

Situational analysis of TB/HIV collaboration at Achham district, Nepal

Background: HIV is a major risk factor for the progression of latent or recent TB infection to active TB disease. Thus, collaboration between TB and HIV/AIDS programme is essential to improve access to comprehensive TB and HIV prevention, care and support services for affected populations and saving their lives. First situation analysis of TB/ HIV co-infection 2006 revealed the fact that there is absence of definite resource allocation from government for collaborative activities and lack of formal referral mechanism between two programmes.

Objectives: To assess existing situation and recommend possible interventions for implementing TB/HIV collaborative activities. .

Methods: Descriptive cross sectional study was conducted in Achham district of Nepal. Semi-structured questionnaire implemented among service providers, focal persons, TB patients and PLHIVs. All existing DOTs and VCT/ART centers of the district were included in the study.

Findings: Total 77 institutions were providing TB services, five institutions for HIV/AIDS related services and three institutions for both TB and HIV related services. One ART center and five VCT centers were currently delivering HIV/AIDS services. Voluntary Counseling and Testing (VCT), Management of Opportunistic Infection (OI), Provision of Anti Retroviral Therapy (ART) and Prevention of Mother to Child Transmission (PMTCT) were available HIV/AIDS services. Weak TB/HIV collaboration and all DOTs centers were delivering information about HIV and counseling on HIV prevention to TB patients. Above a quarter (27%) of the DOTs centers conducting intensified TB case finding mostly through Female Community Health Volunteers.

Conclusion: Achham is one of the most high burden districts for HIV/ AIDS cases in Nepal. Numbers of ART and VCT centers should be expanded. Mobilization and deployment of trained health personnel should be ensured to implement collaborative TB/HIV activities.

