



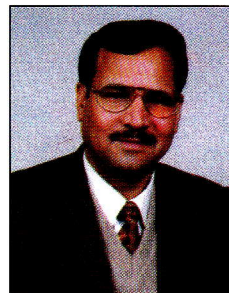
**SAARC TUBERCULOSIS CENTRE**  
**ANNUAL REPORT**  
**2001**



Released on:  
**World TB Day 2002**  
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## Preface



This annual report is a summary of the activities carried out by the SAARC Tuberculosis Centre during the period of January to December 2001. It gives me a great pleasure to extend my sincere thanks to all who support this Centre to complete all the assigned job for this year. This Centre has completed all activities recommended by the Governing Board for the year 2001. During the year, some of the remarkable achievements like recognition of the Centre as WHO collaborating centre and other more events have taken place. I believe that the activities performed by the Centre could be able to **provide a strong support to NTPs of Member Countries for the expansion of DOTS and achieve the target within desired time.**

I want to offer my sincere thanks to His Excellency Mr. Nihal Rodrigo, Secretary General, Mr. Thinley Dorji, Director of SAARC Secretariat for their continued support and cooperation to implement the programmes effectively. I would also like to thank His Majesty's Government of Nepal for strong support to SAARC TB Centre and authorities of WHO for identifying our Centre as a collaborating centre of WHO/SEARO.

I would like to extend my appreciation to Dr. P. Kumar, Deputy Director and GS Staff of this Centre for their hard work to implement the activities and to produce this report.

  
Dr. D. S. Bam  
Director  
SAARC TB Centre

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## STC Mission

**The STC Mission is to work for prevention and control of Tuberculosis in the Region by coordinating the efforts of the National Tuberculosis Control Programmes of the Member Countries**

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- ▶ To act as a Regional Co-ordination Centre for National Tuberculosis Control Programmes in the Region and function as a Centre for information exchange and related activities.
- ▶ To collect, collate, analyze and disseminate all relevant information regarding the latest development and findings in the field of Tuberculosis in the Region and elsewhere.
- ▶ To establish a networking arrangement among the National Tuberculosis Programmes and to conduct surveys, researches etc. if necessary.
- ▶ To initiate, undertake and coordinate the Research and Training in Technical Bio-medical, operational and other aspects related to Tuberculosis Control Programme in the Region.
- ▶ To strive for adequate supply at low cost of anti-TB drugs and other related supplies in all the Member Countries.
- ▶ To monitor incidence, prevalence and emergence of drug resistant strains of Tuberculosis in the Region.
- ▶ To promote action on issues relating to HIV related Tuberculosis in the SAARC Region.
- ▶ To carry out any other function related to Tuberculosis as requested by the Member Countries.

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National TB Control Programmes at all levels; co-ordinating and conducting research, providing platform for interaction and exchange of ideas, organizing workshop, seminar on priority areas of TB and HIV/AIDS control along with regular collection and dissemination of information of the field.

The unmanaged migration of the people in intra-country and inter-country is a major obstacle to implement DOTS and prevention of HIV in the Region. SAARC TB Centre has taken initiatives to manage this problem. Migratory meetings have been organized jointly with the WHO in this regard.

### **Epidemiology of TB in SAARC:**

- ▶ Countries: Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka
- ▶ Total Population: 1300 million
- ▶ Global Population: 22 %
- ▶ Global TB Burden: 40 %
- ▶ New TB Cases every year: 2.5 million
- ▶ New Smear Positive every year > 1 million
- ▶ TB Deaths every year 0.6 million
- ▶ Dually infected with TB and HIV 1.84 million (17% of global total)

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## 2. Tenth Meeting of the Governing Board:

The Governing Board of SAARC Tuberculosis Centre (STC) held its tenth meeting in Kathmandu on 27 – 28 February 2001, which reviewed the progress of the Centre and discussed the related matters in detail. The meeting recommended the following activities to be carried out by the Centre for the year 2001:



*(Meeting of the STC Governing Board Members)*

### 2.1 Activities Planned for the year 2001:

1. Public awareness & advocacy on Tuberculosis on World TB Day 2001, SAARC Charter Day, Partnership programmes with Schools, Media and Industries in Member Countries and documenting the situation of TB and HIV/AIDS control in the Region.
2. Trainers' training in TB control programme management

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3. Workshop for preparation of strategic long-term plan of STC for TB and HIV/AIDS control in the Region.
  4. Seminar on involvement of NGOs and private sector in TB control.
  5. Meeting to formulate guidelines for migratory population in TB and HIV/AIDS control.
  6. Strengthening of networking with institutions working for TB & HIV in the Region.
  7. SAARC Regional Conference for TB, HIV/AIDS control and other respiratory diseases in 2002 or 2003.

### **Programmes under SAARC-Canada Project:**

1. Meeting of Directors of Focal Reference Laboratories for the Project in Member Countries.
2. Meeting of TB and HIV/AIDS focal points for the Project
3. Country visit to finalize various issues pertaining to the Project

### **Programme under SAARC-WHO collaboration:**

1. Informal consultations with potential consultations in the Region.
2. Meeting on cross border issues relating to TB, HIV/AIDS, Malaria and Kala-azar.

In addition to the above programmes, the Centre was advised to continue its regular activities such as:

- ▶ Collection of recent information related to TB and HIV/AIDS control
- ▶ Compilation of the collected information
- ▶ Dissemination of compiled information through its publications.
- ▶ Coordination with National TB Programmes of the Member Countries

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- ▶ Publication of STC newsletters, activity reports, books, and other TB and HIV/AIDS related documents.

### **3. Activities Carried-out by the Centre:**

#### **3.1. Public awareness & advocacy on Tuberculosis on World TB Day 2001, SAARC Charter Day, Partnership programmes with Schools, Media and Industries in Member Countries and documenting the situation of TB and HIV/AIDS control in the Region:**

##### **World TB Day 2001:**

This activity was carried out by commemorating the Day on 24 March 2001. The STC organized different programmes in collaboration with His Majesty's Government of Nepal, WHO, JICA and NATA; with the objective of generating community awareness, magnetize the concentration of media, bargaining with policy makers for strong commitment as well as mobilizing the community support for the control of TB.

##### ● **Display of Banners:**

Before a couple of day, the STC displayed banners at the different prominent places of the city with the eye catching and sound biting slogans related with the TB and its co-infection with HIV/AIDS.



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The STC has expanded this partnership programme out of the valley as well and organized a programme in Dhangadhi, (a densely populated city) on 18<sup>th</sup> April 2001 in Far-western Region of Nepal.



*(Participants of the School Project, Briefing Programme organized at Far West of Nepal)*

### ● **Spreading of Messages:**

Early in the morning of 24<sup>th</sup> March, His Excellency Secretary General of SAARC gave the message from television and radio for good health of the people of the Region. The messages of the Director and Deputy Director were also aired. The National print media published different awareness messages, articles and advertisements in their newspapers.

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- **Partnership Programmes:**

A briefing programme was organized for the school students under the partnership programme on 22 March 2001. Students from different schools of Kathmandu valley visited the SAARC TB Centre where the Director, Deputy Director and President, NATA, Kathmandu-branch explained the role of students in TB control to the visiting students.



*(Participants of the School Project at the Briefing Programme organized at STC hall)*

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● **Joint Function:**

A programme was organized jointly with the organizations working for TB control in Nepal. The Hon'ble Tirtha Ram Dongol, Minister of State for Health, graced the function as a Chief Guest. The joint programme was attended by large number of policy makers, diplomats, intellectuals, journalists, students, bureaucrats, technocrats, teachers, community leaders, businessmen, officials, doctors, health workers, social workers. The function was presided over by the Officiating Secretary for Health.



*(Joint Programme at City Hall of Kathmandu)*

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- **Organizing Exhibition:**

STC organized an exhibition on TB and HIV/AIDS in the city hall, where the joint function was organized. In the exhibition, the recent information on TB and HIV/AIDS in the Member Countries, health education materials, activities and publications of the Centre were displayed. The exhibition was observed by a large number of visitors.

- **Publication of Report:**

STC has published a compiled report on World TB Day 2001 based on the reports received from the Member Countries. This report is distributed to the Member Countries as per the mailing list prepared by the STC.



*(Report is being released by Hon'ble Health Minister)*

## Celebration of SAARC Charter Day

The Charter-day was celebrated on 8th December by organizing a training programme held jointly by SAARC TB Centre and National TB Institute at Bangalore, India. Dr. G. R. Khatri, DDG (TB) and NTP Director, India inaugurated trainers' training programme along with the celebration of SAARC Charter Day on 8 December 2001 in National TB Institute, Bangalore, India. The detailed report on trainers' training can be seen in the page No. 12.

### 3.2. Meeting to Formulate Guidelines for Migratory Population in TB and HIV/AIDS Control:



*(Technical Session of the meeting)*

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The meeting to formulate guidelines for migratory population for TB and HIV/AIDS control in the Region was organized in Kathmandu on 6-7 August 2001. The participants from Bangladesh, Bhutan, Maldives, Nepal and Sri Lanka participated in the programme.

The objectives of the meeting were to formulate guidelines, to exchange experiences, lesson learnt & constraints being faced and to agree on the coherent technical policies and operational issues relating to TB and HIV/AIDS control in the migratory population in the Region.

Dr. D. S. Bam, Director, STC inaugurated the programme at a function held in Kathmandu on 6 August 2001. Dr. Bam paid his sincere gratitude to the representative of SAARC Secretary General Mr. Thinley Dorji for accepting the invitation to grace the function. He also thanked Mr. Ibrahim Shaheem, Chairman, Governing Board of STC for his kind presence and expressed gratefulness to the Member Countries for nominating the experts for this important meeting.

Speaking at the meeting Mr. Thinley Dorji, Director, SAARC Secretariat expressed a warm welcome on behalf of Secretary General of SAARC.

Mr. Ibrahim Shaheem, Chairman of the Board as well as participants from Maldives informed that the meeting would play a pivotal role to formulate guidelines for migratory population in TB & HIV/AIDS control in the Region.

Dr. P. Kumar, Deputy Director, STC made a multi media presentation on TB and HIV/AIDS situation in the Region and highlighted the objective of the meeting.

### 3.3. The Eleventh Meeting of the STC Governing Board:



The 11th meeting of the Governing Board was held in Kathmandu on 20-21 November 2001. The Hon'ble Minister for Health, His Majesty's Government of Nepal Mr. Sarat Singh Bhandari inaugurated the meeting at the special session organized by SAARC TB Centre in Kathmandu on 20th November 2001. Hon'ble Minister welcomed the participants and expressed appreciation for the work being done by the SAARC TB Centre to contain TB and check the dual infection of TB and HIV/AIDS. He congratulated the Centre for being chosen as a WHO Collaborating Centre in this field. He expressed confidence that the collective efforts of Member Countries and other agencies such as WHO and CIDA would help the Centre in tackling this problem effectively. H. E. Mr. Nihal Rodrigo, the Secretary General of SAARC highlighted the challenges posed by TB and

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HIV/AIDS and the efforts being made by the STC to co-ordinate a regional response. He appreciated the increasing involvement of collaborating partners like WHO, CIDA/Health Canada and Government of Japan.

During the inaugural function Hon'ble Minister released the "Report on World TB Day 2001" compiled and published by SAARC TB Centre. This report was prepared based on reports received from the Member Countries for the publication of compiled report on the Day.

The Board reviewed the progress of the Centre of the year 2001 and recommended the following activities for the year 2002.

### **Programme for January to December 2002:**

- ▶ Public Awareness & Advocacy on Tuberculosis on World TB Day 2002, SAARC Charter Day, Partnership programmes with Schools, Media and Industries in Member Countries and documenting the situation of TB and HIV/AIDS Control in Region.
- ▶ Two weeks modular training of trainers in TB control programme management.
- ▶ Consultative Meeting for TB and HIV/AIDS Programme Managers and development of public private linkage and co-ordinated involvement of Medical Colleges in TB control.
- ▶ Workshop on development of Research Protocol related to operational research emphasizing quality assurance and MDR-TB.
- ▶ Training for Regional/district level Programme managers to strengthen their skills in Data Management in consultation with WHO/SEARO unit.
- ▶ Develop Public-Private linkages in TB Control.
- ▶ Coordinate Involvement of Medical Colleges in TB Control

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## **Programme for SAARC-Canada Project:**

The Board recommended the following activities to be undertaken during the year 2002-3 under the SAARC-CIDA project:

- ▶ Meeting of Directors of Focal Reference Laboratories for the Project in member countries
- ▶ Meeting of TB and HIV/AIDS focal points for the Project
- ▶ Install a web-site and infrastructure of the Epidemiological Database and training of STC staff.
- ▶ Coordinate inter-country research on Gender based issues relating to TB and HIV Control

## **Programme in Collaboration with WHO**

The Board was informed that the two programmes were planned to be carried out in collaboration with WHO during the year 2002:

- ▶ Cross Border issues on TB, HIV, Malaria and Kala-azar
- ▶ Coordinate South-East Asia Regional Training Course in TB Control.

In this direction, the Board recommended coordinated activities of STC and WHO ensuring that there is no duplication of efforts. In fact, the emphasis should be on supplementation and complementation of each other's efforts.

The Board reiterated that the Centre should also organize SAARC Regional Conference for TB, HIV/AIDS control and other respiratory disease in 2003.

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At the end of the meeting, on behalf of the Board Members Dr. Md. Belayet Hossain, Board Member from Bangladesh expressed sincere thanks to the Chairman for the efficient manner in which he conducted the deliberations. The Chairman expressed his sincere gratitude to the H. E. the Secretary General of SAARC. He also extended thanked to the Director, SAARC Secretariat, Director and Deputy Director, SAARC TB Centre for the excellent arrangements and documents made for the meeting and warm hospitality extended to the Board Members.

### **3.4 Workshop for Preparation of Strategic Long-term Plan of STC for TB and HIV/AIDS Control in the Region.**

In compliance to the decision of the Tenth Meeting of the Governing Board the STC organized a one day workshop for preparation of strategic long-term plan of STC for TB and HIV/AIDS Control in the Region followed by the 11th Meeting of the Governing Board. Experts of National TB Control Programme (NTP) from Bangladesh, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka participated in the meeting with the following objectives:

- ▶ To formulate the strategic long-term plan of STC to deal TB & HIV/AIDS control in the Region.
- ▶ To review the trends of the TB & HIV epidemics & their impact in NTP.
- ▶ To identify the main technical & managerial challenges for control of TB & HIV/AIDS in the community.
- ▶ To develop and recommend an approach for effective control of the dual epidemic.

The meeting was inaugurated by Hon'ble Mr. Sarat Singh Bhandari, Minister of Health, His Majesty's Government of Nepal. In the inaugural

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address Mr. Bhandari welcomed the participants on behalf of HMG Nepal and expressed his views on cooperation among the Member Countries in the field of control of tuberculosis. In his address Hon'ble Minister emphasized that the SAARC TB Centre has provided an opportunity to all the Member Countries to work collectively for prevention of HIV/AIDS and control of TB in our Region. Mr. Bhandari expressed his happiness on the initiatives taken by SAARC towards the control of TB and HIV/AIDS.

Regarding long-term plan, Mr. Bhandari expressed that the growth of TB with HIV/AIDS should be controlled by the collective efforts of the SAARC Member Countries by formulating the long-term plan and regional cooperation. The Hon'ble Minister lauded the timely decision of STC of organizing this workshop to prepare strategic long term plan for TB and HIV/AIDS control in the Region. He also thanked the WHO/SEARO for identifying the SAARC TB Centre and National TB Centre as a collaborating centre of WHO for TB and HIV/AIDS control activities.

The inaugural function was chaired by Mr. Mohan Bahadur Basnet, State Minister for Health, His Majesty's Government of Nepal.

His Excellency Mr. Nihal Rodrigo the Secretary General, SAARC informed that SAARC Member States have proved priority to TB control in the Region and expressed appreciation on the role of STC being played in order to control of TB and HIV in the Region.

The Secretary for Health, His Majesty's Government of Nepal highlighted about the policy of government regarding the TB and its co-infection with HIV/AIDS in Nepal.

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Dr. D. S. Bam, Director, SAARC TB Centre, extended a warm welcome to all. In his address he paid his gratitude to the Hon'ble Minister of Health, Secretary of Health, His Excellency the Secretary General of SAARC and all-National & International dignitaries.

Director General, Department of Health Services Dr. B. D. Chataut addressed the workshop. He expressed his happiness for organizing these kinds of workshop for preparation of strategic long-term plan of STC for TB and HIV/AIDS control in the Region.

Mr. Ibrahim Shaheem, Maldives, Chairman, Governing Board of STC proposed Vote of Thanks. He expressed his profound gratitude to the Member Countries for deputing the participants and the SAARC Secretariat for the support provided to organize the workshop successfully. Mr. Shaheem informed about the activities of STC and SAARC-Canada project for promotion and control of TB and HIV/AIDS in the Region.

A one-day workshop began on 22 Nov. 2001, Thursday morning with the registration of the participants and distribution of the relevant material prepared by STC on TB and HIV/AIDS situation in the Region. Dr. D. S. Bam, Director, STC welcomed the participants and request for the result oriented long term action plan of STC for TB and HIV/AIDS control in the Region.

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#### 4. Trainers' Training in TB Control Programme Management:



*(Participants along with the facilitators gathering at the training venue at NTI, Bangalore.)*

The training in TB control has been taken as a major activity of the Centre since its establishment. The STC organizes training programmes for trainers of different levels of TB control programme managers and workers. For the better impact of the training, STC has taken a policy to organize at least one activity in Member Country other than host country in a year. This year the training programme was organized at National TB Institute, Bangalore, India from 8th to 21st December 2001. During that opportunity, SAARC Charter Day was also celebrated in the same institute.

A fourteen-day trainer's training course for TB control programme management was jointly organized by SAARC TB Centre and National TB

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Institute, Bangalore from 8 to 21 December 2001. Fourteen participants from Member Countries attended the training programme.

To run the training programme smoothly and celebrate SAARC Charter Day, a committee was formed as per details given below:

Course Organizer - Dr. D. S. Bam, Director, SAARC TB Centre  
Course Director - Dr. G. R. Khatri, DDG(TB), Director NTP, India  
Course Coordinators- Dr. P. Kumar, Deputy Director, SAARC TB Centre  
Dr. P. Jagota, Director, National TB Institute, Bangalore.

To facilitate the programme, the renowned facilitators of the Region were also provided their valuable contributions to make the programme a success. The list of the out side facilitators is as under:

- ▶ Dr. Rani Balasubramaniam, Dy. Director, TRC, Chennai, India
- ▶ Dr. N. Selva Kumar, Dy. Director, Bact. Dept. TRC, Chennai, India
- ▶ Prof. Udai Pareek, IIHMR, Jaipur, India
- ▶ Mr. Avijit Home Chaudhary, WHO/SEARO
- ▶ Dr. S. B. Pande, Senior Research NIH, NTC, Nepal.
- ▶ Facilitators from NTI, Bangalore, India

Dr. G. R. Khatri, DDG (TB), Director, NTP, India inaugurated the programme at a function held in the auditorium of NTI. Dr. D. S. Bam, Director, STC and Dr. P. Jagota, Director, NTI welcomed the participants in the inaugural function of the training and celebration of SAARC Charter Day. Dr. Bam expressed his sincere gratitude to the Government of India for giving the permission for organizing this training and continuous support to organize the activities in India. He also thanked Dr. G. R. Khatri, DDG

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(TB) and Dr. P. Jagota, Director, and all staff of NTI for their strong support to organize this programme. An special session on TB and HIV was organized in afternoon on the inaugural day by SAARC-Canada Project for TB and HIV/AIDS Control.

### **Proceeding of the Training Programme:**

At the beginning of 2nd day, Dr. P. Kumar highlighted the course objectives and methodology of the training, which was followed by the session on TB & HIV/AIDS by Dr. Klaus Jochem, SAARC-Canada TB and HIV/AIDS project.

Dr. G. R. Khatri presented "Over view of TB and DOTS in India", where as Dr. D. S. Bam highlighted "TB in South Asia: Success Story of DOTS in Nepal". After the lunch, Dr. Selva Kumar, Deputy Director, Bacteriology Department, Tuberculosis Research Centre, Chennai presented his presentation on "Role of Bacteriology: Smear Microscopy" followed by the Introduction of Module 1, for the rest of the day.

The third day was started with the lecture on Epidemiology of TB followed by Role of Culture & Sensitivity in TB Control, Quality Control of Smear Microscopy & Practical Demonstration and Establishing RNTCP strategy with Module E2.

Chemotherapy basis & treatment strategy for TB control in SAARC, Establishing RNTCP Strategy, Module E3 and Role of Medical Colleges in TB Control with Revised Recording & Reporting with Module E4 were completed in day fourth and fifth.

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A special session on the Role of NGOs in TB Control was organized which was followed with Planning Supply – Module E5 and Introduction to Action plan, Preparation of Action Plan with Computing & Monitoring discussed in the sixth and seventh days according to the course planned for the training programme.

Advocacy in TB control with Supervision Module and IEC Skills Module were also toughed. Management Skills and Report Writing Part I and II were exercised in tenth and eleventh day of the training.

The last three days were concentrated in Role of SAARC in TB Control, Role of X-ray and Presentation Skills in TB control, the field visit was also organized. At the end the participants presented their field visit report along with the course evaluation.

The training was concluded on 21st December in the session under the chair of Dr. P. Jagota, Director, NTI. The Director distributed certificates to the facilitators and participants. Vote of thanks was delivered by Dr. P. Kumar, Deputy Director, STC.

### **3.6. SAARC-WHO Collaborative Activities:**

#### **The STC identified as WHO Collaborating Centre:**

WHO has identified SAARC TB Centre as WHO collaborating centre for the TB control activities in the Region. This event is an another milestone in the field of TB control in the Region and the Centre expressed its gratitude to the authorities of WHO/SEARO for giving the opportunity to work collectively for the control of TB and HIV/AIDS in the Region.

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The following activities had been planned for the year 2001 under the joint activities of SAARC TB Centre and WHO/SEARO:

**a) Informal consultations with potential consultants in the Region:**

A meeting of the potential consultants was jointly organized by SAARC TB Centre and WHO/SEARO in Kathmandu on 22-24 January 2001. Participants from the South-east Asian countries, WHO HQ, WHO/SEARO, WHO country offices and SAARC TB Centre participated in the meeting. The meeting had the following objectives:

- ▶ To brief the participants on disease burden, strategies for TB control and their outcome in the Region,
- ▶ To review and finalize the draft guidelines for preparation of 5 year strategic plans for TB control and
- ▶ To brief participants on the steps involved and actions required in the formulation of National 5 year TB control plan.

**b) Meeting on cross-border issues relating to TB, HIV/AIDS, Malaria and Kala-azar:**

Inter-country meeting on cross-border initiatives on TB, HIV/AIDS, Malaria and Kala-azar was jointly organized by SAARC TB Centre and WHO/SEARO on 6-9 March 2001 in Kathmandu. More than 60 participants participated from WHO HQ, WHO/SEARO, WHO temporary advisors, UN representatives and SAARC TB Centre participated in the meeting. The objectives of the meeting were as follows:

- ▶ To review the cross-border issues in TB, HIV/AIDS, Malaria and Kala-azar in the participating countries.
- ▶ To exchange experiences and lessons learnt on interventions to reduce the spread of these diseases across the border.
- ▶ To prepare joint plan of action including pilot projects for dealing with cross-border issues in TB, HIV/AIDS, Malaria and Kala-azar.



*(Technical session of the Meeting)*

### **c) SEA-TC 2001:**

The Fifth South East Asia Regional Training Course on TB Control (SEA-TC) 2001 was organized jointly by SAARC TB Centre and WHO/SEARO on 7-18 May 2001. Participants from the countries of South-east

Asia Region participated in the training. The course was facilitated by the facilitators from SAARC TB Centre, National TB Centre of Nepal, WHO HQ, WHO/SEARO, TRC Chennai and experts from outside the Region.



*(Inaugural session of the training course)*

### **3.7 SAARC-Canada Project:**

During a visit to Canada in the summer of 1997, the Secretary General of SAARC expressed interest in working with Health Canada (HC) to develop a project to address TB, HIV/AIDS and the HIV-TB Co-infection in SAARC Member Countries. A Memorandum of Co-operation (MOC) between SAARC and the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) was signed in July 1997 and provides the governing framework for the current project.

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Following the signing of the MOC between SAARC and CIDA, a meeting and workshop with the participation of Member Countries were held to draft Project Approval Document (PAD). The PAD was approved by all Member Countries at the end of September 2000.

A project Joint Steering Committee (JSC) is the key governance structure for strategic direction and oversight of the project. It serves as the formal body through which CIDA, SAARC and HC review the progress of the project, provide advise and facilitate implementation of project's activities. The JSC is chaired by the SAARC Secretary General and will meet no less frequently than once a year.

### **Project Goal and Purpose:**

The goal of this project is to promote regional cooperation through the SAARC in the area of TB and HIV/AIDS. The purpose of this project is to strengthen the capacity of the STC to support regional and national response to the TB and HIV/AIDS epidemic.

### **Project Outcomes:**

- ▶ Regional TB & HIV/AIDS epidemiological networking for sharing information and supporting regional analysis,
- ▶ Improved accuracy in laboratory diagnosis of TB in national laboratory networks as a result of better quality assurance (QA) and set up a Regional Laboratory at STC.
- ▶ STC effectively influencing and supporting regional advocacy development with respect to TB & HIV/AIDS.

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## **Activities carried out under the project in 2001:**

### **a) Meeting of Directors of Focal Reference Laboratory for the Project in Member Countries:**

The seven National reference laboratories in the Member Countries were identified by the tenth meeting of the Governing Board of STC. A team of the SAARC-Canada Project visited the reference laboratories in two phases. The 1st phase visit of the team was conducted in India, Maldives, Nepal and Sri Lanka from 21 May to 15 June 2001. The team completed its 2nd phase visit in Bangladesh, Bhutan and Pakistan from 10 to 27 September 2001. The series of meetings were held with the Directors of the identified laboratories for the implementation of the project. The list of the identified laboratories are as follows:

- ▶ National TB Reference Laboratory, Shymoli, Dhaka, Bangladesh.
- ▶ Public Health Laboratory, JDWNR Hospital, Thimphu, Bhutan.
- ▶ Laboratories at National TB Institute, Bangalore and TB Research Centre, Chennai, India
- ▶ Laboratory at NTC, Thimi, Nepal
- ▶ National Public Health Laboratory, Male, Maldives
- ▶ Laboratories at Ojha Institute of Chest Disease, Karachi and Federal TB Centre, Rawalpindi, Pakistan
- ▶ National Public Health Laboratory, Welisara, Sri Lanka.

### **Meeting of TB and HIV/AIDS focal points for the Project:**

To perform the meeting with the focal points of SAARC-Canada Project, the Government of Bhutan, Maldives, Nepal and Sri Lanka have nominated their nodal officer for the project. The nominations from the other Member

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Countries are awaited and the meeting will be held after full nomination of the nodal officers are received.

**b) Country visit to finalize various issues pertaining to the Project:**

A project team visited all Member Countries to have smooth implementation of the project. The objectives of the visit were:

- ▶ to meet with the country nodal officers for the project,
- ▶ to meet with heads of the National TB Control Programme (NTP) and National AIDS Control Programme (NAP) to explain the project and collect epidemiological information on TB and HIV/AIDS
- ▶ to meet with Directors of National Reference Laboratories, discuss the concept of a regional network of National TB Reference Laboratories connected electronically and identify the site and contact person for the TB reference laboratory node
- ▶ to collect technical data, bio-safety manuals and QA protocols from each of the reference laboratories
- ▶ to discuss modalities of the project with the Directors of the NTPs, NAPs and National Reference Laboratories in the Member States

**The composition of the project team was as follows:**

**Phase I**

Dr. Adalbert Laszlo, Senior Consultant, TB Microbiology,  
Dr. Klaus Jochem, Epidemiologist and Canadian Project Manager,  
Dr. P. Kumar, TB Control Expert and SAARC Project Manager

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## **Phase II**

Dr. D. S. Bam, Director, SAARC TB Centre

Dr. Adalbert Laszlo, Senior Consultant TB Microbiology

Dr. Kalus Jochem, Epidemiologist and Canadian Project Manager

Dr. P. Kumar, TB Control Expert and SAARC Project Manager

### **3.8 Strengthening of net working with Institutions working for TB & HIV in the Region:**

A compiled list of TB institutions and specialists working for TB control has been prepared and updated by the Centre. The networking with the institutions working for TB and HIV/AIDS in the Region has been started. The existing Directory is being revised with addition of the list of institutions working for the prevention and control of HIV/AIDS in the Region.

### **3.9 SAARC Regional Conference for TB, HIV/AIDS control and other respiratory disease in 2002 or 2003:**

The Centre has planned to organize this conference in the year 2003. It is hoped that the conference will bring a new concept toward the prevention and control of TB and HIV/AIDS in the Region.

### **3.10 Other Activities:**

#### **a) Audit of the Accounts of the STC:**

A Joint Audit Team of Mr. Kedar Man Joshi, Director, Office of the Auditor General, Kathmandu, Nepal and Mr. A. M. Premaratne, Asst. Auditor General, Auditor General's Department, Colombo, Sri Lanka has completed audit of the accounts of the Centre for the year 2000.

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**b) Collection and Dissemination of Information and Experiences by attending International and National Meetings, Seminars and Conferences:**

The STC participated in 20<sup>th</sup> All Nepal Medical Conference organized by Nepal Medical Association on 28 February – 3 March 2001 in Kathmandu. The papers on "DOTS: Effective Strategy for TB Control and HIV/AIDS is a biggest Threat to TB Control in the SAARC Region" were presented in the conference.

The Director and Deputy Director participated in informal consultation meeting to finalize joint plans on cross-border control of HIV/AIDS, TB, Malaria and Kala-azar organized by WHO/SEARO from 24<sup>th</sup> to 27<sup>th</sup> July 2001 in New Delhi, India.

A National level meeting involving medical schools for TB control in collaboration with WHO was organized by BPKIHS from 16<sup>th</sup> to 18<sup>th</sup> August 2001 in Dharan of Eastern Nepal. STC participated in the meeting and presented the papers on "TB in the SAARC Countries and Educational Needs for TB Control".

The 32<sup>nd</sup> World Congress on Lung Health of IUATLD was organized in Paris from 1<sup>st</sup> to 4<sup>th</sup> November 2001. The Director and Deputy Director participated in the meeting. On behalf of SAARC TB Centre "The Role of Schools in TB Control and Community Mobilization is Key to Success of DOTS" were presented during the conference. In the meeting the activities and objective of the STC was also highlighted for the information to the participants.

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Dr. Bam, Director, STC re-elected for the post of Director of the Board of Directors of IUATLD for the next 2 years by the election held during the congress.

A strong technical support from the STC is always available to the NTPs of the Member Countries. Independent in-depth review of NTP was carried out in Nepal. In the review representatives from IUATLD, WHO, LHL, STC and other national experts reviewed the NTP from 16<sup>th</sup> to 30<sup>th</sup> April 2001. On behalf the STC Dr. P. Kumar, Deputy Director actively involved in this review.

A 10<sup>th</sup> National Seminar on NTP was organized by His Majesty's Government of Nepal on 30<sup>th</sup> April 2001 in Kathmandu. The GS Staffs of the Centre involved in the seminar to acquire the knowledge about TB control and to make the seminar a success. On behalf of the STC the paper on "TB and HIV/AIDS in the South Asia" was presented in the seminar.

### **c) Distribution of STC Newsletter and other publications:**

#### **STC Newsletter:**

The regular publication of STC newsletters have been published and distributed as per the mailing list of STC. Three issues of STC newsletter have been published in this year including reports on activities, decisions of important meetings and recent information on TB and its control in the world.

#### **World TB Day 2001 Report:**

A complied report of the activities carried out by the Member Countries in the commemoration of World TB Day 2001 has been published and distributed to the Member Countries for the information, health education and advocacy for the control of TB in the community.

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## **A Book:**

A book "Role of SAARC TB Centre in TB Control" was released on World TB Day 2001. The book includes the efforts made by the STC and published for the benefit of the general people of the Region. This book is also distributed in the Member Countries.

## **Annual Report 2000:**

The Annual Report on activities carried out by the Centre for the period of January – December 2000 has been published and distributed to the Member Countries and other related organizations.

### **d) Collection of books and journals on TB and HIV/AIDS related to the disease:**

A resource centre (Library) has been established to disseminate the information on TB and HIV/AIDS in the Region. To strengthen this resource centre, STC has collected some scientific books, reports, documents, journals and other publication related to TB and HIV/AIDS from IUATLD, WHO and Member Countries. Important scientific papers have been collected from different international seminars, conferences and meetings to up date the information and data.

## **3.11 STC visit:**

### **a) Visit of Health Ministers:**

Hon'ble Mr. Ram Krishna Tamrakar and Hon'ble Mr. Sarat Singh Bhandari, Ministers for Health and Hon'ble Mr. Mohan Bahadur Basnet, Minister of State for Health, His Majesty's Government of Nepal visited

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SAARC TB Centre and observed the activities carried out by the Centre. The visits were performed on 20<sup>th</sup> June 4<sup>th</sup> September and 19<sup>th</sup> November 2001 respectively.

The Director and Deputy Director briefed the objectives, functions and achievements of the Centre. All the Hon'bles observed the exhibition of partnership project, SARC-Canada project and situation of TB and HIV/AIDS in the Region displayed by the Centre.

**b) Visit of SAARC Regional Director:**

Mr. Yaqub Malik, Director, SAARC Human Resources Development Centre, Pakistan visited STC on 10 October 2001. The Director of STC welcomed Mr. Malik. The Director and Deputy Director of STC briefed about the activities and the achievements.

**c) Visit of Students from Medical Collage:**

The Prof. and Students of Kathmandu Medical College visited the Centre on 7<sup>th</sup> September 2001. A meeting was organized to provide the information on TB and HIV/AIDS situation in the Region to the students. In the meeting, the role of medical colleges in TB and HIV/AIDS control was also discussed among the Director, Deputy Director and students.

The Prof. I. Dudani, Kathmandu Medical College shown a strong commitment along with the necessary support for the control of the diseases. He also appreciated the efforts made by the Centre in this field.

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