

## Effectiveness of Social and Financial Support to MDR TB Patients

**Background:** As a response to the increasing numbers of TB patients who have multi-drug resistant (MDR) TB, WHO has developed the DOTS+ strategy. This strategy requires patients to take a set of powerful antibiotic drugs under direct observation (DOT) for a minimum of 24 months. Nepal has been a DOTS+ pilot country since November 2005, and has demonstrated that the strategy is generally successful. National TB control program started supports to DOTS plus patients; effectiveness was unknown and need to assess effectiveness of social and financial support to DOTS plus patients.

**Objectives:** To estimate effectiveness of financial plus social support and social support alone among DOTS plus treatment defaulters.

**Methods:** Cohort study was conducted in kathmandu. Both public and private DOTs centers/sub centers included for study. Total seven DOTs centers/sub centers selected based on case load which includes three social plus economical support, one social support and one no additional support modality implemented among MDR TB patients.

**Findings:** Treatment default rate is 7, 4, and 10 per 1000 person/months respectively among combined support, social support and no support group. Combined support (89%) and 94% of social support group discontinued jobs due to disease and > 80% of patients have economic problems to continue and were managed through loan, selling assets, etc.

**Conclusion:** Self-esteem increased, decreased fear about disease & treatment, relieved tension, and raised level of confidence among social support groups; money used for food, extra diet, rent, travel cost, schooling of children and increased confidence among social plus economical support group.

