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STAC Newsletter is a regular publication of SAARC TB and HIV/AIDS Centre, it includes reports of 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 and HIV/AIDS.

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# Editorial Board

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Dr. R. P. Bichha

**Co-Editor**  
Dr. Ajith Weerakoon

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MESSAGE

THIRTY-THIRD SAARC CHARTER DAY

On the auspicious occasion of the Thirty-third Charter Day of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC), which falls on 08 December 2017, I wish to warmly felicitate the peoples and Governments of Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, the Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka.

At their historic First Summit at Dhaka in 1985, the Heads of State or Government of the South Asian countries launched SAARC to promote the welfare of the peoples of South Asia and to improve their quality of life through accelerated cooperation in economic, social and cultural fields.

As enshrined in its Charter, the forum of eight countries in South Asia that are bound by ties of shared history and culture, SAARC is a tangible manifestation of the determination of its Member States to promote peace, stability, amity and progress in the region through strict adherence to the principles of sovereign equality, territorial integrity, national independence, non-use of force and non-interference in the internal affairs of other States and peaceful settlement of disputes.

Though SAARC commenced its journey with limited areas of cooperation, its ambit of cooperation continued to expand over the years. Regional cooperation under the auspices of SAARC today covers areas, such as, poverty alleviation, economic and trade, agriculture, education, energy, culture, regional connectivity, infrastructure development, climate change, investment, finance, security, disaster risk reduction and management, fight against terrorism and drug trafficking, and promotion of people-to-people contacts and tourism, among others. Additionally, SAARC’s cooperation with regional and international organizations and its Observers is increasing. The SAARC Apex and Recognized Bodies are making useful contribution to the SAARC process.

Every successive Summit has injected renewed vigour and dynamism to the SAARC process. The Eighteenth Summit (Kathmandu, 26-27 November 2014), devoted to the theme, Deeper Integration for Peace and Prosperity, inter alia, committed the Member States “to deepen regional integration for peace, stability and prosperity in South Asia” and to “achieve South Asian Economic Union in a phased and planned manner.”

As we observe the Thirty-third SAARC Charter Day, I remain confident that the Member States would redouble their concerted efforts in the attainment of the Association’s objectives.

Kathmandu, 08 December 2017

(Ammad Hussain B. Sial)
SAARC Regional Training on Management Information for Action (MIFA) for Tuberculosis & HIV/AIDS Control Programmes

01-05 September 2017, India

SAARC TB and HIV/AIDS Centre (STAC), Nepal and RNTCP, Government of India jointly organized a “SAARC Regional Training on Management Information for Action (MIFA) for Tuberculosis & HIV/AIDS Control Programmes” in National Tuberculosis Institute, Bengaluru, India from 1st to 5th September, 2017.

The training was participated by 12 participants from Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal and Sri Lanka.

The objectives of the training were:

1. To provide knowledge and skills on management information for action with focus on TB and HIV/AIDS control programs
2. To strengthen the skills of participants in data entry and analysis using analytical Software Programmes.
3. To assist Member States in review of their TB and HIV/AIDS control programmes

Inaugural Session:

Dr. R. P. Bichha, Director, STAC graced the occasion as Chairperson. The programme was inaugurated by lighting the traditional lamp jointly by Dr. P. Kumar, Director, NTI, Dr. R.P. Bichha, Director, STAC and Dr. Ajith P. Weerakoon, Epidemiologist, STAC.

Dr. P. Kumar, Director, NTI, India, delivered the welcome address. He mentioned the collaboration between STAC and NTI has been conducting many regionally relevant programmes. He assured fullest cooperation from the Government of India and his support for future STAC activities.
Dr. R.P. Bichha, Director, STAC delivered the inaugural address. He highlighted about the importance of MIFA training and reliability of data. He also highlighted the activities of SAARC TB and HIV/AIDS Centre.

Dr. Ajith P. Weerakoon, Epidemiologist, STAC delivered the Vote of Thanks.

**Technical Session:**

Dr. R.P. Bichha, Director of the STAC, welcomed the participants for the technical sessions. He has highlighted about the introduction of STAC.

Dr. Ajith P. Weerakoon, Epidemiologist STAC presented Objective and Methodology and expected outcome of the training.

Dr. S. Uma Shankar, Chief Medical Officer, resource person for the training presented Health Management Information System.

First day training was conducted by introduction to data management (SPSS) using SPSS-23 version by Mr. R. Jitendra, NTI, India and also he highlighted the Nikshay programme to the participants. This session was facilitated by resource person from NTI and STAC.

**Day 2: 02 September 2017**

The Technical session of day 2 started with summarizing the previous day work by a participant followed by the introduction of Epidemiology as per schedule by Dr. S. Uma Shankar, Chief Medical Officer, NTI, India. In which Basic Bio-statistic-I was discussed by Mr. Sanjeeb Kumar Jha, Statistician, STAC. In the afternoon session, Descriptive Epidemiology, causality and Basic Biostatistics -II was facilitated by Dr. V.K. Chadha, Head, Epidemiology & Research, NTI, India.

**Day 3: 03rd September 2017**

The technical sessions was commenced with summarizing previous days. Thereafter, Mr. R. Jitendra demonstrated the important aspects of data entry and data modifying using hypothetical questionnaire. Each participant were provided Lap top computer for doing practice. Then participants had practical session on SPSS on Data Analysis and Data distribution and cross tabulation. Practical course was conducted whole day.

Third day training was conducted using SPSS -23 versions by Dr. R. Jitendra, Following topics were covered during this session.

-Opening SPSS data File
-The Help system
-Collapsing and Deleting Viewer Items
-Data Organization in SPSS
-Designing a Coding Scheme
-Choice of Entering Data

This session was also facilitated by resource person from NTI and STAC.

At the end of the session, there was discussion on “Epidemiological of TB, global trend and country situation, case finding, case holding and TB notification” by Dr. V. K. Chadha, NTI, India.

**Day 4: 04th September 2017**

The Technical session of day 4 started with summarizing the previous day work by a participant. Fourth day training was conducted using SPSS -23 versions by Mr. R. Jitendra, Following topics were covered during this session.

- Bivariate analysis with discrete variables (Practical course)
- Practice on Data Analysis (SPSS)

This session was also facilitated by resource person from NTI and STAC.

**Day 5: 05th September 2017**

Recap of previous day sessions followed by the using data for analysis was conducted by Mr. R. Jitendra. Participants had presented status of TB and HIV/AIDS in their respective country. During this session were facilitated by resource persons from NTI and STAC.

**Closing session**

Dr. P. Kumar, Director, NTI, Dr. R.P. Bichha, Director, STAC, represented in closing session of the programme. Dr. P. Kumar delivered closing remarks and thanked all participants and organizers for the success of the program. He acknowledged the efforts made by STAC for prevention and control TB and HIV/AIDS in the region.

Resource persons of the programme Dr. V. K. Chadha, Head, Epidemiology & Research, NTI, India gave his remarks and appreciated for excellent arrangement of the training by STAC and Government of India.

Dr. R.P. Bichha, Director, STAC, Nepal delivered his closing remarks. He extended thanks to Resource Persons and participants from National TB Control Programme (NTP) and National AIDS Control Programme (NACP) and all supporting staff for their hard work to make the training successful. Dr. Bichha also highlighted the importance of this training. He expressed gratitude on behalf of STAC to the Government of India, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, National TB Control programme & National AIDS Control Programme.

On behalf of the participants Dr. Ahmadul Hasan Khan, Monitoring and Evaluation Expert, National TB Control Programme, Directorate General of Health Services, Dhaka, Bangladesh thanked the organizers, Resource Persons and STAC for organizing the valuable training and highlighted the benefit that they obtained from this training.
SAARC Exposure Visit to Observe the Best Practices on HIV/AIDS in Nepal,
11-15 September 2017


11 September 2017 at STAC

Dr. R. P. Bichha, Director, SAARC TB and HIV/AIDS Centre, Nepal opened the programme by addressing welcome remarks. Dr. R. P. Bichha highlighted the importance of SAARC Goodwill Ambassador’s programme to create public awareness in the region. Dr. Ajith P. Weerakoon, Epidemiologist, SAARC TB and HIV/AIDS Centre Nepal made presentation on “Introduction of STAC and Situation of HIV/AIDS in SAARC Member States. Dr. Runa Jha, Director, National Public Health Laboratory, Teku, Kathmandu gave her remarks in the opening of the programme. She highlighted that there is big challenges to reach 90-90-90 targets in 2020 in Nepal and emphasized that the all SAARC Member States should work hard to ending HIV epidemic in 2030. During inaugural session, there were country presentations of Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Nepal and Sri Lanka on situation of HIV/AIDS and best practices.

11th September 2017
Field visit to National Centre for AIDS and STD Control (NCASC), Nepal

Dr. Rajya Shree Nyachhyo Kunwor, HIV Technical Specialist, National Centre for STD and AIDS Control, Nepal extended a warm welcome to all delegates in the NCASC on behalf of Dr. Tarun Paudel, Director of NCASC. Mr. Keshab Deuba, SI Specialist made a presentation on Integrated Biological and
Behavior Surveillance (IBBS) surveys among key population in Nepal. He mentioned that the first case of HIV infection in Nepal was identified in 1988, Nepal has made significant achievement in reduction of new HIV infection cases from 7,512 annually in 2,000 to 1,331 in 2015, despite of high HIV prevalence among certain population groups such as people who inject drugs and male and transgender sex workers. This achievement so far in terms of reduction in HIV prevalence and new HIV infection is the result of collaborative efforts of national government entities, external development partners, non-governmental organizations, civil society organization and communities of key affected populations.

She highlighted that the Nepal is the first Country to implement harm reduction programme to Injecting Drug Users in South Asia.

2nd Day (12th September 2017)-

**Visited National Public Health Laboratory-Teki, Kathmandu**

Mr. Subash Dhital Microbiologist of NPHL and his team welcomed to the delegates and officials of STAC. He briefed about the performed activities of Reference HIV/AIDS Laboratory of Nepal. He also explained that NPHL is scale up viral load service in 2014. Following the presentations, participants were observed the facilities in NPHL. Dr. Mujibulrhman Sameer Rasakh, HIV and AIDS Provincial Coordinator from National AIDS Control Programme, Afghanistan informed that Afghanistan does not have facilities to test HIV using PCR method in infants and requested STAC and National Centre for AIDS and STD Control Programme Nepal for facilitate this test for 20 HIV/AIDS children under 18 months.

After visiting NPHL, all the participants and officials visited Sukraraj Tropical and Infectious Disease Hospital, Teku, Kathmandu.

Dr. Ramesh Pokheral, Director of the Hospital welcomed the SAARC delegates and officials of STAC. He briefed the activities carried out by the Hospital and participants observed the facilities provided by the hospital to the People living with HIV/AIDS.
12th September 2017 at 3.30 pm visited Sparsh Nepal

Officials of Sparsh Nepal welcomed the SAARC delegates and STAC officials. Mr. Prabachan K. C. made a briefed presentation about Sparsh and its activities in Nepal. He mentioned that Sparsh started its journey in 2002 as a group support and registered as a NGO in 2004. The Sparsh started to work with people living with HIV (PLHIV) and their children and families in particular and key population i.e. People Who Inject Drugs (PWID), Female Injecting Drug Users (FIDU), MSM, FSW and clients of FSW in general. He also explained services given by to this people to reduce HIV burdening in Nepal. During his presentation he mentioned that challenges faced by them during the implementation of the programme.

3rd Day – 13th September 2017

Visited Dhulikhel Community Hospital, Dhulikhel, Kavreplanchok District, Nepal

Dr. Ram Kumar Makaju Chief of the Hospital welcomed to the SAARC delegates and STAC Officials. Dr. Ajith P. Weerakoon, Epidemiologist, STAC highlighted the objective of exposure visit, role of STAC in controlling HIV/AIDS in the region.

Dr Rajendra Tamrakar, ART Physician made a presentation about HIV/AIDS scenario in Nepal and its services/treatment, activities provided by Dhulikhel Hospital. He shedlighted that Dhulikhel Hospital is providing service free of charge Patients Living with HIV since 2010, Isoniazid Preventive Therapy (IPT) started since 2016 and PMTCT since 2012.

3rd Day – 13th September 2017

Visited Bhaktapur Hospital, Bhaktapur District, Nepal

Dr. Sudha Devkota, Chief of the hospital welcomed SAARC delegates and STAC officials. Miss Shristi Aryal ART counselor of this hospital presented the activities of ART, Regimen of ART and services provided by the centre. She mentioned that all the service are free of cost for PLHIV patients. She also briefed that the ART Center started in this hospital since 2013.

Mr. Jagadish Lohani, Director of this organization and his team welcomed SAARC delegates and officials of STAC. Mr. Lohani made a presentation on youth vision service frame. During his presentation, Mr. Lohani mentioned that the vision, mission, goal and objectives of the centre and services provided by the centre to Intervention drug addicts.

He also mentioned the how OST programme is useful for the drug addicts and to reduce the HIV/AIDS situation in Nepal.

**Courtesy call visit to the H. E. the Secretary General – SAARC on 14th Sep. 2017**

All Participants and STAC officials were in the courtesy call visit with the H. E. the Secretary General – SAARC along with, Ms. Rishfa Rasheed, Director (SA) and Mr. Manzoor Riaz, Desk Officer at SAARC Secretariat. H. E. the Secretary General – SAARC welcomed all the delegates to the SAARC Secretariat.

H. E. the Secretary General – SAARC briefed about the SAARC Secretariat, its establishment, functions and staff strength etc. H. E. also informed about the quorum system for SAARC activities and appreciated that all most all activities completed successfully by the SAARC TB and HIV/AIDS Centre in 2017 in spite of big challenges to fulfill the quorum.

Ms. Rishfa Rasheed, Director (SA) also gave remarks on this visit. She also appreciated the activities done by the STAC.

Dr. Rashidul Rasheed participant from Bangladesh briefed to H. E. Secretary General of SAARC about the situation of HIV/AIDS in Bangladesh. Dr. Mujibulrahman expressed his happiness by observing best practices on HIV/AIDS in Nepal. Following discussion all the participants observed the facilities available at SAARC Secretariat.
Closing Session

Dr. Ajith P. Weerakoon, Epidemiologist, STAC Chaired the closing ceremony. On behalf of participants Dr. Mujibulrhman Sameer Rasakh, HIV/ and AIDS Provincial Coordinator, National AIDS Control Programme, Afghanistan; Dr. Mohammad Rashedul Hassan, Deputy Programme Manager, AIDS/STD Programme, Bangladesh and Dr. Ahamed Ismail Ahamed Ziyad, Medical Officer, National STD/AIDS Control Programme (NSACP), Sri-Lanka gave their remarks. All of them highly appreciated the programme was organizing in Nepal and extended their gratitude to STAC and NACP, Nepal. The programme concluded with thanks to all the SAARC delegates for the active participations.
The 27th Meeting of the Governing Board of STAC

The Twenty-seventh Meeting of the Governing Board of SAARC Tuberculosis and HIV/AIDS Centre (STAC) was held on 29-30 November, 2017 in Kathmandu, Nepal. The Governing Board Members, Dr. Rouseli Haq, Director MBDC, NTP, DGHS Mohakhali, Dhaka, Bangladesh, Dr. Radhay Shyam Gupta, Dy. Director General, NACO, Ministry of Health and Family welfare (MOHFW), Government of India, Dr. Ali Nazeem, Director, Medical services, Senior consultant in Medicine, Indira Gandhi Memorial Hospital, Maldives, Dr. Kedar N. K.C, Director, National TB Centre, Thimi, Bhaktapur, Nepal, Mr. Dadhi Ram Bhandari Under Secretary (Director), Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Regional Organization Division, Nepal, Mr. Javed Ahmed Umrani, Deputy Chief of Mission, Embassy of Pakistan, Kathmandu, Dr. Kanthi Ariyarathne, Director, National Programme for Tuberculosis Control and Chest Diseases, Sri-Lanka participated in the meeting.

Similarly, Ms. Rishfa Rasheed, Director, Social Affairs, SAARC Secretariat, Kathmandu and Dr. R. P. Bichha Director, SAARC TB and HIV/AIDS Centre participated in the meeting.

Ms. Rishfa Rasheed, Director (SA) participated in the meeting as representative of His Excellency, Secretary General of SAARC and Dr. R.P. Bichha act as Member Secretary of the Board. The meeting was Chaired by the Governing Board member from Bangladesh Dr. Rosuseli Haq.

Dr. R.P. Bichha, Director, STAC delivered welcome remarks in the Meeting. Ms. Rishfa Rasheed, Director, Social Affairs, SAARC Secretariat delivered the opening remarks. She conveyed the best wishes of His Excellency the Secretary-General of SAARC for successful organization of this meeting and fruitful deliberations. She appreciated the efforts of STAC for completing all its activities for the year 2017.

Dr. R. P. Bichha, Director, STAC while delivering his opening remarks thanked the Member States and SAARC Secretariat for excellent support and cooperation for all the activities. He also highlighted achievements and common problems and contrarians of National TB and HIV/AIDS Control Programs.
While reviewing the performance of the STAC of the year 2017, the Board expressed its satisfaction to the Centre for completing all of its activities and declared “STAC as a Centre of Excellence”.

The Board recommended the Budget and Activities of the Centre for the year 2018 for approval of Programming Committee.

While discussing one of the activity proposed by the Centre for the year 2018, the Board felt that the SAARC Tuberculosis and HIV/AIDS Centre is one regional Centre of SAARC in the health sector and technical assistance of STAC would be helpful to the Member States in the Disease Epidemic/Disaster urgency/ Cross Border/Migration Health issues.

The Director, STAC proposed that the Staff Day may be celebrated on 16 January of every year and the Board approved the proposal.
SAARC Exposure visit to observe the best practices on Tuberculosis in India

04-08 December, 2017, New Delhi, India

SAARC TB and HIV/AIDS Centre (STAC), Nepal and NITRD, New Delhi, India jointly organized a “SAARC Exposure visit to observe the best practices on Tuberculosis in India” on 04-08 December, 2017. The Participants from Governments of Bangladesh, Bhutan, India Maldives and Sri-Lanka participated in the visit.

Opening Session (Day 1: 4th December 2017)

The opening session was conducted in NITRD, New Delhi. Dr. Rohit Sarin, Director, NITRDS welcome all the participants and delivered his remarks. He highlighted the progress about to TB case finding and success rate in India. He also briefed the activities and achievements of NITRD. In the session Dr. Prahlad Kumar, Director, National Tuberculosis Institute, Bangalore also delivered his remarks and briefed some good examples of best practices on TB Control in India.

On behalf of the SAARC Tuberculosis and HIV/AIDS Centre, Mr. K.B. Basnet, Administrative Officer conveyed the message of Director, STAC for successful of the Programme and thanked to the NITRD, RNTCP, Government of India for warm hospitality and excellent arrangements made for the Programme.

Day 2: 5th December 2017

As per schedule for SAARC Exposure Visit to observe the best practices on TB in India. The team has visited and conducted meeting at RNTCP, Central TB Division, Ministry of health Government of India. Dr. Sunil Khaparde welcomed and delivered his remarks on RNTCP. Dr. Nishant Kumar presented “Organization of services under RNTCP”, Dr. Bhavin Vadera presented on “National Strategic Plan 2018-2025”, Dr. V. S. Salhotra made a presentation on “Updates on Programmatic Management of DR TB” and Dr. Raghuram Rao presented on
“Innovative under RNTCP”. During the meeting event objectives and agenda was set by Central TB Division.

**Day (3 – 5): 6th to 8th December 2017**

The participants also visited the different places as per the schedule of SAARC Exposure Visit to observe the best practices on TB in India. The participants were visited the Delhi TB Centre, and Dr. K. K. Chopra Director-STDC and departmental heads briefed about the good practices to the participants.

During the visit, delegates from Bangladesh, Bhutan, Maldives and Sri-Lanka presented their country presentations. Involvement of Group Works and presentations of learning has been done. Also the participants were discussed the best practices on TB learned from India and prepared their summary report which was presented in before in the closing session.

**Closing of the Programme**

The programme concluded with thanks to all the SAARC delegates for the successful completion of the visit and excellent cooperation and coordination for organizing this visit by the Director, NITRDS India.
Celebration of 33rd SAARC Charter Day

Interaction Programme with Teachers and Nursing Students on SAARC, STAC & TB and HIV/AIDS

On the auspicious occasion of the 33rd SAARC Charter Day, SAARC TB and HIV/AIDS Centre (STAC) organized an Interaction Programme with Teachers and Nursing Students from Shradha Institute of Health Science on 8th December 2017 in STAC. In the programme over 60 students of grade of PCL along with the Vice-Principal and concerned teachers participated. Students are considered as revolutionary forces to change the community and they are also considered as Child Ambassadors to spread the messages for the control of TB and HIV/AIDS in the society.

The objectives of the programme were:

General Objective:

♦ To enhance the awareness on SAARC and its important in the region
♦ To sensitize the participants about important aspects of TB, HIV/AIDS among nursing students.
♦ To emphasize the importance of community participation in prevention and control of TB and HIV/AIDS in the region.
♦ To stress the role of teachers and nursing students as change agents in prevention and control of TB and HIV/AIDS to make a TB and HIV/AIDS free region.

On the occasion of SAARC Charter Day, a special message was issued by HE, Secretary General, SAARC and it was disseminated to the SAARC member States for covering news in local news paper. It was also uploaded on the Website of STAC.

Prof Dr. R. P Bichha, Director, STAC delivered welcome address and made a presentation on SAARC, STAC and its objectives, functions, vision, mission, goal and Role of Nursing College for the prevention and
control of TB and HIV/AIDS. He stressed the vital role of nursing students in TB and HIV/AIDS. He also highlighted the ongoing activities of SAARC and STAC for the benefit of the people of South Asia.

In addition, presentations were made by the following resource persons/professionals:

Dr. Ajith Weerakoon, Epidemiologist, STAC made a presentation on General information on sign, symptoms, diagnosis and treatment on HIV/AIDS. Dr. Ajith highlighted the risk groups of getting infection of HIV/AIDS and different ways of transmission.

Mr. Kailash Bdr. Karki, Training Officer, STAC presented a paper on General information on sign, symptoms, diagnosis and treatment on TB. He sensitized the participants the mode of transmission and ways of prevention. He also pointed out the role of nursing students in prevention of tuberculosis.

Mr. Bishnu Kunwar, Lab technician, STAC presented his presentation on Laboratory diagnosis of TB and HIV/AIDS

Mr. S. K. Jha, Statistician, STAC Presentation statistical data and its role on TB and HIV/AIDS

Mr. Dependra Subba, Librarian, STAC made a presentation on brief introduction of Resource Centre of STAC

Ms. Bimala Khadka, Vice Principal made a remarks on behalf of College. She appreciated the programme organized by STAC and thanked for giving opportunity for inviting them in such important programme.

Prof Dr. R. P Bichha, Director, STAC Felicitated to Mr. Gyanendra Lal Joshi , Former Accountant and Mr. Pradyumna Bhanadari, Former Computer Technician of STAC for their invaluable contribution in STAC as well as in TB and HIV/AIDS Control Programmes.

Director, STAC Awarded the appreciation letter to participating college & delivered closing remarks. Vote of thanks was delivered by Ms. M. K. Dhakal, SPA, STAC.
Celebration of 33rd SAARC Charter Day in New Delhi on 08 December, 2017

On 08 December, the Thirty-third SAARC Charter Day Celebrate also in New Delhi, India on the last of STAC’s Activity “SAARC Exposure visit on best practices on TB in India. The participants from Governments of Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives and Sri-Lanka had given their remarks in a special session organized to celebrate the day. The participants from the member states informed in the session about Messages issued by their respective country on the occasion of Thirty-third SAARC Charter Day. Mr. Krishna B. Basnet, Admin Officer, SAARC TB and HIV/AIDS Centre, red-out the Message issued by the His Excellency the Secretary-General, SAARC.

(Mr. Krishna B. Basnet, Admin Officer, SAARC TB and HIV/AIDS Centre, red-out the Message issued by the His Excellency the Secretary-General, SAARC)

(Participants in SAARC Charter Day programme)
Brief News

Participation in the 48th UNION World Conference on Lung Health

Dr. R. P. Bichha, Director, STAC participated in the 48th UNION World Conference organized in Guadalajara, Mexico from 11th to 14th October 2017. In the Conference most of the National Programme Managers of TB Control in SAARC Member States participated, congregated and utilize the opportunity to share their experiences and renewal their cooperation required for the control of TB in the Region.

Participation in National Consultation on National Migration Health Policy and Strategies

Dr. Ajith P. Weerakoon, Epidemiologist had participated in National Consultation on National Migration Health Policy and Strategies Organized by IOM on 11 October 2017, Kathmandu, Nepal..

Participation in 5th International Conference on Lung Health

Dr. R. P. Bichha, Director, STAC participated at the 5th international Conference on Lung Health by Bangladesh Lung Foundation held in Dhaka, Bangladesh, 14-17 November 2017.

Visit of Dr Md Khurshid Alam Hyder, Public Health Administrator, WHO Nepal,

Dr Md Khurshid Alam Hyder, Public Health Administrator from WHO Nepal visited STAC office on 10th November 2017. He observed the facilities of the Centre and available infrastructure and progress made by the Centre.

Digitalization of library resources (TB, HIV/AIDS) and link to STAC Website

The SAARC TB and HIV/AIDS Center has initiated online hosting of STAC library from 27th November 2017, which has linked into the STAC homepage www.saarctb.org. The resources produced by the centre can be view by logging and clicking into the STAC Library menu.

Participation of Training Officer in National TB Day 29th November 2017

Mr. Kailash Bahadur Karki, Training Officer, STAC represented the centre in 64th National Tuberculosis Day (29th November 2017) was celebrated to remark the establishment day of
NATA. Every year, on Mangsir 13th NATA Central including its district branches organize various awareness raising programs to celebrate National Tuberculosis Day.

**Participation in Meeting of National Prevalence Survey Nepal**

Dr. R. P. Bichha, Director, STAC participated in the Meeting of National Prevalence Survey Nepal organized by NTP Nepal in Chitwan District of Nepal from 19-21 December 2017. The objective of the meeting was to provide information about TB prevalence survey to Medical Officer from government. One of the major functions of STAC is to support Member States in strengthening/updating the knowledge and skills of existing manpower working in control of TB and HIV/AIDS upon the request of Member States.

**Farewell of Mr. Pradyumna Bhandari**

Mr. Pradyumna Bhandari, who was working in Centre as a Computer Technician, since the establishment of the centre, retired on 19th October 2017. A farewell was organized at STAC to say good-bye to outgoing staff of the Centre. Director, STAC along with all staff thanked him for his remarkable contribution for the Centre. He was awarded by “Letter of Appreciation” and souvenirs as token of love. STAC is very much thankful to Mr. Bhandari for his valuable contributions to the Centre and wishes him for his great success in coming days.

**Visit of STAC by Programme Leader of SAARC Energy Centre, Pakistan**

Engr. Salis Usman, Program Leader (Energy Trade) SAARC Energy Centre, Islamabad, Pakistan had visited STAC on 13 November 2017. The main purpose of his visit to STAC was to development of Multimedia Archive on SAARC Energy Centre (SEC) was an approved program activity of SEC for the year 2017. The SEC Archive was aimed to facilitate awareness by sensitizing the stakeholders in the most effective manner with respect to potential and development in the energy sector of South Asia and provision of sustainable energy along with functioning of SAARC apex bodes to the wider audience within than outside the region. During SEC multimedia archive took interview of Dr. Ajith P. Weerakoon, Epidemiologist on behalf of STAC.
**Visit of Governing Board Member from Bangladesh**

Dr. Rouseli Haq, Director, MBDC and Programme Manager TB, DGHS, Mohakhali, Dhaka Governing Board Member from Bangladesh visited STAC on 27th November 2017 and observed the functioning of the Centre.

**Participation of Director in World AIDS Day**

Dr. R. P. Bichha, Director, STAC had participated in the programme organized by National AIDS Control Programme, Nepal on 1st December 2017. World AIDS Day is held on the 1st December each year and is an opportunity for people worldwide to unite in the fight against HIV, show their support for people living with HIV and to commemorate people who have died. World AIDS Day was the first ever global health day, held for the first time in 1988.

**Visit of STAC by Korean Team**

A team from Government of Korea Mr. Hee Jin Kim, Director, The Korean National Tuberculosis Association, Mr. Eenhoo Kim, Manager, Strategic Planning Division, Korea Digital Hospital Export Agency, Mr. Tae Hyung Kim, Executive Managing Director, Korea Digital Hospital Export Agency and Dr. Sailesh Shrestha, Medical Officer, National Tuberculosis Centre Nepal had visited STAC office on 20th December 2017. The team observed functioning of the Centre and available infrastructure and progress made by the Centre.

**Participation in Laboratory workshop**

Dr. Ajith P. Weerakoon, Epidemiologist and Mr. Bishnu Bahadur Kunwar, Lab Technician participated in National Assessment of Laboratories in Nepal on 16th November 2017 at Kathmandu Nepal jointly organized by National Public Health Laboratory, Nepal, WHO and Save the Children.