

# Greetings from the Asian Harm Reduction Network!

Asian Harm Reduction Network

[www.ahrn.net](http://www.ahrn.net)

Dear friends and well-wishers,

It is my pleasure to introduce myself. My name is Ronny Waikhom and I was recently appointed as Interim Network Coordinator at AHRN. I come from Manipur, one of the places hardest hit by drug use and HIV/AIDS. My experiences with drug use and HIV/AIDS response began early 90s but my actual and intensive contributions to the response towards these twin epidemics began from middle of 2000. Before taking on the work at AHRN, I was directing a drug user based organization called Care Foundation and I also played a key role as a Treasurer for the North East India Harm Reduction Network. For further details you may click to the following link:

[http://www.ahrn.net/uploadfiles/ronny\\_resume.pdf](http://www.ahrn.net/uploadfiles/ronny_resume.pdf)

As you may be aware, AHRN is in the process of separating itself into two entities: a network-based agency called AHRN and a technical agency called Access Quality International (AQI). The former will retain and continue to carry out its original core activities that include advocacy, networking and information sharing, whereas the later will focus more into ensuring and achieving increased access to prevention, treatment, care and support with a higher degree of quality and reach. This transition is expected to finalize by October 2010. The current projects in Thailand, Myanmar, Nepal and China will eventually be under the technical agency, under the supervision of the current AHRN Executive Director, Mr. Ton Smits. Both organizations, the network and technical agency, will be accountable to the same HIV/AIDS Harm Reduction Foundation Board, Thailand, currently being chaired by Dr. Jaroon Jittiwuttikarn.

As Network Coordinator, my priority would be to see that the network functions are re-established and sustained to achieve its set goals. During my interim posting, I have been assigned to finalize and implement a transition plan for the Network that includes clarity on operational structures, human resource needs, resource mobilization requirements as well as strategic development, redefining network membership, and revising governance arrangements. For the transition to be successful, I would greatly appreciate your input and assistance. I believe it is time now for all of us to work together and consolidate our efforts towards a more effective response to drugs and HIV to improve drug users' lives as well as that of their families and their communities.

The rich experience and information that AHRN has in its coffer will be of immense value in enhancing and expanding harm reduction efforts at national levels in and across Asia. Therefore, as pioneers, colleagues, friends, well-wishers and key stakeholders of AHRN, I would like to seek suggestions and feedback on how best we can revitalize AHRN's network functions and generate effective, meaningful and sustainable outcomes.

You are most welcome to contact me at my official AHRN e-mail I.D., i.e. [ronnyw@ahrn.net](mailto:ronnyw@ahrn.net) or at my personal e-mail I.D., i.e. [ronny.waikhom@gmail.com](mailto:ronny.waikhom@gmail.com)

Harm reduction for people who use drugs will continue to be key priorities and interests for AHRN as a whole.

With best regards

Ronny Waikhom

Network Coordinator, AHRN

P.S: The current activities of the network, including newsletter, postings & website updates, are currently on hold. A transition plan is already underway and once we are ready with a draft framework we will share it with all of you for your valuable inputs, comments and feedback. In the meantime you may kindly send me your suggestions and ideas so as to help the team at AHRN Network to shape things up. You may also kindly visit our website i.e. [www.ahrn.net](http://www.ahrn.net) should you require any of our documents, including newsletters, publications, plan for organizational change, etc.