

# MOMENTUM

Routine Immunization Transformation and Equity



Alan  
Project Manager  
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Manipur, a hilly northeastern state in India battled the COVID-19 pandemic and overcame the challenges of inaccessible terrains, low connectivity and a significant tribal population that resisted the COVID-19 vaccination.

Many young people in the state are addicted to substance abuse which has been a primary concern for the state. In order to provide support and assistance to such communities Shalom Centre, a rehabilitation facility for substance abusers that have been working towards the welfare of this vulnerable community by providing night shelter, food, and healthcare services.

The COVID-19 pandemic was extremely challenging for this community as they were largely vaccine-hesitant. Alan, the Project Manager of Shalom Centre was facing a lot of difficulties in vaccinating the residents of the centre. With the pandemic spreading aggressively, Alan found himself amidst a high-risk community of Injecting Drug Users (IUDs) who suffered from intense social stigma and found it extremely difficult to venture out to hospitals and medical institutions to get vaccinated.

When Alan got to know about the MOMENTUM Routine Immunization Transformation and Equity Project supported by the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) which works towards ensuring equitable vaccination to vulnerable, hard-to-reach, and marginalized communities, he joined hands with the Project. In Manipur, the Project has engaged with local non-governmental organizations like CASA and TCIF to maximize reach amongst the priority groups.

The Shalom Centre collaborated with the State Government and the Project to delegate awareness programs and vaccine dispensation activities to local change agents to increase vaccine uptake among underrepresented groups and the residents of the centre. The Project evaluated the situation and decided to counsel this community and help them fight their fears and doubts regarding COVID-19.

Through Alan's dedicated endeavours, the Project, under the guidance of the State Government was able to set up an easy-access vaccination camp in the premises of the centre, thereby negating the need for the residents of the Shalom centre to venture out. Most people living in the rehabilitation centre got themselves vaccinated in the camp organized by the Project. They expressed their gratitude to Alan and the Project.

With efforts put in by Alan, the residents of the Shalom Centre are fully vaccinated. He is our COVID-19 vaccination champ!