

High population density, lingering effects of the caste system, and income disparities contribute to Delhi's complex public health challenges, including the HIV/AIDS endemic. Through Child Family Health International, I engaged in rotations with Delhi's local NGOs dedicated to developing innovative interventions in response to community-specific health challenges. The Society for the Promotion of Youth and Masses (SPYM) delivers HIV/AIDS education and services to key populations including long distance truck drivers and injecting drug users (IDUs). Long distance truck drivers are more likely to engage in high-risk sexual behaviors than short-distance truckers. At SPYM's Tuglakabad clinic, located in India's largest container depot, workplace interventions take place in the form of educational plays, workshops, and games. Injecting drug users (IDUs) are at high risk for HIV/AIDS exposure due to the sharing of needles and syringes. SPYM offers sublingual opioid substitution therapy for IDUs which reduces HIV/AIDS risk behaviors. I observed that public health experts have a deep understanding of cultural and socioeconomic dynamics unique to the region, making them well equipped to develop effective interventions. Public health and academic tourists may enter a community with a colonial mentality, believing that they possess superior knowledge. This approach undermines local expertise, cultural contexts and community needs by imposing external ideologies that perpetuate power imbalances, leading to ineffective and even harmful interventions. As guests, we must approach our host community with great respect, cultural humility, and curiosity while continuously checking our biases and ideas around normalcy.