



Funded by EC



Pakistan National AIDS Consortium



World AIDS Day



Department for International Development

PNAC Bulletin

November-December 2006 Vol 2, Issue 12

www.pnac.net.pk

Shared Thoughts

Two decades after the global recognition of HIV and AIDS, the world is witness to the enormous and multiplying consequences of the epidemic. AIDS now kills more people worldwide than any other infectious disease. Most of these deaths occur in

young adults, who make up the economic backbone of their countries, and upon whom development depends. The epidemic is not only destroying millions of lives but is also compromising the social, economic and political development of nations.

Nevertheless, there are still many countries where the situation of the disease can still be controlled by introducing comprehensive HIV prevention strategies. For instance, in Pakistan, the epidemic has not yet taken a firm hold and it is believed that the current concentrated epidemic situation among IDUs and MSM presents a vital window of opportunity a window which may be quite short to influence the future course of the epidemic. In such low or medium prevalence but high risk behaviour countries, HIV and AIDS prevention efforts have been effective in helping to slow the rate of the epidemic. It has been the best strategy for reducing the human and economic toll from HIV and AIDS.

However, to have the largest impact on the HIV epidemic there is need of a comprehensive approach to HIV prevention. Comprehensive HIV prevention is a broad term that incorporates surveillance, research, prevention interventions and evaluation. Surveillance and research activities help to better define and understand the HIV and AIDS epidemic across the nation. The prevention interventions and capacity building efforts are based on behavioural, laboratory and medical science, and work to contain the spread of HIV and AIDS Program evaluation, policy research, and development assess intervention effectiveness and refine prevention approaches.

Prevention is always better than cure. Therefore, it will be a far easier and inexpensive enterprise if we start thinking pre-emptively and implement multi-disciplinary programs not ignoring the importance of collaboration with partners at community, state, national, and international levels.

Consultation on Universal Access Organized by PNAC and UNAIDS

In Pakistan the Universal Access has not been able to attract much attention because Pakistan is still going through a denial phase and misperception persists that Pakistan is still a low prevalence country.

In 2005, PNAC with support from UNAIDS initiated One Soul Movement with the purpose of mainstreaming HIV and AIDS into all public and private sector initiatives. National Assembly of all stakeholders held under the banner of the OSM in Islamabad on December 5-6, 2006 has provided a platform to initiate a process for broad based consultation with civil society organizations to develop a process for meaning full participation of civil society at the provincial and national level in Pakistan.

The first round of the consultation has already been accomplished which was started from a launching ceremony and a 1-day consultation at Islamabad. This event was organized by PNAC. In the launching ceremony Dr. Aldo Landy the Country Coordinator of



Dr. Aldo Landy, Country coordinator UNAIDS with PNAC Staff at Universal Access consultation



Participants during consultation

UNAIDS, appreciated this collective endeavour of UNAIDS and PNAC. He underscored the obligation of full-time engagement of a very wide diversity of actors in the consultation owing to the enormous challenges attached to the subject in question.

Raja Khalid Mehmood President PNAC, supporting Dr. Aldo Landy's views, welcomed the joint efforts of UNAIDS and PNAC and articulated this venture as turning small programs / projects into really population-wide access to life-saving services.

The consultation followed the launching ceremony. The Provincial Managers and Program Officers from all the Consortia participated in that session which was facilitated by Dr. Sikander Sohani and PNAC staff.

The first round of consultative process was accomplished by replicating this process at provincial and regional level. Similar consultations were arranged by the partner consortia and networks at Karachi (SNHHA), Muzaffarabad (KAC), Peshawar (NAC), Lahore (PAC), and Gilgit (NAACC) on December 14, 18, 19, 21, and 24 respectively.

Now in the final round, PNAC will arrange a national consultation here at Islamabad during January/February 2007. Both from health and non-health sector 50 participants will be attending the national consultation.

The objectives of the consultative process are mainstreaming HIV and AIDS in all developmental initiatives by involving CSOs, enhancing understanding of the concept of Universal Access among the CSOs, improving contribution of (CSOs) in ensuring Universal Access by identification of priorities, enhancing focus on public private partnership, and contribution of CSOs in setting of ambitious targets in the larger consultation to be organized by the government of Pakistan.

STI Management Training for SGP Staff-NAACC

Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs) Management Training was organized by Northern Areas AIDS Control Consortium on September 1, 2006 in Gilgit. The training was organized for all the Tameer SGP staff, who is directly or indirectly working with the target groups. Twenty Two participants attended the training.

The training workshop was facilitated by Dr. Safdar Kamal Pasha (M & E Officer PNAC). The objectives of the training were increase awareness about STIs, to enhance their skills in identifying STIs, to understand techniques of counselling, and to know about STIs and their vulnerability towards HIV and AIDS. The expectations were well met as the main purpose of the training was to build the capacity of the Staff about STI management. After the training the participants reflected upon the training as fruitful and informative. Mr. Ishtiaq Ahmed (General Secretary NAACC) concluded the training by saying that such trainings are a learning process which should be continued for capacity building of all those who are directly or indirectly working with vulnerable groups.

General Body Meeting of NAACC

The NAACC special annual general body meeting was held in Gilgit on September 14, 2006. The representatives from all member organizations attended the meeting. The meeting critically reviewed NAACC Progress. It was appreciated that the performance graph of NAACC was rising up which is all due to the efforts of the NAAC Board and staff.

Group work on Progress Review of Member Organizations was also conducted which was facilitated by the Regional Manager Mr. Khalil Ahmed. The representatives shared their ideas on developing guidelines for the draft strategic plan of NAACC for the next ten years. The representatives ensured their commitment in strengthening NAACC Secretariat and the creation of Endowment Fund to ensure sustainability. The meeting was adjourned with a vote of thanks.



Member at the Special General Body Meeting-NAACC

Poster Competition - PAC

A poster competition was arranged by Mohib-e-Watan Welfare Organization (MWO) implementing an In School Youth project "SAFE" at Rawalpindi. Mohib-e-Watan Welfare Organization is working for the prevention and control of HIV and AIDS in school going youth under Small Grants Programs. Its objective is promoting and rights based approaches among school going youth (age 12-24) of Rawalpindi city, to implement quality HIV and AIDS service delivery package that increases awareness, addresses stigma and discrimination associated with HIV and AIDS, and to bring behavioural changes resulting in lower level risk behaviours.

The competition was organized among the children from different schools. There were 13 competitors. The topic of the competition was **صحت مند نوجوان خوشحال پاکستان** (Healthy Youth, Prosperous Pakistan).

The age limit of the participants was from 10 - 15 and the issues they addressed through their posters were drug free society, cleanliness, nutrition, and education. However, HIV and AIDS was the only element which was highlighted in every poster. The purpose of the activity was to highlight the relationship between health and country progress, the role of youth in country progress, and



Mr. Saeed Mirza, Provincial Manager PAC, distributing certificate among the participants

to spread awareness on HIV and AIDS among youth.

The panel of judges included Provincial Manager PAC, and Senior Program Associate from PNAC. At the end of the competition PM PAC distributed certificates among the winners.

SGP Learning Forum

The Small Grants Programs (SGP) Forums are conducted to assimilate major learnings from grass roots action programs. Following the chain of SGP Learning Forums, a similar Forum was conducted on September 20, 2006 in Peshawar. The Program Officer - NAC moderated the event. The representatives of the lead and partner NGOs of SGPs were the focal persons.

SGP learning forum is a continuous feature with the aim of reviewing the progresses, learnings, and growing together for better quality assurance. NAC while realizing the time frame of SGPs and necessity of understanding the future design focused on overall progress review reflecting achievements so far, challenges, sustainability plans and lessons learnt. The objectives of the forum were individual SGP project's achievements, challenges, areas for improvement and key lessons learnt; reflection on the overall impact of individual interventions in specific targeted domains; broadening the vision and skills of SGP partners for effective strategies and overall review of Tameer SGP component (NWFP) and foresee the future frame work.

The session was inaugurated by interim Chairperson NAC, Mr Alam Zaib Khan. The forum continued with SGP partners' presentations and discussions. The overall progress comments were given by PO - NAC. At the end of sessions National Program Officer - PNAC, Mr. Aftab Ahmed Awan highlighted the key lessons learnt from the discussion. The concluding remarks were given by the Provincial Manager, Dr Khizar Hayat and emphasized that enhanced preparation and practice is required to excellently advocate our cause and promote our action research projects.

PAC Visioning Exercise

The visioning exercise of PAC was conducted on October 7 - 8, 2006 at Changa Manga. For this activity a committee was constituted in General Body Meeting held in May 2006 and further endorsed in Board Meeting held in September 2006.

The activity was aimed at the development of the future strategy for PAC for the next ten years. The exercise was facilitated by Mr. Hector Nihal from AIDS Awareness Society (AAS) and Mr. Saeed Mirza PM PAC. A total of 13 participants attended this 2-day exercise. All the participants actively contributed to the event to ensure its



Participants at visioning Exercises

success. The major areas of planning included the infrastructure, finance, human resource development, institutional development and program interventions.

This 2-day activity comprised of two major sections including SWOT (Strength, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats) Analysis and Strategic Visioning. The SWOT analysis was carried out in the groups while the Strategic Visioning was done in a participatory way in which the participants came up with innovative ideas. The facilitators did well to make it a participatory exercise.

The exercise ended with the development of a plan of action for the coming ten years. It will be shared with all major stakeholders.

PNAC/IWW - NAACC Staff Forum

PNAC / IWWNAACC staff forum was held on November 2-3, 2006 at NAACC Secretariat Gilgit. General Secretary - NAACC, Regional Coordinator NAACC, Director Technical - IWW, Finance Advisor - IWW, National Manager - PNAC and NAACC staff were present in the forum.

The main purpose of the forum was to enhance coordination between the staff of NAACC and PNAC, the future prospects and exit strategy for SGPs, and sustainability of NAACC with reference to SGP extension and devolution of funds. It was also decided that Focus Group Discussions would be conducted instead of Post-RSA of SGPs, the pending cases of NAACC at PNAC and SGPs instalment would be released as soon as possible. It was also agreed to devolve funds for NAACC.

On behalf of NAACC Board and staff, Mr. Ishtiaq Ahmed, thanked the PNAC/IWW team for their visit to NAACC office and Gilgit. He showed his satisfaction that this forum would be useful for both NAACC and PNAC and termed it as a productive and fruitful forum.

Meeting with Roshan Development Society (RDS), Hangu

The dearth of local health care centres, dependence on unsafe practices by paramedics and the strong position of quacks there at Hangu, is posing a big threat to the existing situation. Therefore, a meeting was held on September 8, 2006 at NAC secretariat. Mr. Sheryar Khan, Director - RDS, Dr Khizer Hayat PM - NAC, and Kaneez Fatima PO NAC were present at the meeting.

RDS at Hangu has 53 registered cases of HIV and AIDS from specifically Hangu and Orakzai Agency. The cases are mostly of the deportees from Gulf States. In addition, hepatitis C is also reported as on alarming rise at Hangu. Currently the situation of stigma and discrimination attached to hepatitis C is very serious, which is further rising due to the rising graph of HIV and AIDS cases. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss the priorities for response to HIV at Hangu, to highlight the value and importance of awareness raising, to provide care and support measures, to work for the reduction of social stigma attached to HIV and AIDS and mapping of the HIV and Hepatitis infections.

PNAC, NAC, and UNDP Seeking New Avenues

UNDP consultant visited PNAC office to learn about the role of the Consortium in the fight against the spread of HIV and AIDS. They also visited NAC office on October 6, 2006 to know the status of HIV and AIDS prevalence in NWFP and how NAC was responding to the challenges. The purpose of the visit was to identify possible avenues for UNDP's intervention for prevention of HIV and AIDS and care and support for those affected by the virus.

The PM, the PO - NAC, Mr. Paul L. Jansen (MD UNDP) and Ms. Abida Alwee (Consultant UNDP) discussed the major challenges in the sector. It was realized that there is a need for urgent response to Frontier and Tribal Area (FATA) scenario. The consultants recommended that the interventions should be tailored according to the cultural and social barriers of the location. Moreover, capacity enhancement and sensitization measures should be focused to counter the challenges of stigma and discrimination and all the measures have to be appropriated with the Rights Based Approaches (RBA).

Training Workshop on MSM

The Provincial AIDS Control Program (PACP) organized a 3-day workshop from October 19 - 21, 2006 at Lahore. The purpose of the workshop was capacity building of the staff of its projects on Male having Sex with Male in Lahore and Faisalabad.

Two participants each from PAC & PNAC also participated in the workshop. The President and NPO from PNAC and PAC, PO and the Project Coordinator of the MSM project also participated in the workshop. The workshop was facilitated by the Chief Executive of Naz Foundation International (NFI) Mr. Shivnanda Khan who is renowned for his sound knowledge on Male Sexual and Reproductive Health.

The objective of the workshop was to build the capacity of those who are directly involved in implementing the intervention strategies for MSM and Male Sex Workers (MSWs).

STI Management Training for SGP Staff - PAC

A series of one day Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs) Management Trainings was organized by the PAC. The trainings were organized on October 18, 19, and 30, 2006 at Lahore, Okara, and Rawalpindi respectively. In all 25 participants attended the activity, including the Program Officer PAC, the Provincial Manager PAC, and two local general practitioners and lady health visitors.

The training was organized for all the Tameer SGP staff, who is directly or indirectly working with the target groups. The objectives of the training were to know about the STIs, to enhance their skills in identifying STIs, to understand techniques of counselling and to know about STIs infections and its vulnerability towards HIV and AIDS. The expectations were well met as the main purpose of the training was to build the capacity of the staff about STIs management. The participants shared that training proved fruitful and enhanced the knowledge regarding STIs, counselling, and its linkage with HIV and AIDS.

Compiled by: Nighat Anwar, Asma Abbasi
Contact us: PNAC, House no. 441, Street no. 57, Sector I-8/3,
Islamabad, Pakistan
Tel/Fax: +92 - 51- 4100935, 4437019, 4432094
Email us: info@pnac.net.pk URL: www.pnac.net.pk

PNAC is implementing Tameer Project
in collaboration with Interact Worldwide.

PNAC is being generously supported by
EC for the publication of this bulletin.

Disclaimer

This document has been produced with financial assistance of European Union. The contents of this document are the sole responsibility of PNAC and can under no circumstances be regarded as reflecting the position of European Union.