Stop TB in My Life Time
On World TB Day 2013

Advocacy, Communication & Social mobilization (ACSM) Unit
National TB Control Program
Ministry of Health
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BACKGROUND:

Introduction to National TB Control Program:

The National TB Control Program Pakistan (NTP-PK) is running as the largest health program in the public sector across Pakistan. In the year 2003, World Health Organization, WHO declared Tuberculosis (TB) as a threatening disease for mankind across the world. In this regard the Ministry of IPC initiated the National TB Program to curb down the spread of TB through enhancing public and private sector health facilities.

TB is a major public health problem and government of Pakistan is fully aware of the gravity and the consequences of this disease. The government has declared TB as a National Emergency and through a recent resolution passed by National Assembly of Pakistan has reiterated our commitment to control and subsequently eliminate the disease as a public health problem as defined by MDG and endorsed by Government of Pakistan.

The overall objective of NTP is to reduce mortality, morbidity and disease transmission so that TB is no longer a public health problem. NTP, Ministry of IPC developed a comprehensive strategy for control of Tuberculosis in the country. The strategy focuses on expansion and consolidation of Directly Observed Treatment Short Course (DOTS) services in the country. The national Program was successful in establishing a country wide network of laboratory services, providing free diagnostic and treatment services at 5,000 public health facilities and engaging private sector to further enhance the TB quality services. The program is able to achieve Millennium Development Goals (MDG) output indicators by detecting 70% TB cases in the country and treating 85% of them, and it is well on track to reach MDG targets by 2015.

A well-coordinated surveillance system is in place for prompt response to drug or chemical shortages in these centers. As a matter of fact, in order to empower TB patients to demand their right to free treatment and diagnosis, boards saying ‘Free services for diagnosis and treatment of TB available here’ have been affixed on all TB Centers across the country.
Global Situation:

Tuberculosis is the second commonest cause of death from infectious diseases in the world killing almost 1.3 million people annually. Approximately nine million new TB cases are estimated to occur every year, more than 95% of which are in the developing countries. The global prevalence of the disease is around 14 million. Furthermore, 80% of the cases occur amongst people in the most economically productive age group of 15-59 years, representing a major economic burden for patients and ultimately countries. Twenty-two countries referred to as High Burden Countries (HBCs) account for 80% of the total TB disease burden in the world. Although Sub-Saharan Africa has the highest incidence rate, certain highly populous countries of Asia namely India, China, Indonesia, Bangladesh and Pakistan have the highest number of cases and together account for more than half of the global burden.

TB Situation in Pakistan:

Pakistan ranks 6th among the 22 high burden countries. The Number of TB cases diagnosed was increased from 20,707 in 2001 to 268,780 in 2010. Since the revival of the program in 2001, NTP has successfully treated more than 1.5 million TB cases free of cost. Current case detection rate of new smear positive TB cases is 75% and treatment success rate is 91%.

Advocacy, Communication & Social Mobilization (ACSM):

ACSM is a key determinant of the outcomes of Pakistan’s TB control Interventions. It is through the use of ACSM tools that agendas are set, public awareness on specific health issues is raised and communities are mobilized to adopt early health seeking behavior and treatment adherence.

NTP’s Leadership on ACSM: ACSM Unit has demonstrated leadership in designing, planning and executing ACSM interventions and further institutionalizing health communications for TB in the country. Vision of eliminating differential of quality of “health communication” products, services and information between public and private sectors has been introduced. NTP, Pakistan is being recognized as a leader on producing high quality advocacy, communication and social mobilization products. NTP/ACSM Unit has further modeled Public-Public and Public-Private partnerships with a number of institutions related to health sector in the country.

Numbers of national strategic/policy documents have been produced under ACSM, including National ACSM Strategy and Operational Guidelines; National M&E Framework; Quality Assurance Manual (Trainer and Trainee guide) for IPC;
Social Marketing Plan; ACSM Resource Center Development Guidelines; and National Logistic & Management Information System. ACSM unit is also providing TA to regional countries.

**WORLD TB DAY:**

World TB Day is commemorated every year in the month of March. The day is designed to build public awareness that tuberculosis today remains an epidemic in much of the world, causing the deaths of several million people each year, mostly in the third world.

**National TB Control Program & World TB Day 2013:**

Every year National TB Control Programme (NTP) designs and implements a series of activities to commemorate World TB Day on March 24. This year special campaign “STOP TB IN MY LIFETIME” was proposed by Stop TB Partnership. The World TB Day Campaign 2013 will allow people all over the world to make an individual call to stop TB in their lifetimes. This year NTP targeted more than 200 school children and youth from all over the city. NTP engaged large number of young volunteers from Pakistan Girls Guide Association, and Pakistan Boys Scouts Association in various activities of World TB Day 2013. The campaign challenges us to look at the fight against TB in an entirely new way: that every step we take should be a step that counts for people and will lead us towards TB elimination. The theme is most relevant in the context of Pakistan today as we are currently witnessing a level of effort for controlling Tuberculosis and every individual in the society has a part to play in it. Stopping TB promotes economic development.
HIGHLIGHTS OF THE ACTIVITIES CARRIED OUT IN CONNECTION WITH THE WORLD TB DAY 2013

National Level

A National Seminar on Tuberculosis

Like every year a national event to commemorate World TB Day was organized on March 28, 2013 at RHC Bara Kahu.

Honorable Sectary of IPC Mr. Fareed Ullah graced the occasion as a chief guest. Dr. Najeeb Durrani, DTC, Dr. Muhammad Azhar, DHO ICT, Dr. G.N Qazi, Representative WHO, Dr. Ejaz Qadeer, National Manager, National TB Control Program were also present on the occasion.

A large number of youth, Lady health Workers and key stakeholders including representatives of Ministry of IPC, NGOs, INGOs, multi-lateral and bilateral organizations, academia and media participated in the event.

The salient features of the event are as follows:

- **Recitation from the Holy Quran:** Dr. Khalid Incharge RHC Bara Kahu inaugurated the seminar with the recitation from the Holy Quran.

- **Welcome Remarks by DTC, Dr. Najeeb Durrani:** Dr. Najeeb Durrani warmly welcomed all the participants and gave an overview of the disease and this year's theme “Stop TB in My Life Time”. He said that today is an important day for all of us as we have gathered here to commemorate World TB Day - a day which is designed to revitalize our commitment and dedication for improving the lives of people suffering from TB. He in detail explained the causes and symptoms of TB and that TB is curable after 6 months of complete treatment. He also told the participants that TB diagnosis and treatment is available free of cost throughout the country at health facilities established by the government.

- **TB Patient highlighted his Success Story:** Mr. Shaukat Ali Dots Facilitator RHC Bara Kahu cured TB patient while narrating the story of his life told that his job was never at stake instead he was encouraged and was given
full support to complete the 8 months treatment when he was declared as a TB patient. He not only encouraged the TB Patients to complete the 8 months treatment but at the same time extended his full support and voluntary services to National TB Control Program in the fight against TB.

- **TB Patient highlighted his Success Story**: Ms. Saira Ali resident of Bara Kahu also narrated her story. In the start I felt fever and a little bit of cough. I thought that it is seasonal but it continued for some days. I felt a little bit worried about that so I consulted a doctor. Doctor gave me some medicines for cough and fever but they had no effect on my health. One day a lady health worker came to my house. After seeing my condition she inquired about the symptoms and told that these can be the symptoms of TB. So, she took me to hospital. There my sputum test was taken and unfortunately they diagnosed that I was suffering from TB. At that time the lady health worker cooperated very well and told me that TB is curable and that its treatment is available free of cost. Then I asked her about the duration of this treatment about which she told that I will have to take my medicines regularly till 6 months. I am taking medicines regularly. My two sisters are also TB Patients and they are also taking medicines. LHW gave us hope and advised us to continue these medicines in order to get rid of this disease. By the grace of Allah my condition is improving. I am very much thankful to LHW because she is supporting us in taking medicines. I am also thankful to all the members of National TB Control program who are serving people and saving lives of many people like myself.

**Speech by Scout Haider Ali Awan**: Haider Ali also shared the involvement of scouts in disseminating the facts about TB at National and International level. He also ensured participation of scouts in TB DOTS Program.

- Mr. Haider gave a speech on TB. He said Tuberculosis, like other epidemics knows no boundaries. It is an increasing world-wide problem and is one of the major health challenges in Pakistan. It is a sad truth that even though TB is a curable disease, thousands of people die from it each year.

Tuberculosis kills more adults than any other infectious disease, kills more women than all causes of maternal mortality combined, and creates more orphans than any other cause. It also disproportionately affects the poor.
The key to controlling TB is to raise awareness about its symptoms and encourage sufferers to seek treatment which is available free of cost. It is to ensure that patients follow the full course of medication for the prescribed period. TB patients who are taking their treatment can live and work safely in the community; and they need and deserve our support as they journey towards recovery.

- **Remarks by DHO, Dr. Muhammad Azhar** also remarked on the occasion. He said that Pakistan is having the 6th highest incidence in the world which does not occupy an enviable position with regard to Tuberculosis. He further remarked that the key to controlling TB is to raise awareness about its symptoms and encourage sufferers to seek treatment which is available free of cost. It is to ensure that patients follow the full course of medication for the prescribed period. Also, tuberculosis carries social stigma, which is a major obstacle for treatment. Public education and building awareness can help prevent a deepening epidemic. He said that the Government of Pakistan is making concerted efforts to control TB in Pakistan and together with the help of youth we can disseminate the related information regarding tuberculosis the communicates which will can help in saving the lives of thousands of people who die of TB every year.

- **Remarks by Chief Guest Sec IPC, Mr. Fareed Ullah:** The honorable Sectary for IPC while addressing the audience said that cleanliness is very important. No one can get better unless he/she takes cares of the hygiene. He also advised that National TB Control Program should develop their PC-1 for the education and rehabilitation of TB Patients. He also said that IEC material should be distributed in all the schools.

- **Remarks by Dr. Ghulam Nabi Qazi, WHO Representative:** Dr. G.N Qazi appreciated the efforts of National TB Control Program and congratulated NTP and its team on their achievements and wish them all the best for future endeavors. He also thanked the young people and LHWs for their participation and acknowledged the efforts of young volunteers for putting their efforts in World TB Day activities.

- **Remarks by Mr.** appreciated the TB Patients for their courage to share their stories in front of large gathering despite of the stigma attached with the disease. He also assured his fullest support and cooperation in the noble cause of eliminating TB from Pakistan. He said
that he feels honored to be a part of this noble cause and he believes that knowledge is the key to controlling TB. It is our duty to spread information to as many people as possible as by doing so we will not only protect ourselves but also millions of other people who die of TB every year.

**Symbolic Walk:**
After the seminar all the participants under the leadership of honorable Sectary IPC started the symbolic walk in the vicinity of Bara Kahu holding the banners and play cards of TB messages. The main focus was to create awareness among masses and to attract media to grab required news space for Tuberculosis.

**Dissemination of ACSM Resource Material:**
ACSM resource and promotional material including posters and leaflets and pens were also DISTRIBUTED among Provincial programs and partners for dissemination among the different target audience during World TB Day activities.
Picture Gallery