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Dear

**Subject:- National Workshop on Backward Regions Grant Fund –
combating HIV/AIDS.**

The Backward Regions Grant Fund (BRGF) provides untied development grants to the selected districts to undertake gap filling interventions which are planned for and implemented by the Panchayats. HIV/AIDS is emerging as a serious scourge that needs to be tackled on a war footing. As you are aware, HIV/AIDS cannot be combated by a health sector response alone and needs a comprehensive developmental response which can only be spearheaded by the PRIs. Could we think of using the opportunity provided under BRGF for designing an appropriate community led approach to combat HIV/AIDS ?

2. In this direction, I suggest that representatives of all backward districts that have been invited to the National Workshop on Backward Regions Grant Fund, to be held on 13th and 14th October, 2007 at Vigyan Bhavan may bring with them the following information so that we could build up a comprehensive action plan to address identified vulnerabilities:

- (i) Baseline figures of people living with HIV/AIDS in the district.
- (ii) Number of intermediate Panchayats with higher prevalences in the district.
- (iii) Present involvement, if any, in HIV/AIDS prevention and control at each Panchayat level.
- (iv) Any perspective plan for training on HIV/AIDS to gender coordinators/animators at resource centers, which might have been prepared.
- (v) Identification of certain well identified indicators of vulnerability to HIV infection and specific redressal measures, such as migration, vicinity to national highways.
- (vi) Any monitoring of access to services:
 - Availability of condoms within a 20 minutes walk radius
 - Availability of infrastructure for 100% institutional delivery
 - Services of counseling and testing for HIV
 - Access to treatment and care

(vii)Steps taken to ensure discrimination free right to life and livelihood of all people and children living with HIV.

(viii)Access to social protection programmes for the HIV infected, who fulfill eligibility criteria.

3. Based on this information, we could collectively plan for a road map to combat HIV/AIDS in backward districts and review the same in the near future.

Yours sincerely,

(T.R. Raghunandan)

Principal Secretaries/Secretaries in-charge of Panchayati Raj of all States/UTs