Annexure 1: Working Definitions of the Terms ‘Transgender’ and ‘Hijra’

Source: (NACP IV working groups, May 2011)

Hijras

Hijras are individuals who voluntarily seek initiation into the hijra community, whose ethnic profession is Badhai (ritual of clapping hands and asking for alms when blessing new-born babies, or dancing at auspicious ceremonies such as weddings). Due to the prevailing socio-economic and cultural conditions, a significant proportion of them have been forced to enter into begging and sex work for survival.

These individuals live in accordance to the hijra community’s norms, customs and rituals which may vary from region to region.

Transgender

• TG is a gender identity.
• TGs usually live or prefer to live in the gender role different from that which they are born into.
• This has no relation to an individual’s sexual preferences.
• TG is an umbrella word which includes transsexuals, cross-dressers, intersexed persons, and gender-variant persons.
• TG includes people who have not undergone any surgery or physiological changes.

Note: The above definitions are adopted under the Pehchan programme.