



SAARC Tuberculosis and HIV/AIDS Centre (STC)

Annual Report 2007

SAARC Tuberculosis & HIV/AIDS Centre (STC)
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Preface



This Annual Report is a summary of activities carried out by SAARC TB and HIV/AIDS Centre during the period of January to December 2007. It is my pleasure to inform that STC has completed almost all assigned responsibilities for the year. I would like to thank Program Managers of National TB and HIV/AIDS control programs of SAARC Member States for their generous cooperation and support for implementation of STC activities.

I believe that the activities performed by SAARC TB and HIV/AIDS Centre have provided support to National Tuberculosis and HIV/AIDS control programs of SAARC Member States in the implementation of TB & HIV/AIDS control and prevention activities.

I want to offer my sincere gratitude to His Excellency Mr. Chenkyab Dorji, Secretary General and Mr. Mohamed Naseer (previous Director, SAARC Secretariat) and Mr. Hassan Shifau, Director, SAARC Secretariat for their generous support, guidance and full cooperation to carry out all activities effectively in the SAARC Member States. I would like to thank WHO/SEARO for providing technical support for the activities of the Centre.

I extend my sincere gratitude to the Government of SAARC Member States for their cooperation and support for successful organization of STC activities, such as Partnership Programs, Trainings, Workshops, Meetings etc. on different aspects of TB and HIV/AIDS.

I appreciate my Professional Staff and General Services Staff for their hard and sincere works to organize all the activities timely and effectively. We are committed in our endeavour to provide support to SAARC Member States for prevention and control of TB & HIV/AIDS.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Kashi Kant Jha', written over a horizontal line.

Dr. Kashi Kant Jha
Director

Abbreviations and Acronyms

STC	SAARC TB and HIV/AIDS Centre
AFB	Acid Fast Bacilli
BICC	Birendra International Convention Centre
CBO	Community Based Organizations
CMO	Chief Medical Officer
DHO	District Health Officer
DOT	Directly Observed Treatment
DOTS	Directly Observed Treatment Short-course
DPH	District Public Health
DST	Drug Susceptibility Test
EQA.	External Quality Assurance
FGD	Focused Group Discussion
FM	Frequency Modulation
HIV/AIDS	Human Immunodeficiency Virus/Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome
ICTC	Integrated Counselling & Testing Centre
IDU	Injecting Drug User
IEC	Information Education and Communication
IMHRC	Iwamura Memorial Hospital and Research Centre
IUATLD	International Union Against Tuberculosis and Lung Diseases
lab	Laboratory
LFN	Low False Negative
LQAS	Lot Quality Assessment Sampling
MDR	Multi Drug Resistant
MoH & P	Ministry of Health & Population
NACP	National AIDS Control Program
NATA	Nepal Anti TB Association
NGMC	Nepalgunj Medical College
NHRC	Nepal Health Research Council
NMA	Nepal Medical Association
NPTCCD	National Programme for TB Control and Chest Diseases
NRL	National Reference Laboratory
NTC	National TB Centre
NTI	National TB Institute
NTP	National TB Program
PAL	Practical Approach to Lung Health
PHC	Primary Health Centre / Primary Health Care
QA	Quality Assurance
SAARC	South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation
SIC	SAARC Information Centre
SMS	Short Message Service
Sr.	Senior
TB	Tuberculosis
TFI	Tobacco Free Initiatives
ToT	Training of Trainers
TV	Television
VCT	Voluntary Counselling and Testing
Vol	Volume
WAC	World AIDS Campaign
WHO	World Health Organization
XDR	Extensively Drug Resistant

Introduction of SAARC TB and HIV/AIDS Centre (STC)

SAARC Tuberculosis and HIV/AIDS Centre (STC) is one of the Regional Centres of SAARC working for prevention and control of TB and HIV/AIDS in the Region by coordinating the efforts of the National TB Control Programmes (NTPs) and National AIDS Control Programmes (NACPs) of SAARC Member States. The centre was established in 1992 in Kathmandu, Nepal.

The Centre has a Governing Board comprising of 11 Members. The structure of the Governing Board is created from eight representatives - one each from every Member States, representative from SAARC Secretariat, representative from Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Government of Nepal and Member Secretary from SAARC TB and HIV/AIDS Centre.

Sixteenth Meeting of the Governing Board of STC

The Sixteenth Meeting of the Governing Board of SAARC TB and HIV/AIDS Centre was held from 4 to 5 December 2006 in Kathmandu, Nepal. The Governing Board reviewed the achievements of the Centre of 2006 and recommended programs and budget for 2007.

Recommended Programmes for 2007

1. Public Awareness and Advocacy Program on TB and HIV/AIDS:
 - Commemoration of:
 - World TB Day and World AIDS Day
 - Celebration of SAARC Charter Day
 - Partnership Program with –
 - School and Media in Afghanistan
 - School Teacher in Bhutan
 - School and Media in Maldives
 - School (teacher/students), Media, Medical Colleges and NGOs in Nepal
 - Industries in Sri Lanka
 - Media involvement / mobilization activities
SAARC Workshop on involvement of Media – Bangladesh, India, Pakistan
2. i) Participation in International / Regional Meetings, Seminars, Conferences,
ii) Participation in NTP and NACP review in Member Countries.
3. Production of STC Publications:
 - i. STC Newsletter
 - ii. SAARC Journal of TB, Lung Diseases and HIV/AIDS
 - iii. SAARC epidemiological yearly reports (updates) on TB, HIV/AIDS including TB/HIV co-infection
 - iv. History of HIV/AIDS in the SAARC Region
 - v. Annual Report of STC
 - vi. World TB Day and World AIDS Day Report

-
- vii. Guidelines for Partnership program with Industry, Travel Agency and Manpower Agency
 - viii. Awareness and advocacy materials (stickers on HIV/AIDS, calendar, brochures etc.)
 4. Distribution of STC Publications
 5. Strengthening of STC Library and updating of website:
 - i. Purchase/subscription of books and journals
 - ii. Updating of Audio Visual materials in Library
 - iii. Dissemination of information on TB & HIV/AIDS by updating STC website
 6. SAARC Regional Training of Trainers on Management of Drug Resistant TB (DOTS Plus)
 7. SAARC Regional Workshop to develop/strengthen mechanism for cross - border activities in controlling TB and HIV/AIDS
 8. SAARC Regional consultative and strategic planning meeting of HIV/AIDS program managers
 9. SAARC Regional Meeting of Managers of NTP and NACP from SAARC Member States & SAARC Meeting for the Group of Experts of Electronic and Print Media to develop the mechanism/link to utilize the facility for dissemination of information, education and communication (IEC) information/materials on TB and HIV/AIDS in the region.
 10. SAARC Regional Training on Leadership and Strategic Management in TB and HIV/AIDS control
 11. SAARC Regional Training of Trainers (ToT) on QA in Sputum Microscopy
 12. Preparatory works for the SAARC second conference on TB, HIV/AIDS & Respiratory Diseases to be organized in Kathmandu in 2008
 13. Carryout situation analysis of TB and HIV/AIDS control program and laboratory activities in Afghanistan and Pakistan
 14. Community based risk behavior study on HIV/AIDS targeting women in Nepal
 15. Quality Assurance of Sputum Microscopy in Private Labs in Dhaka
 16. HIV prevalence in TB patients in Afghanistan and Bhutan
 17. Third SAARC Regional Workshop on TB/HIV co-infection (follow up of second workshop)
 18. Second Workshop to develop regional guidelines for treatment of MDR TB & third meeting of Laboratory Directors from 9 Reference Labs in SAARC Region
 19. Fourth Round External Proficiency Testing in 9 Reference Laboratories
 20. Chemical and other materials to develop culture and sensitivity test, AFB test and regular activity at the STC reference lab
 21. Strengthening of SAARC regional epidemiological networking for TB and HIV/AIDS data management
 22. Acceptability of HIV testing by TB patients in the Member States
 23. Identify the ways and means of collaboration between TB and HIV/AIDS programs to find out the challenges in implementation and suggest solution in Member States.

Seventeenth Meeting of the Governing Board of STC

The Seventeenth Meeting of Governing Board of STC was held from 27th to 28th November 2007 in Kathmandu, Nepal.

The Board Members **Md. Abul Hossain**, Counsellor & HOC, Bangladesh Embassy, Kathmandu, **Dr. Pandup Tshering**, PM, NTP, Ministry of Health, NTP, Bhutan, **Mr. S. K. Joshi**, First Secretary & HOC, Embassy of India, **Dr. Ajay Kumar Khera**, Joint Director, National Control Organization, New Delhi, India, **Dr. Kuldeep Singh Sachdeva**, Chief Medical Officer, Central TB Division, India **Mr. Ibrahim Shaheem**, Director General, Department of Public Health, Maldives, **Dr. D. S. Bam**, Chief,



Curative Division, Ministry of Health and Population, Nepal **Mr. Deepak Dhital**, Under Secretary, SAARC Division, Ministry of Foreign, Affairs, Nepal **Dr. Shahid Hanif**, Deputy Manager, NTP, Pakistan, **Mr. Hassan Shifau**, Director, SAARC Secretariat, Kathmandu, **Dr. Kashi Kant Jha**, Director, SAARC Tuberculosis and HIV/AIDS, Centre, Kathmandu attended the meeting.

Dr. Nirakarman Shrestha, Secretary, Ministry of Health and Population, Government of Nepal graced the occasion as Chief Guest.

The opening session was held under the Chairmanship of Dr. Mahesh Kumar Maskey, Chairman, Nepal Health Research Council, Kathmandu, Nepal.

Dr. Kashi Kant Jha, Director, STC delivered welcome address. Mr. Hassan Shifau, Director, SAARC Secretariat also addressed the opening session of the meeting.

Dr. Nirakarman Shrestha, the Chief Guest delivered remarks in the meeting and wished for grand success of the meeting. Dr. Mahesh Kumar Maskey, Chairperson also delivered his remarks. Dr. V. S. Salhotra, Deputy Director, STC delivered vote of thanks.

The Governing Board meeting was initiated and conducted under the Chairmanship of Dr. Pandup Tshering.

Dr. Kashi Kant Jha, Director, STC presented achievements of year 2007 and proposed the programs and budget for year 2008.

The Governing Board reviewed the achievements of the Centre of the year 2007 and recommended programs and budget for the year 2008.

Recommended Programs for 2008

1. Public Awareness and Advocacy Program on TB and HIV/ AIDS:

Commemoration/Celebration of:

- i. World TB Day,
- ii. World AIDS Day,
- iii. SAARC Charter Day,

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- iv. Production of awareness and advocacy materials on the occasion of SAARC Charter Day, World TB Day and World AIDS Day.
 - v. Public-Private mix strategy under partnership programs
- 2. The SAARC Second Conference on TB, HIV/AIDS & Respiratory Diseases in Kathmandu.**
3. Participation in International/Regional meetings, seminars, conferences in the field of TB and HIV/AIDS by STC.
 4. Visit of STC officials to identified National TB Reference Laboratories in Member States in India.
 5. Constitution of Scientific Committee for reviewing Articles for SAARC Journals of TB HIV and Respiratory Diseases
 6. Development of Training Materials for Quality Assurance (QA) of Sputum Microscopy by STC Professionals
 7. SAARC Regional Workshop for development of Research Protocols for 2009 and observation TB/HIV coordination mechanism.
 8. Meeting of Regional TB and HIV/AIDS Program Managers of the Member States, Maldives
 9. SAARC Regional Training of Trainers on essential Technical & Operational aspects of DOTS Plus, Nepal
 10. SAARC Seminar to Collaborate and support Cross border activities in controlling TB and HIV/AIDS, Pakistan
 11. SAARC Regional Training of Microbiologist for sputum Culture & Drug Susceptibility Test, India
 12. SAARC Training on Leadership and management skills at National/Regional level, Bhutan
 13. SAARC Training of Program Managers on DOTS Plus (MDR-TB), Afghanistan
 14. SAARC Training on Technical and Operational Aspects of Anti Retro Viral Therapy, Bangladesh
 15. SAARC Training on Technical and Operational Aspects of Anti Retro Viral Therapy, Sri Lanka
 16. Strengthening of STC library
 17. Dissemination of information of TB & HIV/AIDS by updating STC Website and Installation of Broad band internet connectivity & yearly charges
 18. Production of STC Publications
 - i. STC Newsletters
 - ii. SAARC Journals of TB, Lung Diseases and HIV/AIDS
 - iii. SAARC Epidemiological Yearly Reports on TB and HIV/AIDS
 - iv. Annual Report of STC
 - v. Print a booklet giving salient programme details NTP & NACP of all Member States.
 - vi. Updating and Printing of History of TB Control Program in the SAARC Region – (IIInd edition).
 - vii. Wall Calendar –2009
 - viii. Services of Professional Editor/s (volume basis) from Nepal as and when necessary.
 - ix. Distribution of STC Publication
 19. Fifth round Proficiency testing of Sputum Microscopy for Ten National TB Reference Laboratories
 20. Procurement of chemical and other lab materials for regular works at SAARC TB Reference Laboratory at STC

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21. Collection of Information/Data and publish book on Epidemiological Trend of last ten year on TB and HIV/AIDS in the Member States (analytical study book on TB and HIV/AIDS)
 22. Review of research activities as conducted by Member Countries in last five year pertaining to TB and HIV/AIDS.
 23. Review of available training facilities/manuals, types of training for different level health workers in the field of TB and HIV/AIDS

Research Activities

24. Case –Control Study to identify risk factors for MDR TB in Nepal
25. Barriers to DOT for MDR-TB patients in Nepal
26. Baselines CD4 count in the adult population in India.

Global Fund Application

STC has got mandate from the Governing Board for submission of proposal in consultation with the SAARC Secretariat and SAARC Member States.

SAARC Award

The Governing Board of STC has established SAARC Award on TB and HIV/AIDS control with a provision of Cash Prizes.

Conference

SAARC Second Conference on TB, HIV/AIDS and Respiratory Diseases is going to be organized in Kathmandu from 15 to 18 December 2008.

Report on Activities Carried out and Achievements of the Centre in 2007

1. Public Awareness & Advocacy and Partnership Programs on TB and HIV/AIDS

1.1. Partnership Programs with School in Nepal, Maldives and Bhutan

SAARC TB and HIV/AIDS Centre organized partnership programs in schools in Nepal, Maldives and Bhutan in this year.

The **objectives** of the partnership with school program were -

- to boost up the awareness level of students regarding TB and HIV/AIDS
- to disseminate updated information on TB and HIV/AIDS
- to seek more cooperation in control of these disease through raising public awareness
- to strengthen and expand partnership for control and prevention of TB and HIV/AIDS and
- to build a cadre of child ambassadors, committed to spread messages on TB and HIV/AIDS in the community

Bal Deekshya Sadan, Lalitpur, Nepal



Partnership program with School in control of TB & HIV/AIDS was organized jointly by SAARC TB and HIV/AIDS Centre, National TB Control Program, Nepal, Nepal Anti-TB Association, Central Office, Kalimati and Bal Deekshya Sadan Higher Secondary School, Gwarko, Lalitpur, Nepal on March 23, 2007. This programme was organized on the occasion of World TB Day 2007 which falls on 24th March every year. The program was organized to enhance public awareness through students on TB and HIV/AIDS.

Opening Session

The session was held under the Chairmanship of Mr. Shiva Shrestha, Principal of school. Mr. Dinesh Khanal, Teacher welcomed the participants, officials and other participants in the programme.

Mr. Devendra Bahadur Pradhan, President, Nepal Anti-TB Association (NATA) addressed the gathering. He highlighted role of NATA in TB control and the role of students in control of tuberculosis in the community.

Dr. Kashi Kant Jha, Director, SAARC TB and HIV/AIDS Centre (STC) extended a warm welcome to the participants. He highlighted the objective of the school partnership program in TB control and role of school students in control and prevention of TB & HIV/AIDS in the community. Dr. Jha presented detail about TB disease, its symptoms, diagnosis and treatment.

Dr. Pushpa Malla, Director, National Tuberculosis Centre (NTC) presented the situation of TB in Nepal and facilities provided by the Government to the people for diagnosis and treatment of TB disease in Nepal.

Dr. Lochana Shrestha, Epidemiologist, STC explained about HIV/AIDS and its situation in SAARC Region.

Following the presentations, interaction session started. Participants took part in this session enthusiastically.

The program, concluded with the remarks of Chairperson. He expressed happiness and appreciated the efforts of STC to involve school students in spreading messages on awareness. He also expressed commitment to help in spreading awareness messages to the people. He thanked all participants for their presence and to STC, NTC and NATA for selection of their school for this activity.

At the end of the programme, Director, STC thanked all for their participation, cooperation and support. The program was attended by 150 participants.

Shree Padma Higher Secondary School, Durbar Square, Bhaktapur, Nepal



SAARC TB & HIV/AIDS Centre organized interaction program on TB and HIV/AIDS with school teachers & students on prevention and control of TB and HIV/AIDS on the occasion of World AIDS Day 2007 at Nepal on 30th November 2007.

Sixty five students from grade 10 to 12 attended the program. In addition Vice-Principal, panel of teachers, experts from STC also took part in the program.

Opening session

The session was held under the Chairmanship of Mr. Ram Hada, Vice-Principal, Shree Padma Higher Secondary School. Mr. Hada, delivered welcome address and thanked STC for providing opportunity to organize this program at their school. He assured that the school in collaboration with STC will work on regular basis for prevention and control of these diseases.

Dr. Lochana Shrestha, Epidemiologist, STC presented on general information on HIV/AIDS and its prevention strategy and TB & DOTS situation of Nepal.

Dr. V. S. Salhotra, Deputy Director, STC urged to collaborate TB and HIV/AIDS programs, so that these diseases can be controlled in effective way. He highlighted the general information on TB, and ways of prevention to control TB.

Dr. Kashi Kant Jha, Director, STC extended a warm welcome to the officials of the school and thanked all for their cooperation and participation in this program. Subsequently, he appreciated the attention shown by students to organize this program at their school. Dr. Jha made a presentation on partnership program of STC with school and role of school in prevention and control of TB in the community.

Students and teachers discussed with facilitators on various issues regarding TB and HIV/AIDS.

STC publications on awareness on TB and HIV/AIDS, SAARC guidelines for partnership program with school along with other publications were distributed to the participants.

Concluding the program the Chairperson thanked STC for selecting their school for this activity and urged to organize such activities regularly.

The vote of thanks was delivered by Mr. Dhruva Kumar Khadka, Microbiologist, STC.

School and Media in Maldives



Partnership program with School and Media for control of TB & HIV/AIDS was organized jointly by Government of Maldives and SAARC TB and HIV/AIDS Centre, Nepal on 13th June 2007.

Opening of Session

Mr. Ibrahim Shaheem, Deputy Director General, Department of Public Health, Maldives, chaired the opening session of the program. Dr. Ahmed Razee, Deputy Director General, Medical Services, Ministry of Health, Maldives and Dr. Ahmed Jamsheed Mohamed, Senior Medical

Officer, DPH, Maldives jointly inaugurated the program.

Mr. Shaheem extended a warm welcome to the participants, delegates and STC officials. In continuation with the inaugural address, Mr. Shaheem presented an informative and provocative story regarding the importance of conveying the correct and actual message to general people in relation to TB and HIV/AIDS.

Dr. Jamsheed Mohamed expressed his thanks to the participants from school, scouts and media agencies and STC.

Dr. Kashi Kant Jha, Director, STC also extended a warm welcome and highlighted the importance of the partnership programme in TB and HIV/AIDS control in the community. Dr. Jha emphasized the role of media agencies to propagate the right message to the right people at the right place and at the right time.

Ms. Shameema Hussain highlighted the Situation of TB control in Maldives. She explained the signs & symptoms of TB and additional information about this disease.

Dr. Rameez and Mr. Hameed arranged an AIDS game about transmission of HIV to impart the knowledge to the participants.

Dr. Lochana Shrestha, Epidemiologist, STC presented global and regional situation of HIV/AIDS. She highlighted the importance of response towards TB and HIV/AIDS epidemic, as window of opportunity is closing down and the problem is increasing worldwide.

Following the presentations, interaction between participants and facilitators was held.

The session concluded with the remarks from Chairperson. He informed the participants that 1st case of HIV was detected in 1991 in Maldives and now there is good network and communication system for monitoring the situation.

Around 50 participants from School, Media and Scouts attended the program.

School Teachers at Paro, Bhutan

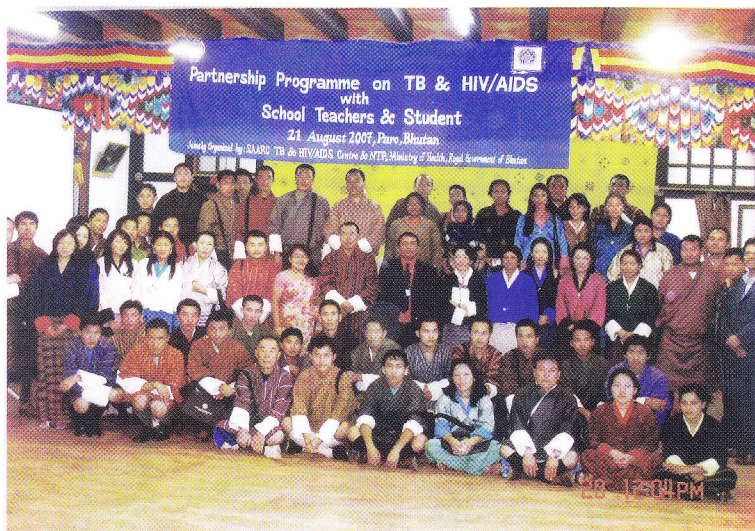
A partnership program with school for control of TB & HIV/AIDS was organized jointly by SAARC TB and HIV/AIDS Centre (STC), Nepal and National TB Control Program, Government of Bhutan at University of Bhutan, Paro on August 21, 2007. Altogether eighty teachers, staff and students from various schools participated in the program.

Opening Session

Dr. Ugen Dophu, Director, Department of Public Health, Government of Bhutan graced the session as Chief Guest and welcomed the participants in the program.

Dr. Pandup Tshering, NTP Manager, Government of Bhutan presented situation of TB and its control measures and activities of NTP Bhutan. He also stressed on the need of partnership program and collaborative activities to tackle the growing problems in the field of TB and HIV/AIDS.

Mr. Dhruva Kumar Khadka, Microbiologist, STC presented general information about symptoms of TB, along with its diagnosis and treatment.



Dr. Lochana Shrestha, Epidemiologist, STC presented general information on HIV/AIDS, its situation in SAARC region and role of schools in control of TB and HIV/AIDS.

A teacher spoke on behalf of participants about the need of awareness programs on public health in school.

Interaction between participants and facilitators was held at the end of the program.

In conclusion, the Chief Guest urged for the collaboration between TB and HIV/AIDS for the development of educational program. He also highlighted the importance of the program to increase the level of awareness of the people. At the end, he thanked the participants and organizers for successful completion of the program. He also thanked University of Bhutan for their cooperation in this activity.

Outcomes

- Dissemination of updated information on TB and HIV/AIDS
- Commitments and cooperation from school level to disseminate the awareness information on TB and HIV/AIDS for elimination of stigma prevalent in the society.

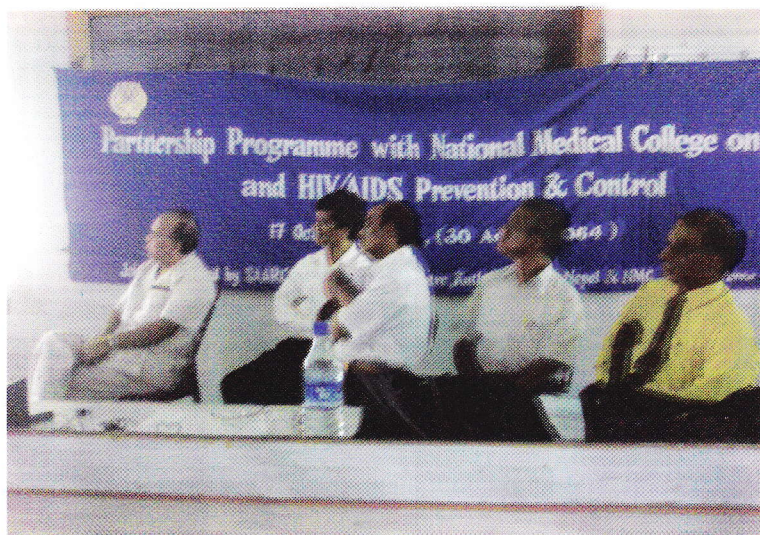
1.2. Partnership Program with Medical Colleges

STC organized partnership programs with different Medical Colleges in Nepal. The programs were organized to meet the following objectives:

The **objectives** of the partnership program with medical college were –

- to discuss the roles of Medical Colleges in capacity building, service delivery & research in collaboration with National TB and HIV/AIDS control program,
- to disseminate updated information on TB and HIV/AIDS and to seek coordination and cooperation in control of TB and HIV/AIDS in the country.

National Medical College, Birgunj, Parsa, Nepal



Partnership program with National Medical College for control of TB & HIV/AIDS was organized jointly by SAARC TB and HIV/AIDS Centre, Nepal, District Health Office, Parsa and National Medical College, Birgunj on October 17, 2007.

Seventy participants consisting of Medical Doctors, Students, and Officials from National Medical College, representatives from Nepal Medical Association, District Health Office, Sub-Regional Hospital,

Central Region, Nepal Anti-TB Association Parsa district participated in the program.

Dr. Jainnudin Ansari, Chairman, National Medical College, Birgunj chaired the session. Mr. Yogendra Prasad Bhagat, District Health Officer, Parsa welcomed the team of SAARC TB & HIV/AIDS Centre along with the students and teachers of the Medical College in the program. Mr. Bhagat extended a warm welcome to the participants and expressed his pleasure and thanks to STC for organizing this activity.

Dr. Lochana Shrestha, Epidemiologist STC delivered talk on TB and HIV/AIDS and its impact on TB control programme. She highlighted the situation of DOTS and DOTS Plus program of Nepal.

Dr. V. S. Salhotra, Deputy Director, STC presented the situation of TB in SAARC Region. He highlighted that by adopting DOTS strategy, this region has started to show success in TB control.

Mr. Dhruva Kumar Khadka, Microbiologist, STC made a presentation on Role of Sputum Microscopy & Quality Assurance in TB Control Programme.

Mr. Kanchan Jha, President, Sano Paila, a non governmental organization presented documentary on "Awareness and Advocacy on HIV/AIDS – Women a Victim of HIV".

Dr. Kashi Kant Jha, Director, STC, presented introduction of SAARC TB and HIV/AIDS Centre, its function, objectives and role in the Region. Simultaneously Dr. Jha informed the participants that the Centre is strengthening its existing partnership program with medical colleges, media, industry workers, school, pharmacists, manpower agencies, travel agencies and private sector. Dr. Jha also highlighted the involvement of medical colleges & private sectors in control of Tuberculosis and prevention of HIV/AIDS. He appealed to the college authorities to join hands in the battle against TB and HIV/ AIDS.

Dr. Rakesh Verma, President, Nepal Medical Association, Parsa Branch gave remarks in the program.

At the end Chairman of the program Dr. Ansari and Mr. Bhagat, District Health Officer gave their concluding remarks.

Vote of thanks was delivered by Mr. Dhruva Kumar Khadka, Microbiologist, STC.

Outcomes

- National Medical College assured to establish coordination and provide cooperation in control of TB and HIV/AIDS.
- National Medical College committed to scale up the services in control of TB and HIV/AIDS.
- Committed to open DOTS Plus services.

Participants were cleared about different issues related to TB and HIV/AIDS.

Nepal Medical College, Kathmandu, Nepal

Partnership Program with Nepal Medical College for control of TB and HIV/AIDS was organized jointly by SAARC TB and HIV/AIDS Centre and Nepal Medical College, Kathmandu at Jorpati, Kathmandu on October 29, 2007 to enhance awareness on TB, HIV/AIDS and their prevention and control.

Opening session

Dr. Shekhar Babu Rijal, Principal, Nepal Medical College, Kathmandu chaired the session.



Dr. Shyam Prasad Bhattarai, Chief, Planning and Evaluation, NMC welcomed the participants and team of SAARC TB & HIV/AIDS Centre. In his welcome address, Dr. Bhattarai thanked STC for organizing this activity at NMC.

Dr. Lochana Shrestha, Epidemiologist STC made a presentation on status of TB and HIV/AIDS in the SAARC Region and its impact on TB control program.

Mr. Dhruba Kumar Khadka, Microbiologist, STC made a presentation on Role of Sputum Microscopy & Quality Assurance in TB Control Program.

Dr. V. S. Salhotra, Deputy Director, STC presented the situation of TB in SAARC Region. He highlighted on the involvement of Medical Colleges and Private Sectors in TB and HIV/AIDS Control Program. Dr. Salhotra elaborated the fact that Centre is strengthening its existing partnership program with medical colleges, media, industry workers, students and pharmacists and private sector. He appealed to the college authorities to join hands in the battle against TB and HIV/AIDS.

Dr. Pushpa Malla, Director, National TB Control Program, Nepal spoke on various activities carried out by NTP in the country. The DOTS and DOTS Plus activities for MDR TB patients in Nepal were discussed. She also explained about the challenges being faced by NTP, Nepal in implementation and expansion of DOTS Plus program.

Dr. Ram Ratna Upadhyaya, Chief Guest and Officiating Chairman of NMC thanked STC for organizing this important programme in the college. He mentioned that this type of program should be continued in different sectors particularly in medical colleges and this will certainly be helpful to tackle the TB problem. He also requested STC and NTP, Nepal for implementation of effective program to prevent MDR-TB and TB HIV co-infection.

Mr. Dhruba Kumar Khadka, Microbiologist, STC delivered vote of thanks.

Dr. S. B. Rijal, Principal, NMC, Jorpati mentioned the role being played by NMC for TB control. He appreciated the different programmes carried out by STC in the region. He highlighted that TB and HIV/AIDS are socio-medical problems and to control this dual infection, all sectors need to be committed for active response.

Outcomes

- Nepal Medical College assured to provide co-ordination and cooperation for the provision of updated information regarding TB and HIV/AIDS to the general people.
- Nepal Medical college committed to scale up the services in relation to TB and HIV/AIDS Control
- Medical Doctors, Para Medical Workers and related staff of the college updated regarding information related to TB and HIV/AIDS and different issues.

Nepalgunj Medical College, Banke, Nepal

Partnership program with Medical College for control of TB and HIV/AIDS was organized jointly by SAARC TB and HIV/AIDS Centre (STC), Kathmandu, Nepalgunj Medical College (NGMC) and National TB Control Program (NTP) of Nepal at Nepalgunj, Banke on December 16, 2007 at NGMC.

Medical students, Para medical students, Medical Officers, Media people and academic staff, representatives from governmental and non-governmental organizations, staff from National TB Control Program participated in the program.



Opening session

Prof. Bhagwat Nepal, Head of Dept. of Ophthalmology chaired the program and Dr. S. K. Kanodia, Managing Director, NGMC graced the program as the Chief Guest.

Dr. M. C. Jain, Deputy Director, NGMC delivered welcome address. Mr. Kehar Singh Godar, District Public Health Officer, Banke briefed the situation of TB and HIV/AIDS in Banke district.

Dr. Kashi Kant Jha, Director, STC extended a warm welcome to the participants and guests in the program. Dr. Jha thanked the participants for their participation and thanked staff of medical college for their cooperation and support in the field of TB and HIV/AIDS control and prevention program in Nepal. Dr. V. S. Salhotra, Deputy Director, STC highlighted situation of TB in SAARC Region as well as DOTS and DOTS Plus program.

Dr. Lochana Shrestha, Epidemiologist, STC delivered a presentation on HIV/AIDS and its impact in TB control program. Mr. Badri Nath Gyawali, Statistician, NTC Nepal presented status of National TB Control Program as well as DOTS Plus program in Nepal.

Prof. S. M. Mishra, Principal, Prof. Gopal Shrestha, Head of the Dept. General Medicine, Dr. J. Mahaseth, Director, NGMC Dr. S. S. Yadav, Superintendent, Bheri Zonal Hospital and Mr. Purna Lal Khuke, President, NATA branch also delivered their remarks.

Chairperson of the program Dr. Nepal delivered the concluding remarks. He acknowledged the cooperation rendered by participants and thanked STC for the program.

Dr. Ajith Weerakoon, Research Officer, STC delivered vote of thanks.

Outcome

- Two hundred Medical Students, Doctors, Para-medical Staff attended the program and updated the knowledge on TB and HIV/AIDS.
- Nepalgunj Medical College committed to scale up the services in relation to TB & HIV/AIDS control.

1.3. Partnership with Non Governmental Organizations (NGOs)



Partnership programme with Non Governmental Organizations (NGOs) working in the field of public health in border districts of Nepal for TB and HIV/AIDS, prevention and control was jointly organized by SAARC TB and HIV/AIDS Centre and National TB Control Program, Nepal in coordination with Sano Paila, a local non-governmental organization, District Health Office Parsa district, Nepal. The program was organized at Udyog Banijya Sangh, Birgunj on January 14, 2008.

The overall **objectives** of the partnership program with non governmental organization were –

- to make NGOs aware about situation of TB and HIV/AIDS, its spread and socio-economic impacts on individuals,
- to develop effective linkage with NGOs working in health sector for effective and efficient program implementation and
- to convince the NGOs to be part of solution to fight against TB and HIV/AIDS.

Participants from different NGOs working in health sector, in border districts of Nepal and India, District Health Officer, Parsa district, Nepal Anti TB Association (NATA) Parsa, Branch, Narayani Sub Regional Hospital, Birgunj, News Agency, Parsa and Nepal Medical Association, Birgunj and National Medical College, Birgunj participated in the program. Nearly 125 participants attended the program.

Opening session

Mr. Yogendra Prasad Bhagat, District Health Officer, Parsa welcomed the participants, officials and guests in the program. Mr Ganga Bahadur Thapa, Vice President, NATA, Birgunj graced the session as Chief Guest and Dr. Rakesh Verma, President, NMA, Parsa presided the program.

Dr. V. S. Salhotra, Deputy Director, STC presented the situation of TB and TB/HIV co-infection globally and in SAARC region.

Dr. Lochana Shrestha, Epidemiologist, STC presented situation of HIV/AIDS in Global and in SAARC regional level and its impact on TB control program.

Dr. Pushpa Malla, Director, NTP Nepal presented situation of TB control program DOTS and DOTS Plus in Nepal.

Mr. Kanchan Jha, President, SANO PAILA, an NGO working on HIV/AIDS, presented Video Film about IDUs in relation to HIV/AIDS. This film was made to highlight current view of IDUs of Parsa district and also showed the need of acceptable, accessible services for them.

Dr. Kashi Kant Jha, Director, STC presented, Introduction of SAARC TB and HIV/AIDS Centre and Role of NGOs in control and prevention of TB and HIV/AIDS. Additional information were also made available to the participants through STC publications.

An interaction session was held and various queries regarding the issues about involvement of NGOs in control of TB and HIV/AIDS were raised. These issues were cleared by the facilitators.

Dr. Kashi Kant Jha, Director, STC presented a 'Letter of Appreciation' to Mr. Sadhu Ram Khadka for quitting drugs & becoming a Role Model to train & counsel other IDUs.

From the discussion following **recommendations** emerged:

- Linking of National Programme on TB and HIV/AIDS with NGOs working in Health sector by involving them actively in programme planning and implementation
- Sharing the information on TB and HIV/AIDS activities with NGOs from relevant TB and HIV/AIDS programme
- SAARC TB and HIV/AIDS center will facilitate for co-ordination between the programmes and related NGOs.

The vote of thanks was delivered by Dr. V. S. Salhotra, Deputy Director, STC.

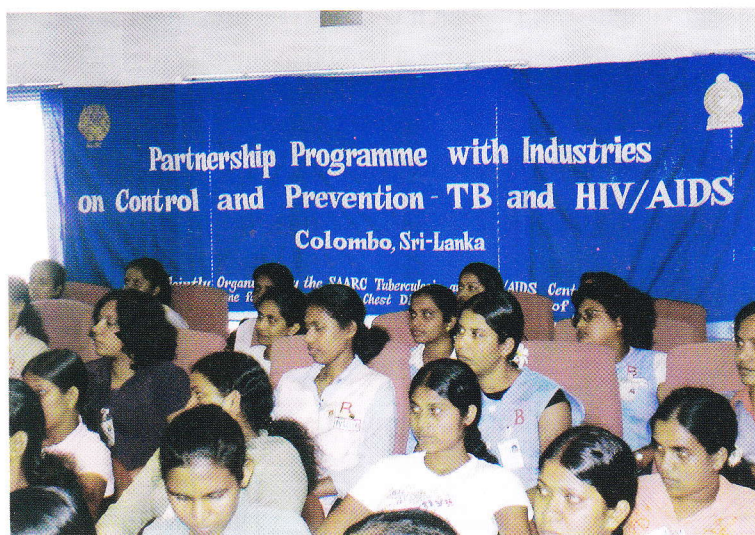
Outcomes

- Participants were cleared about different issues in relation to TB and HIV/AIDS.
- NGOs committed to provide co-ordination and cooperation for the provision of services in the community in relation to control of TB and HIV/AIDS.
- Participants acquainted with role of NGOs working in Health sector for the control of TB and HIV/AIDS

1.4. Partnership Program with Industry

Bodyline Industry at Horana, Kalutara, Sri Lanka

Partnership program with industry for control of TB and HIV/AIDS was organized jointly by SAARC TB and HIV/AIDS Centre, Nepal and National Program for TB Control and Chest Diseases (NPTCCD), and National AIDS Control Program, Government of Sri Lanka at **Bodyline Industry in Horana, Kalutara district, Sri Lanka** on November 22, 2007.



The **objectives** of the partnership program with industry were –

- to ensure commitment of all levels from management to workers for control and prevention of TB & HIV/AIDS
- to strengthen partnership with industries for spreading appropriate messages about these diseases
- to seek their cooperation and involvement in control and prevention of TB and HIV/AIDS and
- to initiate informative and educational programs to raise awareness among workers about TB and HIV/AIDS.

Hundred and twenty five factory workers and management of the industry, officials from NPTCCD and National AIDS Control Program (NACP) participated in the program.

Opening session

Ms.*I. Premachandra on behalf of industry management extended a warm welcome to the participants and guests in the program. She highlighted the importance of the program and its usefulness for awareness of the workers and taking for precautions of these dreaded diseases. She appreciated and thanked STC, NPTCCD and NACP, Government of Sri Lanka for organizing this program at their industry.

Dr. Kashi Kant Jha, Director, STC extended a warm welcome to the participants and officials of the industry in the program. He presented "Introduction of STC and importance of partnership program and the role of industry workers in controlling TB and HIV/AIDS in the community". Dr. Jha also presented "Situation of TB and HIV/AIDS in the SAARC Region".

Dr. V. S. Salhotra, Deputy Director, STC highlighted the General Information on TB. He emphasized the early diagnosis and treatment of TB. Dr. Salhotra also explained the role of industry workers in control of TB and HIV/AIDS.

Dr. Chandra Sarukkali, Director, NPTCCD, Sri Lanka gave a talk in local language about the situation of TB in Sri Lanka. She explained TB is curable if treated in time with proper way.

Dr. S. Gunasekara, Medical Officer, National AIDS Control Program delivered a talk on situation of HIV/AIDS in Sri Lanka in local language. He highlighted the structure and functions of AIDS Control Program in Sri Lanka.

Dr. Ajith Weerakoon, Research Officer, STC presented situation of HIV/AIDS in SAARC in local language and how HIV is transmitted from one person to another and how to prevent it.

On behalf of participants Ms. Deepika Kumari, expressed happiness and thanked the organizers for conducting this informative program in their place.

Participants discussed the important issues with the experts.

Dr. V. S. Salhotra, Deputy Director delivered the vote of thanks.

Outcome

Participants updated the knowledge and attitude regarding TB and HIV/AIDS.

1.5. Commemoration of World TB Day (24th March)

The Theme for World TB Day 2007 - "TB anywhere is TB everywhere"

On 24 March, worldwide, people took part in the World TB Day campaign – a day of social action and awareness.

SAARC TB and HIV/AIDS Centre Commemorated the World TB Day 2007 on 24 March by organizing various activities in collaboration with National TB Control Programme of Nepal.

The theme for World TB Day 2007 was "TB anywhere is TB everywhere." The theme conveyed messages of urgency and shared responsibility, and contains supporting sub-messages focused on the call for increased investment, stronger community involvement, strengthened research and development, and action against emerging threats such as TB/HIV and XDR-TB.

The Day when Dr. Robert Koch announced discovery of TB bacillus in Berlin in 1882 is commemorated on 24th March every year.



Activities carried out

STC displayed the World TB Day banners with slogan, theme and messages for the benefit of the general people. Articles related to TB were published in National dailies on the occasion of World TB Day. A rally of students, social & political activists, celebrities, health volunteers/workers, government officials and general people was organized in Kathmandu. A Rickshaw Rally was organized for the first time on the occasion. STC took part in this rally.

An exhibition of STC activities was displayed at the Birendra International Convention Centre (BICC), Kathmandu. In the exhibition, general information on TB, achievements and activities of STC and information related to Member States were displayed. Emphasis was given on Partnership Programs for awareness which was highly appreciated by the Chief Guest (Minister of Health and Population) and the visitors.

STC publications (brochure, calendar etc.) were distributed to the visitors of the exhibition for their information on TB and HIV/AIDS.

A function was organized at BICC, Kathmandu jointly by National TB Centre, Government of Nepal, SAARC TB and HIV/AIDS Centre, Directorate of Health Services, World Health Organization, LHL, and Nepal Anti-TB Association to commemorate the Day on March 24, 2007.

Hon'ble Mr. Amik Sherchan, Deputy Prime Minister, Minister for Health and Population, Government of Nepal graced the function as Chief Guest and the function was chaired by Mr. Ram Chandra Man Singh, Secretary for Health, Government of Nepal.

Dr. Sarala Malla, Director General, Department of Health Services delivered welcome address. The chief guest inaugurated the program by lighting the traditional oil lamp (Panas).

Following the inauguration, publications from STC and NTC were released by the Chief Guest.

Dr. Pushpa Malla, Director, National Tuberculosis Centre explained the National TB control program of Nepal.

In the function, remarks were given by H. E. Mr. Chenkyab Dorji, Secretary General, SAARC, Dr. Kan Tun, WR Nepal, Mr. Devendra Bahadur Pradhan, President, NATA and Dr. Mahesh Maskey, Advisor, MoH & P.

The Chief Guest awarded different persons for their remarkable contributions in the field of TB control in Nepal. He also delivered his remarks.

Dr. Kashi Kant Jha, Director, SAARC TB and HIV/AIDS Centre delivered Vote of Thanks.

The program was concluded with the remarks of the Chairperson, Mr. Ram Chandra Man Singh, Secretary, Ministry of Health & Population.

After completion of the program all the participants observed the exhibition with Chief Guest and other dignitaries.

1.6. Commemoration of World AIDS Day (1st December)



Each year on 1st December, the world observes the World AIDS Day. The first edition of this tribute dates back to 1988, when the World Summit of Health Ministers on AIDS called for a new spirit of social tolerance and an improved exchange of information on HIV/AIDS. Since then, World AIDS Day has grown into one of the most accredited international days.

World AIDS Day aims to strengthen concerted global efforts to address the challenge of the AIDS pandemic, which continues to spread death and disease

throughout the world. This is also an opportunity to give visibility to the problem and mobilize the attention of the media, so raising global awareness on the state of the epidemic. An increasing number of countries are hosting advocacy activities on World AIDS Day and government, non government and local organizations work jointly forging partnerships against AIDS.

World AIDS day slogan for the year 2007 was '**Stop AIDS, Keep the promise**' to focus on keeping commitments to stop AIDS at all levels. **Leadership** has been chosen by the World AIDS Campaign as the theme for World AIDS Day 2007 and 2008. This theme will continue to be promoted with the slogan "Stop AIDS. Keep the Promise."— the World AIDS Campaign (WAC) emphasis from 2005-2010.

Experience shows that in order to sustain the achievement and to expand the disease control activities, partnership with different sectors is very much essential to halve the morbidity and mortality due to these diseases.

Realizing the gravity of the problem SAARC TB & HIV/AIDS Centre organized an "**Interaction Programme on TB and HIV/AIDS with School Teachers & Students**" on prevention and control of both HIV/AIDS and

Tuberculosis on the occasion of World AIDS Day 2007 at **Shree Padma Higher Secondary School**, Durbar Square, Bhaktapur, Nepal on 30 November 2007. (more information is given in Partnership Program)

1.7. Celebration of SAARC Charter Day (8th December)

The SAARC was established when its Charter was formally adopted on December 8, 1985. On the occasion of its establishment, SAARC TB and HIV/AIDS Centre (STC) celebrated 23rd SAARC Charter Day on December 9, 2007 by organizing a Partnership Program with Media for Control and Prevention of TB and HIV/AIDS in Kathmandu.

Mr. Thakur Raj Adhikari, Officiating Secretary, Ministry of Health and Population chaired the program.

Dr. Mahesh Kumar Maskey, Chairperson, Nepal Health Research Council (NHRC) graced the program as Chief Guest.



The **objectives** of the program were –

- to provide information about SAARC, its aim & objectives and functions
- to make media aware about situation of TB and HIV/AIDS, its spread and socio-economic impact on individuals,
- to strengthen partnership with media for motivating individuals and communities, mobilizing public support, influencing policy makers etc and
- to convince the media to be a part of solution to fight against TB and HIV/AIDS.

Journalist, media representatives from various electronic and print media took part in the program. The officials from Ministry of Health and Population, Department of Health Services, WHO, SAARC Secretariat, National TB Control Program and STC staff also attended the program.

Opening session

Dr. V. S. Salhotra, Deputy Director, STC delivered welcome address on behalf of the STC and presented paper on the situation of TB in SAARC region. Dr. Lochana Shrestha, Epidemiologist, STC presented the situation of HIV/AIDS and its impact on TB control program in the SAARC region as well as role of Media in prevention and Control of TB and HIV/AIDS in the region.

His Excellency Mr. Chenkyab Dorji, Secretary General, SAARC highlighted the significant structural and socioeconomic factors, which put the region at risk for a full-blown AIDS epidemic. He remarked that high percentage of people living below the poverty line; low level of literacy, low status of women etc. are the factors that have contributed to the risk factors. The consequences of these factors are increasing HIV prevalence in TB patients, difficulties in treatment and management, diagnosis, low cure rates and inadequate supervision on anti TB chemotherapy. His Excellency appreciated the efforts made by STC for creating awareness on TB and HIV/AIDS for different segments of the people, such as media people, school students, industry workers etc.

Dr. Chop Lal Bhusal, President, Nepal Medical Association (NMA) presented the role of NMA in control of TB and HIV/AIDS. He said that all doctors need to be dedicated and convinced to carry out the activities smoothly to control TB and HIV/AIDS. He added the fact that media can play role to increase the awareness among the health care providers.

Dr. Padam Bahadur Chand, Director, National AIDS and STD Control Centre, Kathmandu spoke on the issues being faced by the Centre in prevention and control of the disease. He highlighted necessary steps needed on the process of collaboration between TB and HIV/AIDS control programs.

Dr. Kashi Kant Jha, Director, SAARC TB and HIV/AIDS Centre made a presentation on SAARC, its establishment and progress. Dr. Jha highlighted the objectives and functions of STC and also explained the progress of the Centre. In conclusion he acknowledged the cooperation rendered by the journalists for creating awareness related to TB and HIV/AIDS and thanked all the participants.

Dr. Govinda Prasad Ojha, Director General, Department of Health Services, Government of Nepal highlighted the entire health programs of Nepal. He also highlighted that TB and HIV/AIDS are disease of poor and increase poverty. He extended thanks to the participants for attending the program and taking part in discussion with full enthusiasm.

In conclusion, the Chief Guest Dr. Maskey thanked the participants for their active presence in the program and also thanked STC for organizing this important event on the occasion of SAARC Charter Day. Dr. Maskey highlighted the contribution of media in prevention of HIV and control of TB in Nepal.

Chairperson of the program Mr. Adhikari highlighted the commitment of Government of Nepal to control TB and HIV/AIDS in the country. He informed the media that the Government of Nepal has accorded high priority to control and prevention of these diseases. On behalf of Ministry of Health and Population he assured that the support required to STC will be continued and cooperation will be strengthened.

Mr. Dhruva Kumar Khadka, Microbiologist, STC delivered vote of thanks.

In the Interaction program the participants thanked the organizers and expressed their solidarity in prevention and control of TB and HIV/AIDS. They appreciated the STC for the initiation taken to work with media in prevention and control of these diseases.

About eighty participants attended the program. The participants from media expressed their satisfaction and promised to write about TB and HIV/AIDS.

2. SAARC Regional Consultative and Strategic Planning Meeting of HIV/AIDS Programme Managers, Maldives

SAARC Regional Consultative & Strategic Planning Meeting of HIV/AIDS Programme Managers was organized jointly by SAARC TB and HIV/AIDS Centre, Nepal and Government of Maldives from 11 to 12 June, 2007 in Male.



The overall **objectives** of the meeting were –

- to discuss the evidence based activities done by HIV/AIDS control programme of each SAARC Member States, following the SAARC Regional Strategy on HIV/AIDS and
- to share the best practices in relation to HIV/AIDS control for better results.

Participants from HIV/AIDS control programme & Medical Services Department of Maldives and Media people attended the meeting. Along with the HIV/AIDS Programme Managers of different Member Countries of SAARC, there were 30 participants who attended the meeting.

Opening Session

Dr. Sheena Moosa, Director General of Health Services, Ministry of Health, Maldives inaugurated the meeting as Chief Guest. Mr. Ibrahim Shaheem, Deputy Director General, Department of Public Health, Maldives extended a warm welcome to the participants, delegates and officials attending the meeting.

Dr. Kashi Kant Jha presented the objectives of the meeting and highlighted the importance of combined efforts and response towards emerging HIV/AIDS epidemic in the Region.

Following the inauguration, participants discussed the matter and components of the agenda in detail.

Finalization Meeting of National Strategic Plan on HIV/AIDS of Maldives– 2007

Prior to the meeting on SAARC Regional Consultative and Strategic Planning of HIV/AIDS Programme Managers, this meeting was organized on June 10, 2007 on the invitation of Department of Public Health, Ministry of Health, Maldives. Meeting was attended by STC officials and authorities of Department of Public Health, Maldives. This meeting helped the organizers to gather the required information to discuss on different aspects of strategic plan on HIV/AIDS. It also helped to review the regional strategic plan on HIV/AIDS.

Outcomes

The participants agreed for provision of priority on the focused areas of regional strategy in National Strategy Plan on HIV/AIDS of each SAARC Member States. Considering the high mobility of the people between the countries, all expressed the importance of accessible and acceptable interventions targeted to migrant people which help to minimize the risk of entry of HIV into the country. The meeting also addressed the importance of enhancement of preventive services, fostering of enabling environment of HIV/AIDS.

Recommendations

1. The key elements of the SAARC Regional Strategy on HIV/AIDS need to be priorities in National Strategic Plan on HIV/AIDS according to individual country context.
2. Advocacy on development of National Strategic Plan based on regional strategy.
3. Prevention of HIV transmission in health care settings needs to be addressed.
4. National Strategic Plan needs to incorporate TB and HIV collaborative activities
5. National Strategic Plan needs to address children as vulnerable group and incorporation of integration of STI and HIV prevention services.
6. Each country will follow their own National Strategic Plan on HIV/AIDS

3. Quality Assurance of Sputum Smear Microscopy in Private Laboratories in Dhaka

Orientation Training to Laboratory Technicians working in private laboratories

13-15 August 2007

SAARC TB and HIV/AIDS Centre, Nepal and National TB Control Program, Government of Bangladesh jointly organized **Orientation Training in Quality Assurance of Sputum Smear Microscopy for Laboratory Technicians working in Private Laboratories** at TB Clinic, Shyamoli, Dhaka on August 13-15, 2007.



Objectives of training were –

- To gather the preliminary data on quality assurance in private laboratories in Dhaka working for diagnosis of TB, and
- To enhance the knowledge and strengthen skills of the participants on quality assurance in sputum microscopy.

Inaugural Session

The session was attended by officials from TB Clinic, Shyamoli, NTP, WHO and Department of Health Services, Government of Bangladesh.

Dr. Shabjahan Biswas, Director General, Department of Health Services, Government of Bangladesh graced the session as Chief Guest.

Dr. Jahanara Begum, Junior Consultant, TB Clinic Shyamoli, Dhaka delivered welcome address. She welcomed the participants from private laboratories, dignitaries from Government of Bangladesh, expert from WHO, Dhaka, facilitators, STC official & other. On behalf of TB Clinic, she conveyed her best regards to Director and officials of STC.

Dr. Md. M. Rahman, National Consultant, Epidemiology & Surveillance, WHO, NTP, Dhaka & Mr. Kailash Bdr. Karki, Training Officer, STC jointly highlighted the objectives and methodology of the study.

Dr. Md. Enamul Hq, Office In-charge, Shyamoli TB Clinic conveyed thanks to STC for bringing this important program in Shyamoli. He highlighted the role of private sector in TB control and prevention.

Prof. Dr. Pravat Chandra Barua, Director, MBDC & Line Director TB/Leprosy DGHS, Bangladesh appreciated the efforts of STC for selecting this activity in Bangladesh.

Chief Guest Dr. Biswas, declared the training open and appreciated the role being played by STC and thanked for giving opportunity to organize this training in Bangladesh.

Dr. Biswas appealed to all people working in private laboratories to make strong collaboration with NTP. Dr. Bipul Kanti Biswas, Medical Officer, NTP, Dhaka conducted the ceremony.

Technical Session

In the Technical Session brief introduction of quality Assurance, general information on AFB staining/examination were discussed with practical exercises. Subsequently, participants were also given one prepared panel of slides and asked to report accurately. The errors and various queries made by participants were clarified by respective facilitators.

Sixteen participants from different private laboratories from Dhaka participated in the training.

4. Second Workshop to Develop Regional Guidelines on Diagnosis & Treatment of MDR-TB and Third Meeting of Lab Directors from Nine Reference Laboratories of SAARC Region, Bhutan

The workshop and meeting were jointly organized by SAARC TB and HIV/AIDS Centre, Nepal and Ministry of Health, Government of Bhutan at Paro, Bhutan from 17th to 20th August 2007.



The **objectives** of the workshop were -

- To share country specific experiences in DRS and MDR-TB
- To develop SAARC Regional guidelines for diagnosis & treatment of MDR-TB.

Altogether 13 participants attended the program, nine from Bhutan, two from Maldives, one from Nepal and one from Sri Lanka. (List of participants is placed at Annex I)

Opening Session

Dr. Ugen Dophu, Director, Department of Public Health, Bhutan graced the session as Chief Guest. Dr. Pandup Tshering, Manager, NTP delivered welcome address. He welcomed the participants, resource person, facilitators, NTP officials, STC officials & other dignitaries and highlighted the importance of the workshop in relation to MDR-TB.

On behalf of STC, Dr. Lochana Shrestha, Epidemiologist, STC, extended a warm welcome & thanked all participants and the team of NTP, Bhutan for their support to arrange this workshop.

Dr. Dophu addressed and thanked the participants for their participation in workshop. He thanked Member States for sending all the participants and providing opportunity to make this program successful.

Dr. Pandup Tshering delivered vote of thanks.

Dr. Lochana Shrestha, Epidemiologist, STC presented Objectives and Methodology of the workshop along with the presentation on Introduction of STC and its functions in the areas of TB and HIV. She also presented the – MDR TB and its situation in global as well as in SAARC Region.

Mr. Dhruva Khadka, Microbiologist, STC presented the Role of National Reference Lab in diagnosis and treatment of MDR TB.

Technical Session:

All the participants were provided the list of contents of the draft guideline which was discussed and finalized. Participants were divided into two groups to prepare the guidelines, one group focused on treatment aspect and another group focused on diagnosis part. The discussions were mainly based on “*Guidelines for the Management of Drug – Resistant Tuberculosis – Geneva, World Health Organization, 2006*”.

Participants visited Paro General Hospital and Drukgyel Basic Health Unit and observed the activities.

Third Regional Meeting of Laboratory Directors from Nine National TB Reference Laboratories in SAARC Region

The 3rd regional meeting of Lab Directors from Nine National TB Reference Laboratories in SAARC Region was organized on 20th August 2007 in Bhutan.

Objective of Meeting

- To identify new areas of cooperation and collaboration among National TB reference laboratories and the STC Reference Laboratory.
- To harmonize on Quality Assurance (QA) of smear microscopy in TB laboratory networks of the SAARC Region.

Country presentations on Quality Assurance (QA) in SAARC Members State were as follows –

Ms. Fathimath Saeeda, Lab. In-charge of IGM Hospital, Male, presented country report on the system of slide collection and selection of all negatives and positive slide from Microscopy Centres which were submitted to the Regional Hospital Laboratories for blinded cross checking.

Mr. Jagat Khadka, Sr. Medical Technologist, Nepal presented the country paper. He highlighted conventional slide collection and selection system is still in practice and Lot Quality Assessment Sampling (LQAS) is highly recommended in Nepal. Culture and DST services need to be improved at National and Regional level laboratories.

Mr. Pema, Lab Technician from Public Health Lab., Thimphu presented the system of slide selection, highly recommended LQAS system to be implemented in Bhutan and stressed that culture and DST service have to be improved in the country.

Dr Gayani H. Wikramanayake, Microbiologist, Sri Lanka, presented the paper on LQAS system which was implemented in district level laboratory in 2006. Conventional method of slide selection was still in place to the peripheral laboratories and the blind cross checking is done by the district laboratories.

Participants from Member States accepted the QA guidelines recommended by SAARC Regional Workshop held in Colombo, Sri Lanka in Oct. 2006.

Closing Session

Dr. Ugen Dopphu, Director, Department of Public Health, Bhutan chaired the session.

Dr Pandup thanked to all for successful completion of the program. Dr Lochana Shrestha, highlighted the importance of the workshop and presented the copy of regional guidelines to the chairperson. Dr. Shrestha thanked for participation, enthusiasm and interest shown by the participants and also expressed gratitude on behalf of STC to the Government of Bhutan, Ministry of Health, NTP, Bhutan and Member States for sending the participants in the workshop. The participants presented their views about the workshop and highlighted the benefits.

Dr. Ugen extended his thanks to STC, participants from all Member States and congratulated to all for successful completion of the workshop. Certificates were distributed to the participants and facilitators.

Outcomes

- ✓ Development of SAARC Regional Guidelines on Diagnosis & Treatment of MDR-TB
- ✓ Identification of new areas of cooperation and collaboration among National TB Reference Labs in the Member States and the STC Reference Lab.
- ✓ Strengthening of co-ordination and collaboration among laboratories in SAARC Member States.
- ✓ Updating of knowledge on MDR-TB and EQA.

5. Third SAARC Regional Workshop on TB/HIV Co-infection, Bangalore, India

Third SAARC Regional Workshop on TB/HIV Co-infection was organized in Bangalore, India from 5th to 6th September 2007. The workshop was organized by SAARC TB and HIV/AIDS Centre, Nepal.



The overall **objectives** of the workshop were –

- To review the trend of TB, HIV/AIDS & TB/HIV Co-infection and their impacts at the Regional and National level,
- To adopt TB/HIV collaborative approach by sharing experiences and
- To identify new priority research areas/topics in relation to TB/HIV co-infection.

Altogether 25 participants attended the program (List of participants and facilitators is placed at Annex II).

Opening Session

Dr. Prahlad Kumar, Director, National TB Institute CMO, Bangalore graced the session as Chief Guest and Dr. B. Mahadev, CMO, NTI welcomed the participants attending the workshop.

Dr. Kashi Kant Jha, Director, SAARC TB and HIV/AIDS Centre (STC) welcomed the delegates, Resource Persons, Facilitators, Participants, Officials and dignitaries in the workshop. In continuation to his address, Dr. Jha highlighted the situation of TB/HIV co-infection in SAARC region. He emphasized the need of collaborative efforts from National TB Control Program and National AIDS Control Program. He also briefed the activities carried out by STC along with its achievements and highlighted the contributions provided by Member States of SAARC.

Dr. Kumar highlighted the importance of this workshop for the development / strengthening of TB/HIV collaborative efforts in all Member States. He thanked Dr. Jha for choosing NTI as a venue for workshop and appreciated STC for role played to arrange this workshop with good coordination between SAARC Member States.

Dr. V. S. Salhotra, Deputy Director, STC extended the vote of thanks.

Dr. V.S. Salhotra started technical session with the presentation on Objective and Methodology of the workshop and introduction of STC and its functions. He shared the issues on collaboration between TB and HIV/AIDS programs specially on requirements, challenges, drawbacks, planning and implementation. He also highlighted the role of participants for success of the workshop.

The participants made their presentation about TB, HIV/AIDS and TB/HIV co-infection along with the situation of TB/HIV collaborative activities in the country.

A field visit program was arranged to observe the implementation of TB/HIV collaborative activities in ART centre, Integrated Counselling & HIV Testing Centre (ICTC) and DOTS centre in Bangalore.

At the end the group of participants prepared recommendations on priority areas to be focused by national programs of Member States in relation to TB and HIV/AIDS collaboration.

The workshop was facilitated by Dr. Prahlad Kumar, Director, Dr. B. Mahadev, CMO, Dr. Sophia Vijay, Sr. TB Specialist, Dr. V. K. Chadha, Sr. Epidemiologist and Dr. Preetish S. Vaidyanathan, SMO National Tuberculosis Institute, Bangalore, India.

From SAARC TB and HIV/AIDS Centre Dr. Kashi Kant Jha, Director, Dr. V. S. Salhotra, Deputy Director and Dr. Lochana Shreshtra, Epidemiologist facilitated the workshop.

The following recommendations were made by the participants:

Recommendations:

1. Government commitment at National and Sub-national levels for TB/HIV collaboration.
2. National Coordination Committee on TB/HIV collaboration should be established / strengthened, which will –
 - a. identify the areas of collaboration in TB/HIV
 - b. develop National Policy and Strategy on TB/HIV collaboration

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- c. develop a National Action Plan for TB/HIV collaboration
 - d. develop linkages at different levels between two programs
 - e. Initiate preparatory activities of collaboration – Development of National Guidelines on TB/HIV collaboration, development of training manual, training of key health workers including managers of both programs logistic management.
3. Nodal person for TB/HIV collaborative activity may be nominated at National and Sub-national levels from TB and HIV control programs.
 4. Key areas for TB/HIV collaboration may be provision of services for HIV testing for TB patients, diagnosis of TB among clients attending services provided by National HIV/AIDS control programs, CPT for TB/HIV co-infected and care & support for TB/HIV co-infected patients, supervision and monitoring, infection control measures in health care setting. The VCT and NTP's microscopy cum DOT centres should be set-up in close proximity, preferably in the same building. A microscopy cum DOT center may be established in all the centres providing ART services.
 5. Advocacy on TB/HIV collaboration
 6. Undertake surveillance of HIV among TB patients
 7. Supervise and monitor TB/HIV collaborative activities
 8. Undertake Operational Research on TB/HIV collaboration

Closing Session

Dr. B. Mahadev, CMO, NTI delivered remarks and thanked all participants and organizers for the success of the program.

Dr. Jha highlighted the importance of this workshop and thanked the participants for their enthusiasm and devotion. He expressed gratitude on behalf of STC to the Government of India, Ministry of Health, NTI, Bangalore and participants from Member States for valuable contribution for the completion of this workshop successfully.

The participants presented their views about the workshop and highlighted the benefit that they obtained from this workshop. All were pleased to know in depth about TB/HIV collaboration activities being carried out in India.

Dr. Prahlad Kumar extended thanks to STC, participants from all member states and all supporting staff for their hard work to make the workshop successful. Dr. Kumar distributed certificates to the participants and facilitators.

Dr. V. S. Salhotra, presented the vote of thanks.

The closing session was presided over by the Director NTI, Bangalore.

Outcomes

- Participants acquainted with emerging issues in relation to TB/HIV co-infection and came to know about collaborative activities needed to tackle the dual epidemic.

- New research areas pertaining to TB/HIV co-infection were prioritized based on the common issues of SAARC region.

6. SAARC Regional workshop to Develop/Strengthen Mechanism for Cross Border Activities in Controlling TB and HIV /AIDS, New Delhi, India

To tackle the problems related to TB and HIV/AIDS there should be strengthening of cross border activities among SAARC Member States. There is an urge of good collaboration and coordination between the implementing partners on TB and HIV/AIDS across the borders so that all are able to avail the services irrespective of their country of origin.

With this concept in order to strengthen the TB and HIV/AIDS activities across the border, a workshop was jointly organized by SAARC TB and HIV/AIDS Centre, Nepal and LRS Institute of TB and Respiratory Diseases, Government of India in New Delhi on 10th -12th September 2007.



Representatives from Bhutan, India, Maldives & Pakistan participated in the program. (List of participants is placed at Annex III)

The **objective** of the workshop was –

- To develop/strengthen coordination, collaboration and referral mechanism for cross border activities in controlling TB and HIV/AIDS.

Opening Session

Dr. L. S. Chauhan, DDG (TB), National TB Control Program, Government of India inaugurated the workshop. Dr. Digambar Behera, Director, LRS Institute of TB and Respiratory Disease, New Delhi, chaired the opening session. Dr. Rohit Sarin, AMS, LRS Institute of TB and Respiratory Disease extended a warm welcome to the delegates and guests. Dr. Kashi Kant. Jha, Director, SAARC TB/HIV/AIDS Centre, also welcomed the participants and guests and highlighted the importance of this workshop.

Dr V. S. Salhotra, Deputy Director, SAARC TB and HIV/AIDS Centre, proposed the Vote of Thanks. He expressed his profound gratitude to the Member States of SAARC for sending their participants to the workshop, and to

officials of Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Central TB Division and LRS Institute of Respiratory Diseases, Government of India for their kind co-operation and co-ordination for successful organization of this workshop.

Dr Rohit Sarin started the technical session. Dr V. S. Salhotra, Deputy Director, SAARC TB and HIV/AIDS Centre presented Introduction of STC, objectives of the workshop, its methodology, and expected out come of the workshop. Dr. Lochana Shrestha, Epidemiologist and Dr. Ajith Weerakoon, Research Officer, STC presented the situation of TB and HIV/AIDS globally and in SAARC region respectively.

The participants presented country presentations on situation of cross border activities of respective countries.

Under the field visit program participants visited DOTS centre at Ber Sarai, DOTS and Microscopy Centre, New Delhi and observed the functioning of the centre. Dr. Khalid, Epidemiologist, LRS Institute of TB and Respiratory Diseases explained the activities of the Centre. The participants observed recording and reporting system, supervision system, drug supply and overall management of the Centre.

The participants visited urban DOTS centre and MDR TB in - patient ward being built in the LRS Hospital in New Delhi.

The participants made recommendations of several points related to TB and HIV/AIDS issues in cross border activities. The participants deliberated in detail on the previous work done on the cross border activities for TB and HIV and identified a few key areas for taking the coordination further in SAARC Member countries. After detailed discussions the following recommendations were given:

Recommendations

For SAARC TB & HIV/AIDS Centre

1. Coordinate with all member countries on the cross border issues
2. Consensus building in the guidelines to be consistent with National Programmes of each country.
3. Frequent meetings with the Programme Directors for sharing of their experiences and also the success stories which may be adopted by the member states, if feasible. These meetings may be held every six months wherein the country data can also be updated and the same can be disseminated to the other member countries by STC.
4. Update SAARC Regional document about salient features of NTP and National Programme for HIV/AIDS through regular submission of Programme updates by the member states
5. Regular Regional Monitoring for cross border activities
6. Coordination with other International Bodies

For National TB & HIV/AIDS Programmes

1. The Governments of the respective member countries should give their Political, Administrative and Technical commitment to provide diagnostic and treatment facilities to the migrated population irrespective of the country of origin within the country context.

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2. To give Commitment with specific budget allocation for cross border activities
 3. To ensure continued care for TB and HIV/AIDS patients across borders
 4. Develop policy for cross border coordination on TB and HIV/AIDS including operational guidelines.
 5. The respective member countries should decide the level of Health Care delivery who will be responsible for the continued TB Care for the migrated patient. The information on the same can be disseminated to all the SAARC member countries through STC
 6. Constitution of a task force (National/Province/District) for implementation, monitoring and supervision
 7. To conduct situational analysis on quantum of problem
 8. Hold Regular meeting to review the subject
 9. Information/data sharing with all member country through STC

The key areas of activities for Tuberculosis under different situations identified are given below:

A diagnosed patient receiving Anti TB treatment from one country may migrate to the other countries for;

- i) Migration to the border districts for personal reasons other than health
- ii) Migration to the country for specialized health care
- iii) Migration to the other country for job opportunities or other reasons.

After detailed discussion on each area as mentioned above the following recommendations were made:

(i) Migration to the border districts for personal reasons other than health:

- The National commitment should be disseminated upto the lowest levels in the District so that any migrated patient is not denied treatment.
- For the border districts

Strengthen the Health Care service and infrastructure in border districts to improve performance indicators; develop District level (Inter-country) Collaboration-sharing of information, all components of DOTS, IEC, Recording and Reporting.

(ii) Migration to the country for specialized health care

For which there may be referral from NTP, private sectors or the patient may attend the services as an individual

In addition to the above mentioned recommendations, the countries should develop Institutional linkages and also disseminate the information to all the member countries on the same through STC

(iii) Migration to the other country for job opportunities or other reasons:

In addition to the above recommendations, the referral mechanism may be developed through national level for tracing out such patients and disseminating the information to the parent countries regarding initiation and completion of treatment.

The recommendations made for HIV/AIDS are given below:

- The Governments of the respective member countries should give their Political, Administrative and Technical commitment to provide continued care and support facilities to the migrated population in the country context, irrespective of the country of origin.
- To develop policy on regional coordination for effective response to mobility.
- To develop linkages between country Programmes.
- For deportees and returning migrants, SAARC to facilitate acceptance by the Member States for provision of care and support.
- For migrant workers, SAARC to facilitate the involvement of Community Based Organizations (CBOs) and NGOs working with migrant workers.

Closing Session

Dr V. S. Salhotra, Deputy Director, STC presented the recommendations of the workshop and summing up. Dr. Kashi Kant Jha, Director, STC thanked the participants and facilitators for their great contributions to make workshop successful. He also thanked the Government of India and Dr Rohit Sarin, AMS, LRS Institute and his team for excellent arrangement and cooperation for this workshop. Dr. Baseer Ahamad Achakzai from Pakistan thanked STC for organizing this workshop and gave remarks on behalf of the participants.

The certificates were awarded to the participants and facilitators. The vote of thanks was delivered by Dr V. S. Salhotra.

Dr. Digambar Behera, Director, LRS Institute of TB and Respiratory Diseases, New Delhi presided over the closing session.

Outcome

The workshop was successful in formulation of recommendations for strengthening mechanism for cross border activities in controlling TB and HIV/AIDS. The recommendations have been approved by the Governing Board of SAARC TB and HIV/AIDS centre and for further implementation by Member States.

7. SAARC Regional Training of Trainers on Management of Multi Drug Resistant TB (DOTS Plus), Colombo, Sri Lanka

SAARC Regional Training of Trainers on Management of Drug Resistant Tuberculosis (DOTS PLUS) was jointly organized by SAARC TB and HIV/AIDS Centre, Nepal and National Program for Tuberculosis Control and Chest Diseases (NPTCCD), Government of Sri-Lanka in Colombo from 20th - 24th November 2007.



The **objectives** of the program were –

- To strengthen capacity of the participants in managing MDR tuberculosis
- To make them able to train the health care providers and
- To strengthen the capacity of the participants in implementation and evaluation of DOTS Plus Program

Participants from Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri-Lanka participated in the Program. Altogether 15 participants attended the program. (List of participants is placed at Annex IV)

Opening session

Dr. Athula Kahandaliyanage, Secretary, Ministry of Healthcare and Nutrition, Government of Sri Lanka graced the session as Chief Guest. Dr. Kahandaliyanage inaugurated the training by lighting the Traditional Oil Lamp. Dr. Chandra Sarukkali, Director, National Programme for TB and Chest Diseases (NPTCCD), Government of Sri-Lanka, delivered the welcome address. Dr. K. K. Jha, Director, SAARC TB and HIV/AIDS Centre (STC), Nepal, addressed the opening session. Dr. Jha highlighted the role of STC in implementation of DOTS Plus Program for MDR TB patients.

Dr. A. Kahandaliyanage, expressed the commitment of Government towards National TB Control Program and implementation of DOTS Plus Program for the MDR-TB patients.

Dr. Damayanthi Wijesinghe, Medical Officer, Chest Hospital, Welisara, Colombo & Program Coordinator delivered the vote of thanks.

The training was conducted over five days with modular reading, discussions and presentations on different subjects made by Dr. V. S. Salhotra, Deputy Director, Dr. Ajith Weerakoon, Research Officer, D. K. Khadka, Microbiologist, STC, Dr. Jayanthi Elwitigala, Consultant Microbiologist, National TB Reference Laboratory, Chest Hospital, Welisara, Colombo, Dr. Santha Devi, WHO/SEARO, New Delhi, India. The following field visits were made during the training.

District DOTS Clinic, Welisara Gampaha district.

Dr. Francis, DTCO, explained the situation of DOTS Clinic, Welisara, Gampaha. The participants observed the functioning of the centre.

National Reference Lab, Welisara:

Dr. Jayanthi Elwtigala, Chief, NRL, briefed the facilities available in the lab and participants observed the functioning of lab.

Closing session

Dr. Emanuel Haque (Bangladesh), and Dr. Ah. Hamayon Andar (Afghanistan) expressed their remarks on behalf of the participants.

Dr. K. K. Jha, Director, STC, Dr. Chandra Sarukkali, Director, NTP, Sri Lanka and Dr. Santha Devi, WHO/SEARO distributed the Certificates to the participants with closing remarks in the closing session. At the end Mr. D. K. Khadka, Microbiologist, STC delivered the vote of thanks.

Outcomes

- The participants emphasized to establish SAARC Regional TB Supra-national Reference Laboratory in STC, Kathmandu.
- Participants have been trained for the Management of Drug Resistant Tuberculosis.
- They would be able to provide trainings to health care providers working at different level of health facilities and implement DOTS Plus Program and its evaluation in their respective countries.

8. SAARC Regional Meeting of Managers of National TB and HIV/AIDS Control Programs, Kathmandu, Nepal



SAARC TB & HIV/AIDS Centre organized SAARC Regional Meeting of Managers of National TB and HIV/AIDS Control Programs on 18th December 2007 in Kathmandu, Nepal.

The **objectives** of the meeting were –

- To develop or strengthen coordination and collaboration between TB and HIV/AIDS control programs of all Member States,
- To discuss on issues for future plan on collaboration between two programs and
- To increase awareness about situation of TB and HIV/AIDS, its spread and socio-economic impacts on individuals.

Participants from SAARC Member States, National TB Control Programs, Nepal, National AIDS Control Program, Nepal & SAARC TB & HIV/AIDS Centre attended the program. (The list of participants is placed at Annex V)

Opening session

Dr. Kashi Kant Jha, Director, STC inaugurated the program by welcoming the participants and guests in the meeting. Dr. Jha expressed gratitude to His Excellency Mr. Chenkyab Dorji, Secretary General, SAARC for his generous guidance and support to the STC. He also thanked Mr. Hassan Shifau, Director, SAARC Secretariat for his cooperation in the functioning of the Centre. He expressed gratitude to the SAARC Member States for supporting STC by sending participants for this meeting.

He briefed about the burden of TB and HIV/AIDS and emphasized that the magnitude of the global HIV/AIDS epidemic is alarming. Apart from the inevitable death that is associated with HIV/AIDS, the stigma, discrimination, that come along with it make the disease the most haunting. He added in his remarks that the development and strengthening of coordination and collaboration between TB and HIV/AIDS control programs of SAARC Member States is very essential to address the dual problems. A future plan on collaboration between two programs is to be discussed and a strong recommendation should be made in this regard through the meeting.

Mr. Hassan Shifau, Director, SAARC Secretariat gave opening remarks in the program. He conveyed the message of best wishes from Secretary General, SAARC to the participants and STC family. He expressed best wishes for the successful completion of meeting and pleasant stay in Kathmandu. Mr. Shifau thanked STC for organizing this important meeting which is very urgent to address the problem posed by HIV/AIDS in TB control program in the Region. He highlighted the importance of this meeting.

Technical session

Dr. V. S. Salhotra Deputy Director, STC presented, situation of TB globally and in SAARC region along with the situation of TB/HIV co-infection. The presentation was started with the objectives and methodology of the meeting.

Dr. Lochana Shrestha, Epidemiologist, STC presented Situation of HIV/AIDS in Global, SAARC region, and its impact on TB control programme.

There were country presentations regarding TB and HIV/AIDS from Bhutan, Maldives, Nepal and Pakistan.

The different issues for future plans and collaboration between two program and need based regional activities for both programs were discussed. All participants from the Member States presented their views and opinions.

Development of mechanism / link to utilize the Media for dissemination of Information, Education and Communication (IEC) information / on TB and HIV/AIDS in the Region

The vote of thanks was delivered by Mr. Dhruba Kumar Khadka, Microbiologist, STC.

On the basis of discussions the following recommendations were made:

1. Linking of National Program websites to the SAARC TB and HIV/AIDS Centre's website
2. Sensitization of Media on TB & HIV/AIDS and Ethical Guidelines.
3. The Member States should liaise with Media Regularity Body to provide guidelines to the Media for its use in TB & HIV/AIDS Control and also get the co-operation of Media.
4. Strengthening of SAARC TB and HIV/AIDS Resource Centre by making available generic IEC messages from the Member States for the benefit of all.
5. All Member States should share their resource materials with SAARC TB and HIV/AIDS Centre for uploading on the SAARC TB and HIV/AIDS Centre website for benefit of Member States.
6. Pakistan has already developed ethical guidelines for media which Pakistan may share with Member States through SAARC TB and HIV/AIDS Centre.

Issues for future plans and collaboration between two programs and need based regional activities for both programs

1. The Member States should accord priority to SAARC activities and allocate annual budget (travel per diem) for nomination of participants for SAARC activities.
2. Both the programs (TB and HIV/AIDS) should nominate Nodal Officers for timely sharing of the epidemiological and other important information with SAARC TB and HIV/AIDS Centre.
3. Two-way flow of publications between SAARC TB and HIV/AIDS Centre & Member States.
4. The Member States should contribute articles for the SAARC Journals/Newsletters.
5. Countries to submit Research Papers (abstract) to SAARC TB and HIV/AIDS Centre for the SAARC conference on TB, HIV/AIDS and Respiratory Disease and also ensure good participation in the conference scheduled for December 2008.

Recommendations for TB-HIV Collaboration

1. Set up Committees for implementing and monitoring TB-HIV activities at various levels (National, Regional and District).
2. Member States to initiate TB-HIV service linkages on priority.
3. Member States to allocate specific budget for implementation of TB-HIV collaborative activities.

4. The Member States should actively use the SAARC regional strategy for HIV/AIDS and TB/HIV co-infection for implementation of their programs.

Outcomes

- Development of Recommendations on mechanism for implementation of collaborative activities between TB and HIV/AIDS programs
- Increased awareness about situation of TB/HIV co-infection in the SAARC Region and importance of collaboration between two programs among the participants.

9. SAARC Meeting of the Group of Experts of Electronic and Print Media

to develop the mechanism/link to utilize the facility for dissemination of Information, Education and Communication (IEC) materials on TB and HIV/AIDS, Kathmandu, Nepal

SAARC TB and HIV/AIDS Centre organized Meeting of the Group of Experts of Electronic and Print Media along with Program Managers of SAARC Member States in Kathmandu on December 19 – 20, 2007 in collaboration with National Tuberculosis Control Programme, Nepal.



The **objectives** of the meeting were –

- To make media aware about situation of TB and HIV/AIDS, its spread and socio-economic impacts on individuals
- To develop effective linkage with media for advocacy, to strengthen involvement of Media for public awareness and advocacy on TB and HIV/AIDS by motivating individuals and communities, mobilizing public support, influencing policy makers etc. and
- To convince the media to be part of solution to fight against TB and HIV/AIDS

The workshop was attended by Public Health Officer - Nepal FM, Journalist - National News Agency, Reporter – The Himalayan Times, Reporter (Health) – Nepal Samachar Patra, Sub editor – The Kathmandu Post, Reporter (Health) Rajdhani Daily, News coordinator – Associated News Agency (online Television), Senior Producer –

Image Channel Television, News Reporter – Radio Nepal, Computer Officer – SAARC Information Centre – Kathmandu, Reporter – Annapurna Post and News Editor – Nepal Television. The participants were from public and private sector both.

The meeting was also attended by Managers of National TB control program, National HIV/AIDS control program and Manager of National Health Education Information and Communication Center of SAARC Member States, Dr. Asha Rao, Advisor, HIV/AIDS, SAARC Secretariat, Kathmandu..

Opening session

Dr. Kashi Kant Jha, Director, STC inaugurated the meeting. He extended warm welcome to all the participants and guests in the meeting. Dr. Jha expressed gratitude to His Excellency Mr. Chenkyab Dorji, Secretary General, SAARC for his generous guidance and support to the STC. He also thanked Mr. Hassan Shifau, Director, SAARC Secretariat for their cooperation.

In his welcome address he also highlighted burden of TB and HIV/AIDS in the SAARC region and challenges faced by the TB and HIV/AIDS control programs. He emphasized the need of development of linking mechanism between TB and HIV/AIDS control programs and media for dissemination of accurate, appropriate information on TB and HIV/AIDS in the SAARC Region to combat the existing challenges. He urged media groups to spare column, air-time and opinion for the general people who are far away to know the basic information about TB and HIV/AIDS.

Mr. Hassan Shifau, Director, SAARC Secretariat gave his valuable remarks. He conveyed the message of best wishes from Secretary General, SAARC to STC and participants of the meeting for successful completion and pleasant stay in Kathmandu. He thanked STC for organizing this important program which helped to collect the media people together at one platform and conveyed them to start their work in disseminating information for increasing awareness and advocacy on TB and HIV/AIDS. He highlighted the importance of media involvement in TB and HIV/AIDS control program.

He presented the fact that, media plays the vital role in the implementation of interventions among general people, especially in the area of advocacy and awareness, without which programme can not achieve its objective. He gathered the attention on the important steps taken by STC for adopting the strategy such as partnership programs with different social segments of the society, specially focusing on Media partners which are very important for spreading accurate information on diseases like TB and HIV/AIDS in the community.

Technical Session

Dr. Kashi Kant Jha Director, STC presented the Introduction of SAARC TB and HIV/AIDS Centre and Role of Media in Control and Prevention of TB and HIV/AIDS. Dr. V. S. Salhotra Deputy Director, STC presented situation of TB globally and in SAARC Region. Dr. Lochana Shrestha, Epidemiologist, STC presented situation of HIV/AIDS globally and in SAARC Region, TB/HIV co-infection and its impact on TB control program.

There were country presentations on TB and HIV/AIDS and role of media in control of TB and prevention of HIV/AIDS by Mr. Ugyen Norbu, Communication Officer, Information and Communication Bureau, Bhutan, Mr. Md.

Naeem Akhtar, Sociologist, NACP, Pakistan and Mr. Laxmi Raman Ban, Director, National Health Education, Information and Communication Centre (NHEICC), Nepal.

A session for interaction and discussion regarding the issues about involvement of Media in control of TB and HIV/AIDS was held and queries were clarified jointly by STC Director, National Managers TB and HIV/AIDS, and Director NHEICC, Nepal.

There was discussion on various aspects of involvement of media for the control of TB and HIV/AIDS at different levels of control program in two groups to finalize the recommendations. The groups made the following recommendations:

Group A: Recommendations

Development of mechanism for the Advocacy and Awareness through media on TB and HIV/AIDS

- Representation of media governing body at the relevant level of TB and HIV/AIDS programmes (national and regional)
- Allocate budget for media involvement
 - ✓ Training and orientation of media personnel on the issue
 - ✓ Exposure field visit(national & regional) of media personnel
 - ✓ Development of media info-kits
 - ✓ Award/reward/souvenirs on best articles
- Incorporation of health component in journalist training curriculum
- A special session on TB/HIV/AIDS should be arranged for the media during STC conference in September 2008
- Development of directory of media people and institutions at National/SIC/STC level
- Increase participation of media in national and regional level activities on the issue at all levels
- Develop and maintain e-group for sharing information on the issue at National/SIC/STC level

Group B: Recommendations

Use of different types of Media and uses of important dates

The media should develop active partnership with National Programmes with regular interaction.

- The Media people should give more priority to the dissemination of TB and HIV/AIDS information on a regular basis. The media may fix up regular spots / items / articles / publications slots in their own medium.

- The National Programme on TB and HIV/AIDS should use different media for different target groups as noted below in table and decide the priorities according to the country context.

Types of media and different target groups:

S. N.	Types of media	Specific routes of media	Target group
1	Electronic	Radio/TV/FM	ALL people
		Websites	Urban youths, rich and affluent people
		SMS	Mobile users
		Fillers	Big and small celebrities
2	Print	News paper	Literate people
		Books/magazines	Schools
		Pictorials/posters	Educated/uneducated people
3	Theaters	Street shows/Dramas	Lower socioeconomic people
		Concerts	Youths and affluent people
		Miking through vehicles	Highway/migrants people
		Puppet shows	Uneducated, school, rural areas and slumps
4	Others	Others	Political leader
			Religious leader
			Sports persons
			Big/Small actors

- The National Programmes should use all other important days as mentioned below apart from World TB and AIDS Days for Advocacy and Awareness.

Programmes on various important days:

- Festivals, global/regional/national days etc.
- School Day
- Parents Day
- Valentine Day
- Women Day
- Fathers Day
- Mothers Day
- Teachers Day
- Sports Day etc.

Outcomes

- Participants were cleared about different issues in relation to TB and HIV/AIDS.
- Media people committed to provide co-ordination and cooperation for the provision of update information regarding TB and HIV/AIDS to the general people.

- Participants acquainted with role of media for the control of TB and HIV/AIDS
- Recommendations made for the active involvement of media for the control of TB and HIV/AIDS at National/ Regional level.

10. SAARC Workshop on Involvement of Media for public awareness and advocacy on TB and HIV/AIDS, Islamabad, Pakistan

The SAARC TB and HIV/AIDS Centre (STC) organized a two day SAARC Workshop on involvement of Media for public awareness and advocacy on TB and HIV/AIDS at Islamabad from 27 to 28 December 2007.



The **objectives** of the workshop were -

- To develop effective linkage with media for advocacy and for generating awareness among masses on TB and HIV/AIDS,
- To strengthen involvement of Media for public awareness and advocacy on TB and HIV/AIDS and
- To scale up the awareness among Media groups regarding their importance for control of TB and HIV/AIDS.

Around 100 participants (media people and public health personnel) attended the workshop.

Keeping in mind the role and importance of mass media, the workshop was also designed to build a partnership between TB and HIV/AIDS Control Programs and members of electronic and print media and other news agencies for prevention and control of TB and HIV in the country.

The workshop was attended by Dr. Hassan Sadiq, National Manager, National TB Control Program, Dr. Hasan Abbas Zaheer, National Manager, National HIV/AIDS Control Program, Pakistan and officials from Ministry of Health and other line Ministries and development partners. Similarly people working in different media agencies in private (freelance) as well as in public sector, members from electronic and print media from Islamabad and Rawalpindi. Representatives from National News Agency, National Health Education and Information, Education and Communication (IEC) participated in the workshop.

Inaugural Session

Hon'ble Federal Minister for Health Mr. Ejaz Rahiem graced the session as Chief Guest and inaugurated the workshop.

Dr. Kashi Kant Jha, Director, STC extended a warm welcome to participants, guests and officials in the workshop. In his welcome address Dr. Jha explained the magnitude of TB and HIV/AIDS in the SAARC region and its impact. In his address he highlighted the need of partnership with media to control these diseases in our communities.

Dr. Kashi Kant Jha, Director, STC welcomed the Chief Guest, National Managers and participants in the workshop. In his welcome address Dr. Jha thanked the Government of Pakistan and the representatives of the media for coming together at one platform for a noble cause. Dr. Jha expressed his gratefulness to the Governments of SAARC Member States for giving high priority to TB & HIV/AIDS control and prevention. He expressed his happiness in the progress made by National TB Program & National HIV/AIDS Program of Pakistan. He also informed that there is tremendous rise in case finding, DOTS coverage & treatment success achieving WHO targets. He added that HIV/AIDS and TB are not only medical problems but also sociomedical problems. To tackle these problems there is a need of multi-sectoral interventions with the development of partnership between different sectors. That is why STC has initiated the partnership programme to involve different stakeholders in the mission of controlling TB and HIV/AIDS. In this connection, he reiterated that media plays the central role in the implementation of interventions among general people, especially in the area of advocacy and awareness, without which programme can't achieve its objective.

Dr. Hassan Sadiq, National Manager, National Tuberculosis Control Program (NTP) Pakistan highlighted the importance of forging public private partnerships with media as one of the important partners. He thanked the STC for adopting the strategy such as partnership programs with different social segments of the society which are very important for spreading messages on disease like TB and HIV/AIDS in the community.

Dr. Hasan Abbas Zaheer, National Manager, National HIV/AIDS Control Program also gave his remarks on the occasion. He urged media personnel to fully support the actions of the government in this regard. He extended full support to STC at all levels in the fight against TB and HIV/AIDS in the country.

In his inaugural address, Hon'ble Federal Minister for Health appreciated the efforts made by STC and thanked Dr. Kashi Kant Jha, Director, STC for selecting Pakistan for this important activity. He emphasized the need of collaborative efforts between both the TB and HIV/AIDS control programs and the role of media for raising public awareness on the availability of quality services for TB and HIV/AIDS and also for removing the myths and doubts about these diseases. He expressed that the outcome of this workshop would be the development of a strong bond for the overall benefit of the masses. Hon'ble Federal Minister also highlighted the importance of prevention and control for TB, Malaria and HIV/AIDS as an important poverty alleviation measure.

Technical Session

In this session the information regarding the status of TB and HIV/AIDS in Pakistan and in SAARC were presented. Dr. Raja Mohammad Ayub from National Tuberculosis Control Program, Pakistan presented general information about TB, DOTS and role of media in control of TB.

Dr. V. S. Salhotra, Deputy Director, STC presented the Introduction of SAARC TB and HIV/AIDS Centre, Role of Media in Control and Prevention of TB and HIV/AIDS and Objectives and Methodology of workshop. In his presentation partnership with Media program, its initiation, importance and progress were explained. Dr. Ajith P. Weerakoon, Research Officer, SAARC TB and HIV/AIDS Centre presented the Situation of TB in SAARC Region. Dr. Lochana Shrestha, Epidemiologist, SAARC TB and HIV/AIDS Centre presented Situation of HIV/AIDS in SAARC region, TB/HIV co-infection and its impact on TB control.

Participants discussed the issues and decided to prepare the recommendations related to Involvement of Media for public awareness and advocacy on TB and HIV/AIDS.

The following Recommendations were made:

I) Development of mechanism for the Advocacy and Awareness through media on TB and HIV/AIDS

- Representation of media governing body at the relevant level of TB and HIV/AIDS programs (National and Regional)
- A special session on TB/HIV/AIDS during STC conference in December 2008
- Development of directory of media people and institutions at National/SIC/STC level
- Increase participation of media in National and Regional level activities on the issue at all levels
- Develop and maintain e-group for sharing information on the issue at National/SIC/STC level
- The media should develop active partnership with National Programs with regular interaction.
- The Media people should give more priority to the dissemination of TB and HIV/AIDS information on a regular basis. The media may fix up regular spots / items / articles / publications slots in their own medium.
- The National Programs on TB and HIV/AIDS should use different media for different target groups according to the country context.
- The National Programs should use all other important days apart from World TB and AIDS Days for Advocacy and Awareness.

The vote of thanks was delivered by Mr. Dhruva Kumar Khadka, Microbiologist, STC.

Outcomes

- Participants were cleared about different issues in relation to TB and HIV/AIDS.
- Media people committed to provide co-ordination and cooperation for the provision of update information regarding TB and HIV/AIDS to the general people.
- Participants acquainted with role of media for the control of TB and HIV/AIDS
- Recommendations made for the active involvement of media for the control of TB and HIV/AIDS at national/regional level

11. Situation Analysis of TB and HIV/AIDS Control Program and Laboratory Activities in Pakistan



SAARC TB and HIV/AIDS Centre carried out situation analysis of TB and HIV/AIDS control programs including laboratory activities in Islamabad, Pakistan from December 31, 2007 to January 1, 2008.

The **objectives** of the activity were –

- To perform situation analysis of TB & HIV/AIDS control activities
- To collect the information about HIV/AIDS and TB/HIV co-infection
- To assess the laboratory networks activities under National TB Control Program
- To assess epidemiological network activities under NTP and NACP
- To do follow up of meetings, seminars, training, workshops etc. organized by STC

The methodology adopted to carry out the situation analysis was through meeting with NTP, NACP and Health Laboratory authorities and Information retrieved/gathered from documents provided by NTP, NACP and Health Laboratory and field/onsite visit.

Team of experts consisting of Dr. Kashi Kant Jha, Director, Dr. V. S. Salhotra, Deputy Director, Dr. Lochana Shrestha, Epidemiologist, Dr. Ajith Weerakoon, Research Officer, Mr. Dhruva Kumar Khadka, Microbiologist



performed the situation analysis on different aspects of TB and HIV/AIDS control programs. The team visited National TB Control Program and National HIV/AIDS Control Program, Government of Pakistan in Islamabad.

Dr. Hassan Sadiq, National Manager, Dr. Shahid Hanif, Deputy Manager and Dr. Sabira Tahseen, Lab Coordinator and other staff briefed the team on different aspects of TB control program in Pakistan.

Dr. Hasan Abbas Zaheer, National Manager, Mr. Naeem Akhtar, Sociologist and other concerned staff of NACP explained about the HIV/AIDS control activities in Pakistan.

Technical and administrative support was provided by Mr. P. Bhandari, Computer Technician and Mr. K. B. Basnet, Administrative Officer of STC.

The situation analysis team expressed gratefulness to the Directors of NTP and NACP for their full cooperation and support to carry out the situation analysis.

On behalf of STC Dr. Kashi Kant Jha, Director and Dr. V. S. Salhotra, Deputy Director extended thanks to the National Managers and all Officers of NTP and NACP including laboratory unit of both the programs for their hard work, full cooperation, warm hospitality, efficient management and unforgettable reception.

12. Community Based Risk Behavior Study on HIV/AIDS Targeting Women in Nepal

Orientation to Research Assistant (data collectors) and Focus Group Discussions in Kaski, Gorkha, arsa and Banke districts

To conduct community based risk behaviour study on HIV/AIDS, targeting women in Nepal, SAARC TB and HIV/AIDS Centre (STC) planned to conduct the study in some of the selected districts in hilly region and terai region in Nepal. In hilly region, Kaski and Gorkha, in terai region, Parsa and Banke districts were selected. The targeted group of population of the districts was only women aged between 15-49 years.

Kaski and Gorkha districts

STC team consisting of Mr. K. B. Karki, Training Officer & Mr. H. K. Maharjan, Computer Assistant of STC visited Kaski and Gorkha districts to conduct orientation for investigators and Focus Group Discussion (FGD) on community based risk behaviour study on HIV/AIDS targeting women in Nepal on September 23 – 26, 2007.



The study was conducted in two districts Kaski and Gorkha.

In Kaski district the team discussed with Mr. Jhalak Sharma, District Public Health Officer, Mr. Rekh Bahadur Thapa, Regional TB Leprosy Officer, DHO, Kaski, Dr. Mohan Prasai, Act Chief, Regional TB Centre, Western Region, Kaski and other concerned staff.

In Gorkha district the team discussed with Dr. Achyut Lamichhane, District Health Officer, Mr. Thakur Poudyal, District TB Leprosy Officer and concerned staff.

Parsa district



STC team consisting of Dr. Ajith Weerakoon, Research Officer and Mr. K. B. Karki, Training Officer, STC visited Parsa district to conduct orientation for investigators and FGD on community based risk behaviour study on HIV/AIDS targeting women in Nepal on November 5 – 7, 2007. Mr. S. N. Singh, Acting District Health Officer– Parsa DHO, Birgunj informed the team about the program schedule.

In Parsa district the team discussed with Mr. Premachandra, Public Health

Inspector and concerned staff.

Banke district

STC team consisting of Dr. K. K. Jha, Director, Dr. V. S. Salhotra, Deputy Director, Dr. Ajith Weerakoon, Research Officer, Dr. Lochana Shrestha, Epidemiologist and Ms. M. K. Dhakal, SPA visited Nepalgunj, Banke district to conduct orientation on community based risk behaviour study on HIV/AIDS targeting women in Nepal on December 15 – 17, 2007. Mr. Kedar Singh Godar, District Health Officer– Banke, welcomed STC team



and discussed about the program activity and methodology of study to be carried out.

The STC team conducted one Focused Group Discussion (FGD) program with women of reproductive age group.

13. Fourth Round Proficiency Testing of Sputum Smear Microscopy of Ten National TB Reference Laboratories in SAARC Region

SAARC TB and HIV/AIDS Centre (STC) conducted 4th round proficiency testing of sputum smear microscopy in National TB Reference Laboratories in SAARC Member States for the year 2007. STC supports National TB Reference Labs on sputum smear microscopy. It also supports to implement internationally accepted Bio-safety measures. The 4th round of proficiency testing on sputum smear microscopy in National TB Reference Lab is one of such kind.



The objective of the study was –

To implement an ongoing proficiency testing program for sputum microscopy within the Network of National TB Reference Laboratories in SAARC Member States.

A panel of 10 sputum slides (5 stained with Ziehl-Neelsen and 5 unstained smears) were prepared at SAARC Regional TB Reference Laboratory, Thimi, Nepal on the basis of WHO/IUATLD guidelines and sent to Ten National TB Reference Laboratories of the SAARC Member States and were requested to examine and send back the report along with slides within one month. The reports were rechecked and analyzed.

After analyzing the reports the results, showed that only one of the Ten National TB Reference Laboratories reported only one minor error of Low False Negative (LFN), but were within the limits of acceptance. Rest of the nine laboratories reported no error of any type and demonstrated excellent performance.

The following National TB Reference Laboratories were involved in the Proficiency Testing:

1. National TB Reference Laboratory, Kabul, Afghanistan
2. National TB Reference Laboratory, Dhaka, Bangladesh
3. Public Health Laboratory, Department of Health, Thimphu, Bhutan
4. Tuberculosis Research Centre, Indian Council of Medical Research Chennai, India
5. National Tuberculosis Institute, Bangalore, India
6. Public Health Laboratory, Male, Maldives
7. National Tuberculosis Centre, Bhaktapur, Nepal

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8. National TB Reference Laboratory, Ojha Institute of Chest Diseases, Karachi, Pakistan
 9. National TB Reference Laboratory, Federal TB Centre, Islamabad, Pakistan
 10. National TB Reference Laboratory, Welisara, Colombo, Sri Lanka
-

14. Production of STC Publications

STC printed the following publications in 2007:

1. STC Newsletters (Vol. XVII, No. 1 & 2)
 2. SAARC Journal of TB, Lung Diseases and HIV/AIDS
 2. SAARC epidemiological yearly reports on TB, HIV/AIDS including TB/HIV co-infection
 3. History of HIV/AIDS in the SAARC Region
 4. Annual Report of STC
 5. World AIDS Day Report
 6. Guidelines for Partnership program with Industry, Travel Agency and Manpower Agency
 7. Awareness and advocacy materials (pocket calendar, brochure on TB and HIV/AIDS)
-

15. Distribution of STC Publications

The publications of STC have been distributed as per mailing list.

16. Strengthening of STC Library and updating of website:

- Purchase/subscription of books and journals:

The following books have been purchased –

1. Datta, TB of Pathology, 2/e 2004 (with two color)
2. Gupta, The short TB of Medical Microbiology 9/e' 06
3. Sood, The Medical Laboratory Technology, 1/e, 2006
4. Mahajan, Methods in Biostatistics, 6/e, reprint 2004
5. Mahajan, TB of preventive and social medicine with CD, 3/e'03
6. Prabhakaran, Biostatics, 2/e, 2007

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7. Singh, Elementary statistics for medical workers, 1/e
 8. Krishna Das, TB of medicine, 5/e, vol. I II, 2007
 9. Humes, Kelley's TB of Internal medicine, 4/e
 10. Kartikeyan, Chest X-ray made easy with CD 2007
 11. Singh, TB of Anatomy with color atlas, 3 vols, 4/e, 2007
 12. Ebenzar, TB of orthopedics, 1/e 2006 with free booklet
 13. Parthasarathy, IAP TB of pediatrics 3/e 2006
 14. Bailey & Scott, Diagnostic microbiology
 15. Daniel, Biostatistics
 16. Cheesborough Monica, Lab manual for tropical diseases I
 17. Cheesborough Monica, Lab manual for tropical diseases II
 18. Park & Park, Preventive & Social Medicine

- Updating of Audio Visual materials in Library

Audio visual materials related to TB and HIV/AIDS have been collected.

- Dissemination of information on TB & HIV/AIDS by updating STC website

The updated information on TB and HIV/AIDS has been disseminated through STC website and different publications. The website of STC is being updated.

17. Preparatory Works of the SAARC Second Conference on TB, HIV/AIDS and Respiratory Diseases

Required preparatory works of the conference have been initiated. The announcement leaflet has been prepared and disseminated through different media to the concerned people and institutions.

18. Acceptability of HIV Testing by TB Patients

19. Identify the ways and means of collaboration between TB and HIV/AIDS program

These two studies mentioned in 18 and 19 are going on in Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka.

20. Additional Activity

20.1. On-site Training on DOTS Plus

On the request of NTP, Bhutan STC organized “On-site Training on DOTS Plus” from 12th to 17th March 2007 for a team of 3 participants from Bhutan. The program was facilitated jointly by SAARC TB & HIV/AIDS Centre and National Tuberculosis Centre, Nepal. The participants were Dr. Pema Choden Bhutia, District Medical Officer, Mr. Leki Dorji, TB In-charge from Eastern Bhutan, Mr. Deki Phuntsho, In-charge, Primary Health Centre.

Objectives

The objectives of the program were:

- To provide knowledge on DOTS Plus activities to improve case finding and case holding
- To expose participants on the TB laboratory works in SAARC TB and HIV/AIDS Centre and DOTS Plus treatment activities of NTP, Nepal
- To provide knowledge on Management of MDR-TB

Dr. Kashi Kant Jha, Director, STC gave advise and directions to the participants and facilitators as a Course Director.

Dr. Lochana Shrestha, Epidemiologist, STC, Dr. S. S. Jha, Medical Officer, NTC, Nepal, Mr. Dhruva Kumar Khadka, Microbiologist, Mr. Kailash Bahadur Karki, Training Officer, STC and Mr. P. Bhandari, Computer Technician, STC facilitated the participants in different aspects of the training.

Course Contents

- Orientation on STC and NTP activities
- Quality Control and Quality Assurance on Sputum Smear Microscopy
- Field Visit to DOTS and DOTS Plus Centres and Sub-centres
- Management of MDR TB Cases
- Recording, Reporting and Follow up of TB Patients under DOTS

Institutions and persons visited

1. Dr. Pushpa Malla, Director, Dr. S. S. Jha, Medical Officer, Mr. Dhruva Kumar Khada, Medical Technologist at National TB Centre – DOTS Plus Clinic.
2. Dr. Bhawana Shrestha, Director and other staff at German Nepal Tuberculosis Project.
3. Ms. Janak Kumari Dhakal – District TB and Leprosy Assistant and other staff at Bhaktapur DOTS Centre.

Presentation of Findings

Dr. Pema Choden Bhutia briefed STC about their training on behalf of the team. She also submitted a report of training titled "Tour Report on DOTS Follow up Training at SAARC TB and HIV/AIDS Centre, Nepal from 12th – 17th March 2007".

At the end of programme a meeting was held in STC with participants, facilitators and Director of STC. Participants recalled the knowledge they gained during their training and they made the comments that the training would be very useful. They expressed that they have enhanced their capability to manage MDR TB at their places when they start DOTS Plus in Bhutan. They expressed their satisfaction over course contents, accommodation arrangement, hospitality and coordination. Participants recommended STC to organize such program for health workers for all SAARC Member States. The participants were awarded Certificates for the training.

21. Other Activities

21. 1. Participation in Health Fair (Swastha Mela)

Dr. Iwamura Memorial Hospital and Research Centre (IMHRC), Sallaghari, Bhaktapur, Nepal organized a three day Health Fair (Swastha Mella) which was inaugurated on January 18, 2007. This fair was organized to make the people aware on their own health. The theme of the fair was – My Health is My Wealth (Mero Swastha Mero Sampatti).

The fair was decorated by different health related stalls with different kinds of information for people to remain healthy. Stalls were arranged by SAARC TB and HIV/AIDS Centre, National TB Centre, Netra Jyoti Sangh, Himalayan Herbal, Himalaya Vidhya Mandir, Nepal Family Planning Association, Nepal Red-cross Society, Blood Donors' Association, Korea Friendship Hospital, Nepal Heart Foundation, Khopo Poly-technique, Khopo Campus, Siddhi Memorial Academy, Child Support Programme, District Public Health Office and many other organizations.

STC distributed different publications on the request of visitors during the fair.

The programme was presided by Mr. Neel Krishna Tamrakar, Managing Director, IMHRC.

21. 2. Short-term Training on Library Software:

A short-term training on library software was organized in STC on 29 January 2007. Expert of the software from New Delhi, Mr. Rohit Mahajan gave introductory training to STC staff about the software, its introduction, usefulness and operating methodology. STC has installed (Soft-link Library Automation) Alice Software.

21. 3. Participation in DOTS Orientation for Media People

DOTS orientation for Media People was organized by NTC on March 20, 2007 at NTC Training Building, Thimi, Bhaktapur. Dr. Kashi Kant Jha, Director, SAARC TB and HIV/AIDS Centre presented on the Role of Media in

National Tuberculosis Control Programme. This programme was addressed by Director and Senior Medical Officer of NTC. This programme was organized to sensitize the media people to write about TB control on the occasion of World TB Day 2007.

21. 4. Participation in Dissemination Meeting on Review of the Second Generation Surveillance on HIV and AIDS in Nepal

On the invitation of NCASC, Government of Nepal a meeting was held at Kupandol, Lalitpur on the above subject. Dr. Kashi Kant Jha, Director, and Dr. Lochana Shrestha, Epidemiologist from SAARC TB and HIV/AIDS Centre participated in the meeting. Dr. Jha addressed the meeting and highlighted the need to follow regional surveillance based on regional strategy on HIV/AIDS.

21. 5. Meeting with NTP and NACP Managers

Regional Meeting on CCM Strengthening and Round 7 – South and West Asia Cluster was organized jointly by Global Fund, WHO, UNAIDS, GTZ and UNDP from 20 to 23 March 2007 in Kathmandu. NTP and NACP Managers of the region participated in the meeting. During that opportunity STC organized a special meeting with the NTP and NACP managers of SAARC Member States to discuss on future plan and activities of SAARC TB and HIV/AIDS Centre on 22 March 2007 in Kathmandu. The Program Managers' team visited STC after completion of the meeting to observe the functioning of the Centre.

21. 6. Participation in Technical Sub-committee Meeting

On the invitation of National TB Centre, Nepal Dr. Kashi Kant Jha, Director and Dr. Lochana Shrestha, Epidemiologist, STC participated in Technical Sub-committee Meeting for TB component of GFATM Round 7. In the meeting programme proposal in TB and HIV collaborative activities components were prepared.

21. 7. Meeting with TFI & PAL Mission

A Mission from WHO visited Nepal on the implementation of Tobacco Free Initiatives (TFI) activities through the Practical Approach to Lung Health (PAL) from 21 – 25 May, 2007. During their visit a meeting with mission was organized by National TB Centre and SAARC TB and HIV/AIDS Centre on May 23, 2007 at Thimi, Bhaktapur.

The objective of the meeting was to initiate the development of TB & tobacco control activities through PAL in Nepal.

The meeting discussed about how TB control and tobacco control are presently organized in Nepal. The meeting also discussed and agreed with national experts, health officials and partners on the development of integrated TB and tobacco control activities through PAL and formulated a Plan of Action. They also discussed on development of action plan to develop and implement TB & tobacco control activities through PAL–Nepal.

A meeting was also organized to discuss on work agenda with the NTP team, tobacco control team, MoH & P and PHC key persons, representatives of university and other relevant people/partners involved in TB control, tobacco control or PAL development and implementation in Nepal.

21. 8. Participation in Joint meeting

A Technical Consultation Meeting on Scaling-up HIV testing and counseling in Asia and the Pacific was organized jointly by WHO, UNICEF and UNAIDS in Phnom Penh, Cambodia from 4 to 6 June, 2007. On behalf of SAARC Dr. Lochana Shrestha, Epidemiologist, SAARC TB and HIV/AIDS Centre participated in this meeting. Dr. Shrestha emphasized on the importance of Public Private Coordination in scaling up of TB and HIV/AIDS Program. She also gave emphasis on Operational Research for increasing the acceptance of scaling up of voluntary counseling and testing.

Along with 73 participants from 12 countries, representatives from the WHO, UNICEF, Joint United Nations Program on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS), SPC, SAARC and civil society participated in the meeting.

The meeting discussed critical actions required to scale up access to HIV testing and counseling in Asia and the Pacific towards Universal Access. Participants reviewed HIV testing and counseling policies and practices in different settings and contexts in Asia and the Pacific.

21. 9. Audit of STC Accounts 2006

A joint Audit Team (JAT) 2006 consisting of Mr. Rokhum Lalremruata, Controller of Accounts, Ministry of External Affairs, New Delhi, India and Mr. Ibrahim Fuad, Financial Audit Manager, Maldives Audit Office, Male', Maldives audited the annual accounts and related activities of SAARC Tuberculosis and HIV/AIDS Centres on June 23, 2007 in Kathmandu for the year 2006.

21.10. Dr. K. K. Jha, Director, STC visited Australia

Dr. Jha participated in 4th Conference on HIV Pathogenesis, Treatment and Prevention in Sydney, Australia on July 22-25, 2007. In the conference he presented STC activities in control of HIV/AIDS in SAARC Region.

21.11. Participation of STC in WHO Workshop

At the invitation of WHO/SEARO, Director and Epidemiologist from STC participated in the Workshop on Management of Drug Resistant Tuberculosis organized by WHO held at Faridabad, India on August 6 – 10, 2007. In the workshop progress of STC in management of drug resistant TB was presented.

21.12. Participation in NTP Reviews

Nepal

The Director, Deputy Director and all Professionals from SAARC TB and HIV/AIDS Centre participated in In-depth Review of NTP Nepal held from 1 to 10 October 2007 in different Regions of Nepal. This review was carried out by different National and international experts.

National experts from Ministry of Health & Population, Director General of Health Services, Monitoring Division, MoH & P, NTP Director and staff, RTC Director and staff, President NATA, STP/Nepal, WHO/Nepal and National Planning Commission Nepal and International experts from IUATLD, Gauting Supranational Reference Lab Germany, LHL Norway, Nuffield UK, RIT Japan, University of Edinburgh UK and University of Leeds participated

in the review. Like wise experts from WHO HQ and WHO SEARO, Stop TB Partnership also participated in the review.

Bangladesh

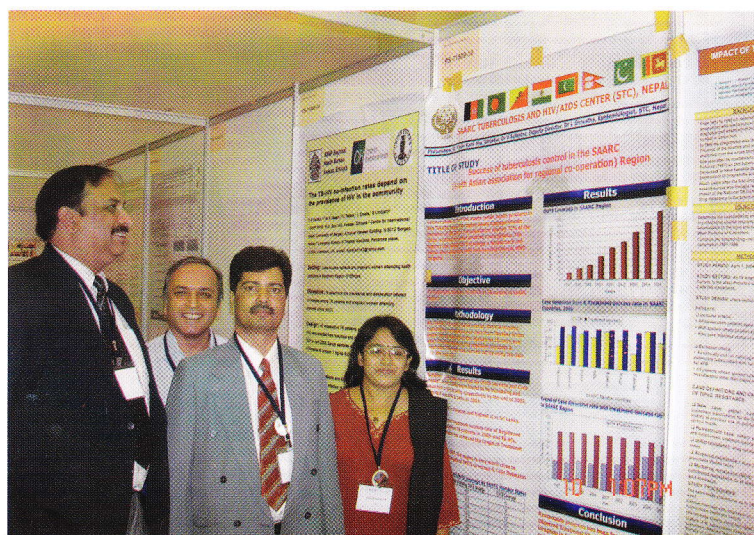


Dr. Ajith Werakoon, Research Officer, STC participated in joint review of National TB Control Program of Bangladesh held from 17 to 28 October 2007. STC was invited by WHO/NTP Bangladesh to participate in this review.

21.13. Participation in World Conference

Dr. Kashi Kant Jha, Director, Dr. V. S. Salhotra, Deputy Director and Dr. Lochana Shrestha, Epidemiologist participated in the 38th Union World Conference organized by IUATLD, held in Cape Town from 8–12 November 2007. The activities and progress of the Centre were presented in two posters on the following topics:

- Gender disparity among TB suspects and new TB patients: Record based retrospective study in SAARC Member States.
- Success of TB Control in the SAARC Region.



22. Visit of STC by different Dignitaries

22.1. Visit of Health Dignitaries from Afghanistan

Dr. Kashi Kant Jha, Director, along with the staff of STC welcomed the dignitaries from Member States in SAARC TB and HIV/AIDS Centre on 22 March 2007.

- Dr. Hayat M. Ahmadzai, Director, NTP
- Mirwais Sarah, Program Officer, UNDP
- Dr. Stanekzai, Director General, MRCA and
- Dr. Saifur Rehman, Director, NACP

The team observed the functioning of the Centre and expressed their happiness and mentioned in the visitors' book that "To-day, we are very happy to visit SAARC TB and HIV/AIDS Centre. What we have learned that no one can work independently and the SAARC will help to bring the experience of neighboring countries in identifying the fight against this disease. This is why communicable diseases recognize no border. On this occasion of World TB Day with theme "TB any where is TB Every Where" we urge the member countries to work closely to fight against TB and HIV/AIDS."

22.2. Visit of H. E. Mr. Chenkyab Dorji, Secretary General, SAARC

STC family welcomed His Excellency Mr. Chenkyab Dorji, Secretary General, SAARC on May 17, 2007 in the Centre. His Excellency observed the functioning of the Centre by visiting all the sections in the Centre. H. E. appreciated the activities done by the Centre and encouraged the staff to do the work more efficiently in future.



22.3. Visit of Prof. Mahendra P. Lama, JLN University, New Delhi

Mr. Lama visited STC on 22 May 2007 to know the activities of the Centre. Objective and activities of the Centre were briefly explained and publications were handed over to him for more information about SAARC TB and HIV/AIDS Centre. He appreciated the activities carried out by the Centre and expressed happiness for friendly behavior and importance given to the public who visit the Centre.

22.4. Visit of Dr. Khalilur Rahman, Regional Advisor, WHO/SEARO, New Delhi

Dr. Rahman visited STC on May 23, 2007 and observed the functioning of the Centre. He discussed with the Director, STC about the plan and programs of the Centre and advised to integrate TB & Tobacco in coming year. In this connection he assured STC that WHO may help to work on this issue in the SAARC Region. He expressed happiness on his visit to SAARC TB and HIV/AIDS Centre and appreciated the achievements of the Centre.

22.5. Visit of Mr. Lila Prasad Sharma and Dr. Narayan Govinda Amatya

Dr. Kashi Kant Jha, Director and staff of STC welcomed Mr. Sharma and Dr. Amatya at STC on 28 May 2007. Both the personality were responsible in establishment of SAARC TB and HIV/AIDS Centre in Nepal in 1992. The Centre is indebted to both of them forever. Mr. Sharma and Dr. Amatya expressed happiness and appreciated the progress done by the Centre. They also appreciated the expert ability of STC staff. Mr. Sharma and Dr. Amatya were assigned for performing Performance Audit of SAARC TB and HIV/AIDS Centre.

22. 6. Visit of Mr. Gyan Chandra Acharya, Acting Foreign Secretary, Government of Nepal



Dr. Kashi Kant Jha, Director and other staff of STC welcomed Mr. Acharya on July 4, 2007 at STC. Mr. Acharya observed the functioning of STC and discussed with the staff. He expressed his delightness to be at STC and said, despite its own constraints, the centre is making best of efforts to achieve its objective of excellence for the SAARC Region. He thanked Director, STC as well as Director, NTC for their dedication and hard-work to strengthen and enhance

the activities of STC. He also expressed his best wishes for intensifying the efforts in the days ahead and expressed the commitment of Ministry of Foreign Affairs to support STC for strengthening.

22.7. Dr. Paul Roche, Ph D, Dip PH,

Dr. Roche Epidemiologist, Surveillance Policy & System Section, Office of Health Protection, Australian Government, Dept. of Health and Ageing visited STC on September 27, 2007 and observed the functioning of the Centre. Dr. Roche presented TB Control in Australia and discussed on the TB control activities in the SAARC Region.

22.8. Dr. Ajmal Sabawoon, MD, PGD, MPH, Afghanistan

Dr. Sabawoon, M/E & Surveillance Consultant, National AIDS Control Program, DG of Preventive Medicine & PHC, Ministry of Public Health, Afghanistan visited STC and observed the functioning of the Centre. He discussed with the Director, Deputy Director and staff of STC about the TB and HIV/AIDS in the SAARC Region. He said that as a part of SAARC he would like to express his deepest feeling on hospitality of SAARC and issues discussed during his visit. He appreciated the cooperation rendered by STC and expressed his desire for effective participation in STC activities to overcome TB and HIV/AIDS, save more lives and provide a healthy environment in the region.

22.9. Farewell to Mr. Mohamed Naseer, Director, SAARC Secretariat

Mr. Naseer completed his tenure as SAARC Director. STC is very much thankful to Mr. Naseer for his contributions to the Centre and wishes him and his family a great success in coming days.

22. 10. Joining of New Director, SAARC

Mr. Hassan Shifau from Maldives joined SAARC Secretariat as Director. STC family extends the best wishes for his successful mission in the SAARC.

Annexes

Annex I

4. Second Workshop to Develop Regional Guidelines on Diagnosis & Treatment of MDR-TB and Third Meeting of Lab Directors from Nine Reference Laboratories of SAARC Region, Bhutan

List of Participants & Facilitators

BHUTAN

1. Mr. Sonam Dorji
Programme Director
Quality Assurance & Standardization Division,
Ministry of Health, Thimphu Bhutan.
2. Mr. Kinzang Namgyel
Senior Programme Director
Department of Public Health, Ministry of Health,
Thimphu, Bhutan.
3. Dr. Ballab Sharma
Senior Medical Specialist & Head of Department, (Medicine),
JDW NR Hospital, Thimphu, Bhutan.
4. Dr. Pandup Tshering
Program Manager,
National TB Control Program, Ministry of Health,
Thimphu, Bhutan.
5. Dr. Pelgay Jamyang
District Medical Officer,
Dzongkhag Hospital, Trashigang, Eastern Bhutan.
6. Mr. Chewang Rinzin
Program Officer,
National TB Control Program,
DoPH, Ministry of Health,
Thimphu, Bhutan.

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7. Dr. Karma Sherub
Medical Officer,
District Hospital, Paro Bhutan.
 8. Mr. Namgay Dawa
ADHO
Paro Dzongkhag, Bhutan.
 9. Mr. Pema Gyeltshen
Lab Technician
Public Health Laboratory,
Thimphu, Bhutan

MALDIVES

10. Dr. Fathimath Nadiya
Senior Registrar,
Internal Medicine, Indira Ghandi Memorial Hospital,
Male, Maldives.
11. Ms. Fathimath Saeeda
SNR Laboratory Technologist
Indira Ghandi Memorial Hospital,
Male, Maldives

NEPAL

12. Mr. Jagat Bahadur Khadka
Senior Medical Technologist
- Western Regional Hospital, Pokhara, Nepal

SRI LANKA

13. Dr. G.H. Wicramanayake
Doctor
National Reference Laboratory

Facilitators / Resource Persons

- Dr. Lochana Shrestha
Epidemiologist
SAARC Tuberculosis & HIV/AIDS Centre, Kathmandu.
- Mr. Dhruba Kumar Khadka
Microbiologist
SAARC Tuberculosis & HIV/AIDS Centre, Kathmandu.

Annex II

**5. Third SAARC Regional Workshop on TB/HIV Co-infection,
Bangalore, India**

List of the Participants and Facilitators

INDIA

Dr. Somashekar N
TB Specialist,
National TB Institute Bellary Road, Bangalore, India
Tel: 091-080-23441192(O)

MALDIVES

Ms. Salma Ali
Public Health Field Officer
National TB Control Programme.
Department of Public Health, Male, Maldives,

NEPAL

Mr. Ram Dhan Mehta
Senior Public Health administrator,
District Health Office, Sunsari, Nepal

SRI-LANKA

Dr. (Mrs) M. S. Lakmali Pererc,

Medical Officer

Chest Clinic (DTCO), Chest Hospital, Welisara, Sri-Lanka,

Facilitators/ Resource Persons

Dr. Prahlad Kumar,

Director,

National Tuberculosis Institute, Bangalore, India

Dr. B. Mahadev

Chief Medical Officer,

National Tuberculosis Institute, Bangalore, India

Dr. *Sophia Vijay

National Tuberculosis Institute, Bangalore – 560 003, India

Dr. V. K Chanda

National Tuberculosis Institute, Bangalore – 560 003, India

Dr. Preetidh S Vaidyanathan

National Tuberculosis Institute, Bangalore, India

Dr. Kashi Kant Jha

Director

SAARC Tuberculosis & HIV/AIDS Centre, Kathmandu, Nepal

Dr. V. S. Salhotra

Deputy Director

SAARC Tuberculosis & HIV/AIDS Centre, Kathmandu, Nepal

Dr. Lochana Shreshtra

Epidemiologist

SAARC Tuberculosis & HIV/AIDS Centre, Kathmandu, Nepal

Office Coordinator

Mr. K. B. Basnet

Administrative Officer

SAARC Tuberculosis & HIV/AIDS Centre, Kathmandu, Nepal

6. SAARC Regional workshop to Develop/Strengthen Mechanism for Cross Border Activities in Controlling TB and HIV /AIDS, New Delhi, India

List of the Participants and Facilitators

BHUTAN

Dr. Pandup Tshering
Program Manager,
National TB Control Program, Bhutan

INDIA

Dr. Upasana Agrawal
Specialist (Medicine) & I/C ART Centre
LRS Institute of TB and Respiratory Diseases, New Delhi, India.

MALDIVES

Mr. Mohamed Rameez
Deputy Director, HIV/AIDS
Department of Public Health, Finance Building, Male, Maldives

PAKISTAN

Dr. Abdul Baseer Khan Achakzai,
Provincial Programme Manager
Tuberculosis Control Programme, PHDC Building, Quetta, Balochistan, Pakistan.

Facilitators/Resource persons

Dr. Rohit Sarin
AMS
L.R.S. Institute of TB & Respiratory Diseases, New Delhi, India

Dr. D. Behera
Director
L.R.S. Institute of TB & Respiratory Diseases, New Delhi, India

Dr. Kashi Kant Jha

Director

SAARC Tuberculosis & HIV/AIDS Centre, Kathmandu, Nepal.

Dr. V. S. Salhotra

Deputy Director

SAARC Tuberculosis & HIV/AIDS Centre, Kathmandu, Nepal

Dr. Lochana Shreshtra

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7. SAARC Regional Training of Trainers on Management of Multi Drug Resistant TB (DOTS Plus), Colombo, Sri Lanka

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8. SAARC Regional Meeting of Managers of National TB and HIV/AIDS Control Programs, Kathmandu, Nepal

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