



Invitation of Application for SAARC Prize on Tuberculosis – 2013 (page no. 10)

STAC

Newsletter



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STAC Newsletter is a regular publication of SAARC TB and HIV/AIDS Centre, it includes reports on activities, decisions of important meetings of the Centre, news of important activities of National TB and HIV/AIDS Control Programmes of SAARC Member States and recent information on TB, HIV/AIDS and their control.

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Editorial

There is a decline of HIV in the SAARC Region, the number of PLHIV significantly has turned down in the Region since 2008. However, TB and HIV/AIDS continues to be a major public health problem in the SAARC Region. All eight Member States of SAARC are designated as low prevalence countries. On the basis of latest available information this region is home for an estimated number of 2.56 million HIV infected people in 2010. Three countries, namely India, Nepal and Pakistan account for majority of the regional burden and have concentrated epidemic. The overall adult HIV prevalence in SAARC Region remains below 1%.

Core high risk group vary from country to country, but generally include female sex workers (FSW) and their clients, injecting drug users (IDU), migrants and men who have sex with men (MSM). Because the majority of people living with HIV (PLHIV) in the Region are asymptomatic and do not know their sero-status however, there is broad agreement that the true scale of the epidemic in South Asia is yet unknown.

The SAARC Region has also seen expansion of HIV prevention, treatment, care and support services. Compared to the year Of 2008, it amounted to more than two fold expansion of the person initiated on ART. But still Tuberculosis (TB) is the most frequent life threatening opportunistic disease among people living with HIV (PLHIV) and is the leading cause of death while TB is preventable and curable.

The three priority public health action to prevent and treat TB in people living with HIV, other vulnerable patients and the community. Three 'I's are, Isoniazid Preventive Treatment (IPT), Infection Control (IC) and Intensified Case Finding (ICF). Despite the considerable benefit of the three 'I's, many countries have been slow to implement these TB-reducing services. In 2008, for example, of the estimated 33.4 million PLHIV, only 50,000 were offered IPT, which has resulted in missed opportunities to prevent many unnecessary cases of TB and related deaths. Isoniazid Preventive Treatment (IPT) is recognized as an important component of collaborative TB and HIV activities to reduce the burden of TB in people living with HIV.

The SAARC Member States have initiated provision of IPT along with HIV intervention and collaboration with TB programme. This is one of the joint efforts for collaborative TB/HIV activities. Let us work together to prevent and control the TB/HIV co-infection.

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Report on Activities

1. SAARC Regional Training on Research Methodology for Protocol Development (National TB and HIV/AIDS Programmes), Thimphu, Bhutan

SAARC TB and HIV/AIDS Centre (STAC), Kathmandu organized a seven-day training programme on Research Methodology for Protocol Development required for National TB and HIV/AIDS Control Programmes of SAARC Member States in Thimphu, Bhutan in collaboration with Department of Public Health, Ministry of Health, Royal Government of Bhutan from 7th to 13th August 2012.

The **objectives** of the training were to facilitate the Member States in the development of good quality of research protocols, to build their capacity in the field of research protocols, to increase the capacity of Programme Managers of TB and HIV/AIDS & relevant staff of Member States and to develop Research Protocols on identified areas of research on TB, HIV/AIDS & TB/HIV co-infection.

The training was attended by the participants from Bhutan, India, Nepal and Sri Lanka.

Mr. Nima Wangdi, Secretary, Ministry of Health, Royal Government of Bhutan inaugurated the programme. He thanked STAC for organizing training in Thimphu and extended his wish for further collaboration between STAC and NTP, Bhutan. He further emphasized the role of research activities among Member States.



Mr. Tashi Dendup, Programme Officer, NTP, Royal Government of Bhutan welcomed the participants, resource persons, officials from STAC, Kathmandu as well as officials of Ministry of Health, Royal Government of Bhutan.

Dr. Badri Thapa, Microbiologist, STAC delivered the speech on behalf of Director STAC. He highlighted the importance of research in Tuberculosis and HIV/AIDS control programmes in the SAARC Member States.

Dr. Dorji Wangchuk, Director General, Department of Public Health, Ministry of Health, Royal Government of Bhutan delivered his speech. He welcomed all the participants and extended his best wish for the successful completion of training.

Mr. Namgay Tshering, Programme Manager, NACP, Royal Government of Bhutan delivered the vote of thanks.

Technical Session

The technical session started with enlightenment on the objectives and methodology that would be adopted during the training along with the presentation on important aspects of the training such as Study Designs, Literature Review & References, Study Variables, Data Analysis Techniques & Estimation of Relative Risk, Odds Ratio, Frequency Distribution, Measurements of Central Tendency etc. The participants were also explained about Financing and Budgeting, Proposal Writing, use of Data Collection Tools, Ethical Issues in Research

Studies, Monitoring in Research Studies etc.

The presentations and discussion was followed by the group work. Participants were divided into different group and they develop their protocols on different topics assigned to them and finalized their research protocols and presented in the session.

Outcomes

This activity enhanced the capacity of National TB and HIV/AIDS control programs in developing

good quality of research protocols for funding from donor agencies. Moreover, the eight protocols were developed on sound scientific lines.

Closing Session

The Director General, Department of Public Health, Ministry of Health, Royal Government of Bhutan graced the closing session as Chief Guest. On behalf of participants, participant from Bhutan and India thanked the STAC for conducting this training which has enhanced their understanding on research

methodology and protocol development. The resource persons from Bhutan and WHO in their remarks thanked the participants for their hard work in preparation of the protocols and thanked the STAC and host country for organizing this training. The Director General in his speech thanked all the participants, resource persons and officials from STAC for their relentless efforts in conduction and making this training a success. He awarded the Certificates to the participants and resource persons.

2. Twenty-second Meeting of Governing Board of STAC

The Twenty-second meeting of the Governing Board of SAARC TB and HIV/AIDS Centre was held in Kathmandu from 11th to 12th October 2012. The Board Meeting was opened by out going Chairperson Mr. Yagya Bahadur Hamal, Under Secretary, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Government of Nepal.

Mr. Asif Hussain Memon, Deputy Chief of Mission, Embassy of Pakistan, Kathmandu, Nepal chaired the 22nd Meeting of the Board and the meeting was attended by **Dr. Md. Abdul Waheed**, Line Director, National AIDS/STD Programme & Safe Blood Transfusion Programme, Dhaka, Bangladesh.

Dr. Dorji Wangchuk, Director General, Department of Public Health, Ministry of Health, Royal Government of Bhutan, Thimphu, Bhutan.



Mr. Yagya Bahadur Hamal, Under Secretary, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Kathmandu, Nepal.

Mr. Asif Hussain Memon, Deputy Chief of Mission, Embassy of Pakistan, Kathmandu, Nepal.

Dr Sudath Samaraweera, Acting Director, National Programme for Tuberculosis Control & Chest Diseases, Colombo, Sri Lanka.

Mr. Ibrahim Zuhuree, Director (Social Affairs), SAARC Secretariat, Kathmandu, Nepal

Dr. Kashi Kant Jha, Director, SAARC TB HIV/AIDS Centre, Bhaktapur, Nepal.

The Board reviewed the programme activities carried out by the Centre in 2011/12 and recommended the programmes

and budget for the year 2013 for the approval of Programming and Standing Committee.

Recommended Programmes for the year 2013

1. SAARC Regional Sensitization Meeting for Social Determinants of Health in relation to TB and HIV/AIDS
2. SAARC Regional Training on "Technical and Operational Aspects of Anti Retro Viral Therapy" for HIV/AIDS Control Programme
3. SAARC Regional Training on Advocacy, Communication and Social Mobilization
4. SAARC Regional Workshop for Experiences and Best Practices sharing for TB Control relating to Public-Private-Mix (PPM) Activities, Early case detection and reaching the unreached
5. SAARC Regional Training for Microbiologist on culture and DST
6. SAARC Regional Training on "Leadership and Strategic Management" for Tuberculosis & HIV/AIDS Control Programmes
7. The SAARC Regional Meeting of Programme Managers on TB and HIV/AIDS Control*.
8. SAARC Trainer's Training on Behavioral Change and Communication (BCC)

9. SAARC Regional Training on "Management Information for Action (MIFA)" for Tuberculosis & HIV/AIDS Control Programmes

Research

10. Frequency and Factors Associated with Childhood Tuberculosis in Bangladesh
11. Frequency and Factors Associated with Childhood Tuberculosis in Afghanistan/ Nepal
12. TB among Young People on rise in Sri-Lanka
13. Operational Research on TB/HIV Co-infection: (TREATMENT ADHERENCE AMONG CO-INFECTED) in Nepal

Regular Activities

14. Tenth Round Proficiency Testing of SSM for NRLs of SAARC Members States
15. Procurement of chemical & other lab materials for Culture, DST and identification of M. tuberculosis and other related works at the STRL
16. i. Identification and networking with National Reference Laboratory on HIV/AIDS in the SAARC Member States (through Correspondence) by STAC
ii. Collection of Information on demographics, vital statistics and other

indicators on HIV/AIDS and produce SAARC Regional Epidemiological Reports HIV/AIDS (through correspondence) by STAC

- iii. Document on Epidemiological Trend on HIV/AIDS of SAARC Member States of last ten years and Generating and Managing HIV/AIDS database through clinical, epidemiological and social research for evidence based approaches (through correspondence) by STAC
- iv. Documentation of the best practices on treatment, care and support on HIV/AIDS in the Member States (through correspondence) by STAC
- v. Situation analysis of mechanism for migration of diagnosed HIV infected persons who need to continue their Care, Support & Treatment for HIV/AIDS (through correspondence) by STAC
- vi. Collection of Information regional data on demographics, vital statistics (TB and TB-HIV Co-infection and other indicators) and produce SAARC Regional Epidemiological Reports on TB and TB-HIV Co

- infection and Strength regional data base on TB, HIV/AIDS and TB/ HIV Co-infection (through correspondence) by STAC
- vii. Preparation of SAARC Technical Bulletin on Tuberculosis and HIV/AIDS Epidemic (monthly) for electronically circulation to the Member States
- viii. Collection, compilation, analysis and documentation on Epidemiological Trend on TB, HIV/AIDS and TB/ HIV-Co-infection of SAARC Member States of last ten years (through correspondence) by STAC
17. Meetings with Collaborating Institutions for Strengthening Networking – WHO / UNAIDS / UNFPA & other collaborating Institutes
18. Presentation & Dissemination of Research findings TB & HIV/AIDS through participation in International Conferences, Union World Conference on Lung Health / International AIDS Conference on HIV/AIDS
19. Participation in Regional Conferences in the Member States
20. Review, Coordination Meetings and sharing of best practices with authorities of Ministry of Health, National TB and HIV/AIDS Control Programmes and SAARC Regional Countries in the SAARC Member States
21. Dissemination of information of TB & HIV/AIDS by updating STAC Website.
- Awareness and Advocacy**
22. Programmes for SAARC Goodwill Ambassador/s for HIV/AIDS
23. Conferment of SAARC Award on Tuberculosis-2013
24. **i. World TB Day,**
- Joint activities with NTP Nepal
 - Preparation and publication of advocacy materials and distribution to the Member States
- ii. World AIDS Day**
- Preparation and publication of advocacy materials/booklet and distribution to the Member States
 - Interaction Programme
- iii. SAARC Charter Day**
- Awareness Programme / joint programme with SIC
 - Preparation and Publication related documents and distribution to the Member States
25. Distribution of STAC Publications, related documents and other materials
26. Review of Articles of SAARC Journals of TB, Lung Diseases and HIV/AIDS
27. **i. Printing-STAC Newsletters**
- ii. Printing-STAC Journals of Tuberculosis, Lung Diseases and HIV/AIDS
 - iii. Printing - S A A R C Epidemiological Yearly Reports (Updates) on TB
 - iv. Printing - S A A R C Epidemiological Yearly Reports (Updates) on HIV/AIDS Control – including TB/HIV Co-infection
 - v. Printing-Annual Report -2012
 - vi. Printing-STAC at a Glance (revision)
28. **Strengthening of STAC library**
- i. Purchase and subscription of scientific books and journals on TB and HIV/AIDS
 - ii. Prepare a printed library catalogue
 - iii. Arrangement of External backup for all library resources available materials
 - iv. Binding of Journal / books / publications etc.

- v. Linkage of library resources in the STAC Website
- vi. Strengthening of audio visual section with facility of Audio visual Conference and Teleconference
- vii. Collection, compile and circulation of published scientific articles and important news related to TB and in the national daily news papers in the SAARC Member States through its website (through internet)
- viii. Hiring of library IT consultant for strengthening of STAC Library as E-Library
- 29. Technical Assistant support to the STAC, NTP/NACP, Member States by providing short term consultancy, utilizing the Expertise from the Region without financial liability to respective programmes of Member States.

3. Commemoration of World AIDS Day 2012

Theme “Getting to Zero: Zero new HIV infection: Zero discrimination: Zero AIDS related deaths” Theme of the World AIDS Day remains same from the year 2011 to 2015. The infection rate should be reduced into zero, no discrimination and no death by AIDS.

Awareness Programme on HIV/AIDS & TB for School Students and Teachers

SAARC TB and HIV/AIDS Centre (STAC) commemorated the World AIDS Day 2012 with the theme “Getting to Zero: zero new HIV infection, zero discrimination, zero AIDS related deaths” by organizing an awareness programme on HIV/AIDS & TB for school students and teachers at Thimi, Bhaktapur on 30th November 2012.

The objective of the programme was to enhance awareness on



HIV/AIDS and TB among school students and teachers.

The programme was attended by over 50 students and teacher of Modern College of Management, located at Thimi, Bhaktapur, Nepal.

The programme was started with the registration of participants followed by a 15 minutes documentary on “Introduction and Activities of STAC” displayed for the information to the students about the Centre and its activities.

The technical presentations were presented by the experts from STAC and NTC as follows:

- Dr. N. K. Afridi, Epidemiologist, STAC presented “General Information on HIV/AIDS Infection”.
- Dr. Badri Thapa, Microbiologist, STAC presented “General Information on TB/HIV Co-infection”.
- Mr. Sujit Kumar Sah, TB/HIV

Co-ordination Officer, NTC, presented “Overview of National TB Control Programme of Nepal”.

The presentations were followed by discussions. Participating students raised different questions regarding HIV/AIDS and TB, its control strategy in Nepal as well as the available services such as treatment facilities, etc. in the country.

On behalf of participants Ms. Reshma Pyakurel, Teacher from College gave her remarks. She appreciated the programme and thanked the organizer for giving

important information which was very necessary to the students of class XI and XII.

At the conclusion students expressed their solidarity to works for prevention of HIV/AIDS by spreading messages regarding HIV/AIDS and TB to their friend circle, family members and community dwellers.

Participants were provided awareness & education materials on TB and HIV/AIDS prepared and published by STAC.

The experts of the STAC clarified the issues raised by the

participants. It was also highlighted the role of students and teachers in prevention and control of HIV/AIDS and TB in the community as well as urged the students to play the role of Child Ambassadors for spreading messages on HIV/AIDS and TB among friends, families and communities for their awareness.

Ms. Reshma Pyakurel, Teacher, Modern College of Management, Thimi, Bhaktapur gave her remarks on behalf of the participants. She thanked for selecting their College for the activity. Mr. K. B. Karki, Training Officer, STAC, gave the vote of thanks at the end of the programme.

Commemoration of World AIDS Day 2012 in SAARC Member States:

Bhutan

“Getting to Zero”- Gearing towards elimination of Mother-to-child transmission

The World AIDS Day-2012 was observed in Thimphu at the Clock

Tower Square on 1st December, 2012. The event was organized by Lhak-sam in collaboration with the National HIV/AIDS & STIs Control programme under Department of Public Health and the RENEW Secretariat. This year, the National theme for the event focused on to

the elimination of Mother-to-Child Transmission of HIV, which defines the Zero New HIV Infection.

The event was graced by Honourable *Zabtog* Lyonpo, His Excellency Lyonpo Yeshey Zimba and was attended by the country representatives from UN system in Bhutan including WHO plus the heads of the governmental organizations. Hundreds of people witnessed the event and was further entertained by the performers from the Happy Valley Edutainment firm. Onsite Voluntary, Counseling and Testing (VCT) were offered during the event and almost 180 blood samples were collected. RENEW and Lhak-sam also showcased their organizational mandates and



their achievements through the posters presentation.

Honourable *Zabtog* Lyonpo in his opening statement highlighted the importance of undergoing HIV testing and urged the people to undergo HIV test. He also applauded the boldness in the members of *Lhak-sam* for their dedicated efforts to create awareness over last one year after giving the face to the disease

in December, 2011. Honourable Lyonpo also congratulated the efforts by the Ministry of Health in containing the further spread of HIV in the country.

Hon'ble Secretary of Health, Dasho Nima Wangdi in his welcome address thanked the Honourable Chief Guest and the dignitaries for their valuable presence to participate in the event, despite being weekend holiday. The program concluded

with vote of thanks by Dr. Dorji Wangchuk, Director General of the Department of Public Health.

As the highlight of the day the Honourable Chief Guest launched the book on the '**Positive Living**' developed by the Ministry of Health in joint collaboration with the UNAIDS and the '**Revised MSTF Manual-2012**' developed and revised by the National HIV/AIDS & STIs Control Programme under the Department of Public Health.

4. SAARC Regional Expert Group Meeting of TB Programme Managers



The SAARC Regional Expert Group Meeting of TB Programme Managers was held from 6 to 7 December 2012 in Kathmandu, Nepal. The Meeting was attended by the delegates from Bhutan, India, Maldives and Sri Lanka.

The **objective** of the meeting was to finalize the draft SAARC Regional Strategy for the Elimination/Control of Tuberculosis.

Opening Session

Mr. Ibrahim Zuhuree, Director, SAARC conveyed the message of His Excellency, the Secretary-General of SAARC for a successful completion of the meeting in his opening remarks.

Dr. Kashi Kant Jha, Director, SAARC Tuberculosis and HIV/AIDS Centre delivered the

welcome remarks. He mentioned that this is time to move beyond DOTS and initiate the process with vision to eliminate TB from the Region.

Dr. Nassem Khan Afridi, Epidemiologist, STAC made a presentation on Introduction of STAC along with the Situation of TB and HIV/AIDS in the Region.

Mr. Chewang Rinzin, Dr. Niraj Kulshrestha, Ms. Maimoona Aboobakur and Dr. Sudath Samaraweera presented country presentations from Bhutan, India, Maldives and Sri Lanka respectively.

Dr. S. D. Gupta Director, Institute of Health Management and Research Centre, Jaipur, India, as Consultant, presented the draft strategy. He briefed the existing NTP policies, strategies, and achievements of National TB Control Programmes

of the SAARC Member States and related issues during the process of preparation of the draft strategy.

In the meeting various aspects of Draft Strategy was discussed in detail for consensus. After deliberations the meeting accepted the draft strategy for the approval of the competent bodies of SAARC.

The Meeting was chaired by Dr.

Sudath Samaraweera, Acting Director, National Programme for TB Control and Chest Diseases, Government of Sri Lanka.

Closing Session

On behalf of all the delegates Ms. Maimoon Aboobakur, Director, Ministry of Health, Government of Maldives, delivered the concluding remarks. She conveyed appreciations to the STAC for

the hospitality extended and for making excellent arrangements for the meeting. She commended the Chairperson for his efficient manner in which he guided the deliberations of the meeting to a successful conclusion. She also appreciated the valuable contributions of the delegates and consultant in the meeting and thanked the Director, STAC for facilitating the deliberations of the meetings.

5. Celebration of SAARC Charter Day



South Asian Association for Regional Co-operation (SAARC) was established in 1985 when its Charter was signed by the Heads of State or Government of seven south Asian countries – Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka. Later, Afghanistan joined the association in 2007 as eighth member of SAARC.

SAARC TB & HIV/AIDS Centre (STAC) celebrated the 27th Anniversary of SAARC (SAARC

Charter Day) by organizing a programme on 7th December 2012 in Kathmandu. Delegates of Expert Group Meeting to finalize the SAARC Regional Strategy on Elimination of TB from SAARC Member States, Bhutan, India, Maldives and Sri Lanka also joined the programme. The programme was attended by the representatives from Government of Nepal, such as Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Department of Health Services, National Centre for AIDS and STD Control, National

TB Centre, National Planning Commission etc. Simultaneously, Directors, SAARC Secretariat and SAARC Regional Centre (SIC), Representatives from Embassies, Federation of Nepal Journalists, International Journalists, UN agencies and different stakeholders also attended the programme.

Dr. Praveen Mishra, Secretary, Ministry of Health and Population, Government of Nepal graced the occasion as Chief Guest. Dr. Mishra, in his remarks, welcomed the delegates from SAARC Member States and participants in the programme and reiterated the commitments of the Government of Nepal regarding the support provided to the SAARC and appreciated the role played by STAC.

The programme was conducted under the Chairmanship of Dr. Niranjana Man Singh Basnyat, Chief of Protocol, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Government of

Nepal. Dr. Basnet thanked STAC for organizing such a programme where different personalities are gathered. He appreciated the progress of the STAC and informed the audience that all SAARC mandate will be reviewed within 2013. SAARC is on the way to implement the declarations rather to add more declarations in future. He reiterated the commitment of the Government of Nepal towards the continue support to Regional Centres of SAARC.

The Director, SAARC TB and HIV/AIDS Centre welcomed the delegates and participants. He congratulated to all people working for SAARC on the occasion of 27th Anniversary of

SAARC and thanked Government of Member States, delegates and SAARC Secretariat for their continue support and guidance for implementation of the activities of STAC.

Dr. Niraj Kulshrestha, Additional Deputy Director General, Directorate General of Health Services, Government of India, on behalf of delegates gave his remarks. Dr. Kulshrestha expressed his satisfaction on the outcome of two days meeting for preparation of draft strategy for elimination of Tuberculosis.

Mr. Laxmi Bilas Koirala, Director, SAARC Information Centre (SIC) also gave his remarks.

Mr. Ibrahim Zuhuree, Director, SAARC Secretariat, Kathmandu delivered vote of thanks. He highlighted the role of SAARC for development of the people of the Region and also explained the SAARC Charter Day as an opportunity to reflect its objectives and commitments towards the people of the Region and expressed his satisfaction on the successful completion & fruitful outcome of two days meeting on development of the draft strategy. He thanked Dr. Praveen Mishra, Secretary, Ministry of Health and Population, Government of Nepal, all dignitaries on dais, delegates, guest and invitees.

Brief News

Orientation workshop for research staff of NTP Nepal

SAARC TB and HIV/AIDS Centre organized an orientation workshop for research staff of National TB Control Programme on 20th July 2012 at STAC. The programme was attended by the staff working in National TB Centre, Thimi, Bhaktapur. It was organized as an orientation to conduct one of the research activities of STAC for the year 2012. The title of the research was "HIV Prevalence among TB patients by visiting National Tuberculosis Centre and Drug Susceptibility pattern *M. Tuberculosis* isolated from TB patients with or without HIV infection". The programme was planned to conduct from 23rd July 2012.

SAARC Prize on HIV/AIDS – 2012

As per the decision of 22nd meeting of the Governing Board of STAC, held on 11-12 October, 2012, Mr. Tshewang Nidup of Bhutan has been awarded by SAARC Prize on HIV/AIDS 2012 in recognition of his remarkable contribution for creating awareness on HIV/AIDS in Bhutan. The prize consists cash prize of US\$ 2,000.00 along with letter of appreciation.

Considering the existing guidelines on the SAARC Prizes under the SAARC Regional Centres, the 21st Meeting of the Governing Board of STAC recommended for conferment of SAARC Prize on TB and HIV/AIDS alternatively each year. The Board recommended



SAARC Prize on HIV/AIDS for the year 2012.

The aim of the prize is to honour citizen/s or organizations of South Asia for their exemplary work towards control and prevention of HIV/AIDS in the SAARC Region with the following objectives:

- to encourage individuals and organizations based in South Asia to undertake programmes and activities complementing and supplementing the efforts on HIV/AIDS Control
- to honour outstanding contributions and achievements of individuals and organizations of the Region in the fields of HIV/AIDS and
- to recognize any other outstanding achievements, not covered above, of individuals and organizations in the Region whose work or contribution has benefited or inspired the country as well as the Region.

Invitation of Application for SAARC Prize on Tuberculosis - 2013

SAARC TB and HIV/AIDS Centre invites the applications for the **SAARC Prize on Tuberculosis - 2013**. The aim, objectives & eligibility for the prize are as follows:

The aim of the prize is to honour citizen/s or organizations of South Asia for their exemplary work towards control and prevention of **Tuberculosis** in the SAARC Region.

Objectives

1. To encourage individuals and organizations based in South Asia to undertake programmes and activities complementing and supplementing the efforts on TB Control.
2. To honour outstanding contributions and achievements of individuals/organizations of the region in the fields of Tuberculosis.
3. To recognize any other outstanding achievements, not covered above, of individuals/organizations in the region whose work or contribution has benefited or inspired the country as well as the region.

The total Prize shall be US\$ 2,000.00 (US dollar Two Thousand) and presented by the Chairperson/ Governing Board Member to the recipient from their respective country.

The Individuals/organizations (public/private/NGOs) will be eligible for nomination for the SAARC Prize on Tuberculosis. The Prize shall be given to the individual/organization working/having worked in the following areas on Tuberculosis.

1. Clinical work/patient care and support
2. Advocacy, Communication and Social Mobilization
3. Research work
4. Diagnostic/Laboratory works/Innovations
5. Community empowerment
6. Public Partnership Mix
7. Human Resource Development
8. Any other important areas

Welcome News

Visit of His Excellency Mr. Ahmed Saleem, Secretary General, SAARC to STAC



(H.E. observing teaching microscope at STAC Lab at Thimi)

His Excellency Mr. Ahmed Saleem, Secretary General of SAARC visited SAARC TB and HIV/AIDS Centre, Thimi, Bhaktapur on 5th July 2012. His Excellency was accompanied by Mr. Ibrahim Zuhuree, Director, SAARC Secretariat. Director and staff of the Centre welcomed them at the Centre. H. E. observed the facilities of the Centre by visiting all sections of the Centre and expressed his satisfaction. He thanked the STAC staff and gave instructions/guidance for further development of the Centre. He also thanked Government of Nepal for new infrastructure provided to the STAC.

Visit of Governing Board Members

Governing Board Members of 22nd Meeting visited STAC on 12th October 2012. The Director and staff of the Centre welcomed the Board Members. Board Members observed the facilities of the Centre and expressed their happiness.



(Governing Board Members at Director's chamber at STAC)

Appointment of Research Officer

Dr. Ghanshyam Kumar Bhatta, DrPH, joined SAARC TB and HIV/AIDS Centre as Professional Staff on the post of Research Officer on 19th Dec. 2012. He graduated as Doctor of Public Health (DrPH) in 2012 from Adventist University of the Philippines. He obtained Master of Public Health in year 2000. He worked with Association of Medical Doctors of Asia (AMDA) as Public Health Manager for HIV/AIDS Programme and also worked as National Programme Co-ordinator for TB and HIV/AIDS in Britain Nepal Medical Trust. Before joining STAC Dr. Bhatta was in PMU/GFATM, NTP, Nepal. He has performed many works in research studies in the field of TB and HIV/AIDS as consultant and principal investigator.



Participation in National/Regional/International Conferences

XIX International AIDS Conference 2012

The Director of STAC participated in XIX International AIDS Conference 2012 held in Washington DC, USA from 22nd to 27th July 2012, organized by International AIDS Society (IAS). The participation of the Centre is taken as an opportunity for disseminating of findings of research conducted by the Centre in the SAARC Member States and forging further networking with international organizations of repute.

The International AIDS Conference is the premier gathering for those working in the field of HIV/AIDS, as well as policy makers, persons living with HIV and other individuals committed to ending the pandemic. It is a chance to assess where we are, evaluate recent scientific developments and lessons learnt, and collectively chart a course forward.

Meeting of Directors of SAARC Regional Centres in Kathmandu

The Directors of SAARC Regional Centres met at the Secretariat in Kathmandu on 30-31 July 2012. All the Regional Centres were represented at the meeting that was convened by H. E. Mr. Ahmed Saleem, Secretary-General of SAARC, in keeping with the mandate of the National Focal Points of SAARC Member States, who last met in Paro, Bhutan, on 23-24 May 2012.

The meeting was opened by the Secretary-General and was chaired by Mr. Tareque Muhammad,



Director, SAARC Secretariat. In his opening remarks, the Secretary-General said, "Over twenty-six years of SAARC's existence, we went on creating mechanisms after mechanisms and one Regional Centre after another, but we could never devote time to examine the efficacy of these mechanisms and entities in a holistic manner. Although over the years, efforts were made to strengthen SAARC and its mechanisms time and again with the institution of a Group of Eminent Persons and holding of special sessions of the Standing Committee, a comprehensive exercise was still needed to make SAARC mechanisms and entities more efficient and effective."

Following in-depth discussions, the two-day Meeting of Directors came up with an exhaustive list of recommendations on strengthening Regional Centres.

Meeting with CARE Nepal

CARE Nepal, Pulchowk, Lalitpur invited STAC to participate in a meeting held at Teku, Kathmandu on 5th Sept. 2012. On behalf of the Centre Dr. N. K. Afridi, Epidemiologist attended

the meeting. The objective of the meeting was to share documentaries and photo stories with stakeholders at central level. CARE Nepal is working in close cooperation with National Centre for AIDS and STI Control (NCASC), HIV and STI Board etc. in Nepal.

Regional Workshop on Programmatic Management of Drug Resistant Tuberculosis, Chiang Mai, Thailand

WHO/SEARO invited Dr. K. K. Jha, Director, STAC to participate in the Regional Workshop on Programmatic Management of Drug Resistant Tuberculosis, Chiang Mai, Thailand from 17th to 21st Sept. 2012 in the capacity of Temporary Advisor to the Regional Director, accordingly, the Director, STAC participated in the meeting. The objective of the meeting was to improve the management of Drug Resistant TB cases under NTPs.

ASTICON 2012

The Epidemiologist and the Microbiologist, STAC participated in ASTICON 2012 - the 36th

National Conference of Indian Association for the Study of Sexually Transmitted Diseases & AIDS (IASSTD & AIDS), organized by Sree Narayana Institute of Medical Sciences and Gurudeva Charitable Trust, Kerala, India from 2nd to 4th November 2012.

A poster on “HIV/AIDS in the SAARC Region and Efforts to contain It” and scientific paper on “Emergence of Drug Resistance

Tuberculosis: Threat to TB and HIV/AIDS Control Programme” were presented with view to provide the information on the SAARC Regional efforts rendered by STAC in the field of HIV/AIDS as well as the information on emergence of drug resistant TB to the participants of the conference.

43rd Union World Conference on Lung Health

A 5-day conference covering the latest developments, opportunities and challenges in tuberculosis, HIV, tobacco control, lung health and non-communicable diseases was organized by International Union Against Tuberculosis and Lung Disease in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia from 13 to 17 November 2012. Dr. Kashi Kant Jha, Director, STAC participated in the Conference.

News on NTP/NACP of SAARC Member State

4th National AIDS Conference, Pokhara, Nepal

Ministry of Health and Population, Government of Nepal, National Centre for AIDS and STD Control (NCASC) along with its partners organized 4th National AIDS Conference with theme for Achieving MDGs through Universal Access from 1st to 4th December 2012 in Pokhara, Nepal. This conference was participated by research scientists, medical doctors, public health experts, policy makers, donors, programme managers, implementers, students

and key populations at higher risk to HIV/STIs, community volunteers and leaders including people living with HIV/AIDS from Nepal and outside.

The NCASC has taken this opportunity as a chance to present, discuss, assess and evaluate recent scientific developments and lessons learnt with in the country, and collectively chart a course forward. This National AIDS conference has offered many opportunities for structured dialogue on the major issues facing the National response to HIV/AIDS. A variety of sessions –

from abstract-driven presentations to symposia, bridging and plenary sessions fulfilled the needs of various participants. Other related activities, including the satellite meetings, exhibitions and affiliated independent events, contributed to an exceptional opportunity for professional development and networking.

The Conference concluded on 4th December 2012 with the “Pokhara Declaration Towards Reaching our ZERO; TOGETHER”.

Dr. Kashi Kant Jha, Director, STAC participated in the conference.

STAC's New Publications in 2012

STAC has published/in process to publish some new publications in this year 2012. STAC's publications are available on its website as well as in Library located at Thimi, Bhaktapur, Nepal.

1. SAARC Regional Strategy on Advocacy, Communication & Social Mobilization (ACSM) for TB and HIV/AIDS
2. Tuberculosis Control – SAARC Region – Update, 2012
3. HIV/AIDS SAARC Region – Update, 2012
4. Ninth Round Proficiency Testing of Sputum Smear Microscopy for National TB Reference Laboratories in SAARC Region, 2012
5. SAARC Journal of Tuberculosis, Lung Diseases and HIV/AIDS, Vol. IX No. 1 & 2, 2012
6. STAC Newsletter Vol. XXII, No. 1 & 2, 2012
8. Annual Report -2011
9. Wall Calendar 2013
10. Report on TB and HIV/AIDS Control Management, Diagnosis & Treatment Facilities in SAARC Member States (in printing process)
11. SAARC Regional Directory of Tuberculosis, HIV/AIDS, Laboratory Institute and Expert (in printing process)

Advocacy, Communication & Social Mobilization are vital to control TB & HIV/AIDS

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