# **Gatekeeper Training Programme Outline**

## **Suicide Prevention Training in Rural Communities in Andhra Pradesh, India**

## **Requested funding amount**

Initially - $9,030

If successful, raise to $16,130 according to 2019 budget

2020: $49,775

2021: $58,320

Total three year programme budget: $124,225.

## **Programme Rationale**

Asia is known to have 60% of suicides in the world and the World Health Organisation (WHO) report that India, and China account for nearly 40% of suicides in the world. Worldwide suicide rates have increased by 60% in the past 50 years, mainly in [developing countries](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Developing_country).

India has the highest number of suicides in the world (WHO, 2014; Suicide Prevention). Vijayakumar (2005) indicated that in India, suicides by pesticides account for between 11% and 33% of all suicides, but up to 80% of suicides by farmers. Andhra Pradesh is one of India’s largest south states. Around 60% of the population is engaged in farming and livestock activities. The state has the third highest rate of suicide in the whole of India. Poverty, low incomes and crop yields means that farmers and women in rural farming communities are most at risk, leaving loved ones, families and communities behind. The statistics are stark, but research and action does show that suicides are preventable particularly through community collaboration and support. Early identification of suicide risk is crucial in order to prevent self-harm and is the starting point of suicide prevention.

## **Programme Background**

‘Gatekeepers’ are individuals within health and community-based services who may be in a position to identify people at risk of suicide by recognising risk factors for suicide. The role of a ‘Gatekeeper includes;

* Recognising the warning signs of suicidal behaviour
* Keeping lines of communication open
* Encouraging help-seeking behaviour and linking to specialist services where appropriate

Gatekeeper training has been identified as a promising component of multi-level suicide prevention programmes by many academics working in the field of suicide prevention (ref). Trained gatekeepers can recognise warning signs of suicidal behaviour, encourage help-seeking behaviour and link into specialist services where appropriate. Studies examining the effects of gatekeeper training consistently show that training positively impacts on knowledge, attitudes and skills of professionals in different settings, such as psychologists, counsellors, social workers, police officers etc.

IASP works in partnership with the Indian NGO SNEHA and Professor Lakshmi Vijayakumar, psychiatrist and advisor to WHO. Dr. Vijayakumar is an author of many scientific journals on suicide in India and headed the WHO/IASP studies on secure storage of pesticides in 2016 and hosted the National review on suicide.

In Andhra Pradesh, Sateesh Babu and his team of medics from Mammata Medical College facilitated the secure storage of pesticides study in 2016. Professor Babu is the current IASP national representative for India and heads the World Suicide Prevention Day activities for the country.

**Programme Specifics**

We are now looking to implement a combined and scalable model of Gatekeeper Training Programme and Train the Trainer Programme to a number of rural communities in Andhra Pradesh. Each Gatekeeper Training will identify 25 existing healthcare professionals, social workers, counsellors, youth workers, police officers, nurses, priests, teachers and community facilitators to become community gatekeepers. On average IASP has found (Kenya, Suriname, New Zealand, Slovenia) that at each training results in five potential trainers that are identified and selected to train as Trainers resulting in a further 5 trainings totalling 125 Gatekeepers within 6 months. This strengthens the programme locally and ensures there is a resilient community of gatekeepers.

The initial Gatekeeper Training will be conducted by two trained international facilitators taken from IASPs team of experts. Surveillance, support and evaluation of trained Gatekeepers and Trainers will be carried out by IASP’s identified Trainers and a team of local experts.

**Programme Training 2019 - 2021**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **IN 2 YEARS** | **SESSIONS** | **IASP** | **LOCAL FACILITATORS** | **TOTAL PARTICIPANTS** |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| 2019/2nd half | 2 | 2 | 2 | 50 |
| 2020/1st half | 6 | 1 | 12 | 150 |
| 2020/2nd half | 21 | 1 | 42 | 525 |
| 2021/1st half | 73.5 | 1 | 147 | 700 |
| TOTAL | 102.5 | 5 | 203 | 1425 |
| **Approx Total** | **100** | **5** | **200** | **1200** |

## **Programme Impact**

We aim to significantly reduce instance of suicides and non-fatal suicidal behaviour in rural farming communities in Andhra Pradesh. Gatekeeper training has been identified as a promising component of multi-level suicide prevention programmes. Training is known to positively affect the knowledge, skills and attitudes of trainees regarding suicide prevention, depression and improves a community’s ability to provide support to those at risk.

Our sustainable programme model also allows the programme to expand with minimal external investment.

**Additional documentation**

* https://iasp.info/gatekeepers
* Project outline
* Budget