with doctors for access to treatment and rights of youth. The group have also advocated with the National AIDS Research Organisation and have provided input with regards to the kind of youth friendly approach that they expect towards care and support for young people.

☑ In 2016, Sahara Aalhad attracted the attention of high-profile business companies and commercial organizations who expressed a keenness in corporate social responsibility (CSR) partnerships. These include the Poonawala Group, Eaton, and Convergys, various 5-star hotels. They have expressed interest and initiated involvement by way of donations, hosting stalls that sell products manufactured by Sahara Aalhad, visiting the projects as a precursor to efforts in volunteerism in different capacities and inviting proposals to examine areas in which they can align with their CSR interests and support Sahara Aalhad.

Sahara Aalhad has taken giant steps in stigma reduction. High profile organizations like the Taj Group of Hotels (the Taj Vivanta) who have come and cooked a meal and shared it with the clients and staff of Sahara Aalhad at the Care Home. Staff from IBIS Hotel conducted a Plant a Tree Drive and have been donating linen, clothes, food at frequent intervals and spending quality time at the Care Home. The staff come in batches and share stories with the staff and clients. The employees of Eaton Technologies also descend on the Care Home once a month for a Coffee Night and to spend quality time and to, surprisingly, dance together.

For the second year running, Sahara Aalhad took part in Pinkathon 2016. A women's empowerment-themed event. This year the theme was cancer survivors; Sahara Aalhad contributed the highest number of cancer survivors as well as participants. Nandini Thapa, a Sahara Aalhad employee, selected for a Leadership Award by HIV/AIDS Alliance. Nandini awarded for 'emerging leadership' in the field of People Who Use Drugs (PWUD).

Pooja B, yoga expert, and teacher conducted yoga classes for the staff and clients who have been learning about mind over matter, to focus on breathing and fitness—physical and spiritual and as a way of reducing stress. Flavius Valone held Art Therapy sessions for youth living with HIV/AIDS and street-based drug users. The experience has been enjoyable, therapeutic and one of learning. The staff has used yoga and the art sessions as a burnout management tool that has worked very well.

Sahara Aalhad also had the opportunity to provide large quantities of shoes and clothes to marginalized poor communities in two areas of intensive outreach work by the Sahara Aalhad Team. The team had seen the people of the community walk and run around in slime, garbage, and muck that would often lead up to foot and mouth disease. The many pairs of shoes and clothes for children and adults accepted with glee by the community.

Sahara is extremely appreciative of the consistent support of well-wishers and donors who regularly supply milk, eggs, adult diapers, gloves, and masks.

