State gets $2m project for HIV prevention and care

Ahmedabad: Gujarat became the first state of India last week to launch Unified Budget, Responsibility and Accountability Framework (UBRAF) project. The project, to be implemented by department of health and family welfare, Government of Gujarat, is supported by seven UN agencies — UNICEF, WHO, ILO, UNESCO, UNODC, UNDP and UNFPA.

As part of the project, the implementing agencies will get $2 million to fast-track achievement goals of HIV prevention, care and treatment. The project will be of one year duration which will be extended for another year. According to the 2017-18 figures by Gujarat State AIDS Control Society (GSACS), Gujarat’s 0.40% population or about 1.66 lakh individuals are HIV positive. The figure is slightly higher than the national average of 0.34% for the age group 15-49 years.

Dr Rajesh Gopal, additional project director; GSACS, said that the project was given to Gujarat due to its grassroots network for project implementation through the network - which primarily consists of persons living with HIV.

“A two-day workshop of stakeholders was conducted in Ahmedabad on May 14 and 15 which was supported by WHO. Each partnering UN agency will focus on different aspects of the issue. For example, WHO will work on AIDS ART centres whereas UNODC will focus on de-addiction and so on,” he said, adding that now TB eradication has also been taken up along with the work for HIV+. Dr Gopal added that they have devised a plan to reach out to different regions and different groups of persons living with HIV+ in tailor-made way for effective implementation of the project.