
Meeting Minutes of the 30th HIV/AIDS Technical Working Group (TWG) of BCCM

Time : 02:00 PM – 4:30 PM
Date : 25 November, 2019
Venue : ASP Conference room, Mohakhali
Participants : List attached (Annex 1)

Dr. Mohammad Aminul Islam Mian, Director, NASC and PM (In charge) and Member Secretary, TWG welcomed everyone and requested to introduce each other. Then he requested Line Director, TB-L and ASP to deliver his speech. Prof. Dr. Md. Shamiul Islam, Line Director described the background, purpose and agendas of the meeting, he expected that all the members and PRs will be supportive to execute all the decisions. Dr. Md. Habibur Rahman, Director- MIS, Prof (Dr.) Sanya Tahmina, Line Director-CDC and Chief of the health education bureau also attended in the meeting and provided their valuable speech during discussion of the various agendas. The meeting agenda were as follows;

Meeting agenda:

1. Presentation and Discussion of draft Investment Case study by UNAIDS
2. Update of National Strategic Plan Review and Update by consultant
3. Discussion on focus areas for the next GF funding cycles
4. Presentation and discussion of proposed study entitled “Feasibility and acceptability of oral fluid-based HIV self-testing (HIVST)” by icddr,b
5. AOB (IBBS and others)

Agenda 1: Presentation and Discussion of draft Investment Case study by UNAIDS

Dr. Saima Khan, UNAIDS briefly discussed the investment case findings through power-point presentation, she stated that the ongoing interventions since 1995 have averted a total of 704,051 HIV infections among adult population and have saved 76,861 lives and 4,486,000 DALYs over the past years in the country. The purpose of prioritizing geographical areas was to achieve high rate of return in terms of DALYs saved, new infections and deaths averted, and achieving cost-effectiveness. At the same time, it would help Bangladesh in achieving the global goal of Ending AIDS by 2030. In this report 23 districts were identified as priority districts based on the KP size, case identification and few other criteria. Finally, she presented 4 recommended scenarios for Bangladesh and also discussed impact each the of the scenarios (**detail presentation is attached as annex-i**). Meeting participants discussed on the different scenarios and its benefits against the investment.

Decisions:

1. Meeting agreed to accept the scenario 3 (BD NSP), the description of the scenario is “Both prevention and treatment coverage will be scaled up in 23 priority districts as per 4th National Strategic Plan (NSP) 2018-2022. Meeting also approved the Bangladesh Investment case of 2019.

Agenda 2: Update of National Strategic Plan Review and Update by consultant

Dr. Rokshana Reza, Consultant of NSP development expressed gratitude to the ASP and other stakeholder for her engagement in the process, she stated that stakeholders are very much supportive for reviewing and updating the NSP.

Then consultant described the updated status of the review process, as part of the updating process 10 thematic groups have been formed consisting by the different stakeholders including government other department, NGOs, CBOs/ community networks, UN organization, HIV PRs, other disease of the Global Fund. During finalization, the thematic group list was circulated among the stakeholders and received few suggestions. Based on the suggestion ASP finalized the list. Meanwhile, all the group meetings have been scheduled from 4 December, 2019, consultant also prepared a list of the key informant interviews (KII). At this stage Consultant is preparing thematic group terms of reference and will be shared very soon with all group facilitators.

Mr. Manoj K Biswas, Coordinator, BCCM said that GF-CT is planning to visit Bangladesh in the 2nd week of December, 2019. ASP can invite them in any of the thematic groups. He also mentioned the time line of the proposal submission, expected date of BCCM meeting and CN endorsement, etc. He suggested to accomplish all the activity related to NSP development and CN writing before the next BCCM meeting.

Dr. Lima Rahman, Save the Children mentioned that as per NSP development plan it is found that country dialogue is organizing little bit delay. Consultant could revise the date country dialogue again. We should invite Global Fund for their participation in the country dialogue. Dr. Lima also emphasized for more engagement of community during thematic group meetings.

Dr. Sharful Islam Khan, icddr,b stated that we should consider all the thematic group consultation is the part of country dialogue. Stakeholder will get more opportunity to speak in the thematic group rather a day long big meeting. The big meeting will validate the recommendations provided by the thematic groups and will add anything if rationale. Dr. Sharful said the list of the KII need to be increased with more relevant officials.

Dr. Saima Khan, UNAIDS proposed to ensure participation of international expert in the country dialogue from WHO, UNAIDS, UNICEF and other development partners. ASP should inform the date of country dialogue at least one month ago, so that international expert can arrange their travel timely.

Mr. Ezazul Islam Chowdhury, Save the Children suggested that during conduction of KII, consultant should briefly discuss about the existing NSP with respondents.

Decisions:

1. TWG endorsed the list of the thematic groups and also approved the work plan for NSP updating presented by the consultant.
2. ASP will invite the Global Fund and other international experts from relevant UN agencies during the Country Dialogue, atleast one month ahead the invitation will have to be sent.

Agenda 3: Discussion on focus areas for the next GF funding cycles

On behalf of national PR, Md. Akhtaruzzaman, ASP said that it is difficult to describe our next focus areas in this meeting without discussion within the organization. There are plans to organize several consultations with thematic groups. Based on the recommendation of thematic group ASP will set its activity for next funding proposal. But based on our previous lesson, we are thinking to continue the previous module and also have plan few new activities including lab services and integration of HIV testing in ANC programme.

Dr. Lima Rahman, SCI said that few innovation and integration is planned for the next cycle, still we are working with the stakeholders especially community networks for increasing the coverage.

Dr. Sharful Islam Khan, icddr,b stated that yet we didn't finalize our programmatic approach, we are expecting recommendations / suggestions from the thematic groups as well as country consultations. But we are thinking few innovations and new modalities in our current intervention.

Prof. Dr. Fatema Ashraf emphasized to HIV testing among pregnant women, she stated that no separate arrangements need to be established in the hospital premises for HTS. This should be integrated within existing system.

Dr. Md. Mahbubur Rahman, Asst. Director, NASC suggested to orient private sector on the HIV testing and its importance. This sector is providing health services more than 50% people of the country, without their involvement it will be difficult to achieve our goal.

Prof. Dr. Md. Shamiul Islam, Line Director of TB-L and ASP mentioned that it is difficult to continue HIV testing stand alone, it is need to be integrated with hospital services either department of pathology, gyne or blood transfusion.

Decision: 1. PRs requested to consider the suggestions in next funding cycle. During selection the specific module PR will consider as following issues;

- a. How the prioritized modules ensure the highest possible impact with a view to ending the epidemics of HIV;
- b. How challenges, barriers and inequities, including those related to human rights and gender, are being addressed through the modules prioritized within this funding request.

Agenda 4. Presentation and discussion of proposed study entitled "Feasibility and acceptability of oral fluid-based HIV self-testing (HIVST) among sexual minority people and their sexual partners" by icddr,b.

Dr. Muhammad Manwar Morshed Hemel, icddr,b presented a short overview of the operational research concept on the above topic. He stated that the Global Fund had accepted this proposal and the concept note has been reviewed and approved by LFA. HIV Self-testing is a first of its nature study in Bangladesh with a lot of challenges. The members of TWG had discussed on various aspects of the study.

Decision: 1. The TWG has approved the study and requested for immediate implementation. During selecting the module by PR

Agenda 5: AOB

Government of the Peoples' Republic of Bangladesh
National AIDS/STD Programme (NASP)
Directorate of General Health Services
Ministry of Health and Family Welfare

Prof. Dr. Saif Munshi, Department of Virology, BSMMU updated the progress of the contract of IBBS, participants also discussed about the methodology and provided suggestion.

Ms. Amatul Karim, ASP updated the viral load testing through using Genexpert machine in ART center, she requested PRs to refer the PLHIV in those center for the testing. She stated that ASP is trying to procure the reagent/ cartridge through CMSD but its needs time. For the interim period ASP explore support from PRs for supplying viral load cartridge.

Participants discussed about the mass awareness on HIV/ AIDS, since long this types of activities are implementing by any organization. In this discussion Line Director updated that Operational Plan have some activities related to mass awareness, soon it will be started through BTV and media. He also stated that ASP also has plan to conduct few small scale study under the OP.

Decision:

1. Save the Children and WHO are again requested to provide Genexpert viral load cartridge about 2500 pcs for the national programme.
2. To raise awareness among general population a mass awareness (TVC, Drama, Bill board-electronic and still)/ campaign will be started under OP very soon. In this regards, ASP requested to contact with Bangladesh Television and other media.
3. ASP will initiate few small scale study (test and treat, OST programme, HTV testing integration, etc) under OP through single sources / individual expert within ASP and PRs.
4. Director, NASC will act as convener of CN writing team (the Global Fund next grant) to complete the whole process.

Finally, meeting chair Prof. Dr. Md. Shamiul Islam, Line Director, TB-L and ASP given thanks to all and requested to execute decisions in time.



Prof. Dr. Md. Shamiul Islam
Chair, Technical Working Group (TWG) of BCCM and
Line Director, TB-L and ASP, DGHS

Distribution:

1. All Member of the TWG of BCCM.

Attachment:

1. PPT of Investment case
2. PPT of NSP updating plan
3. PPT of Feasibility and acceptability of oral fluid-based HIV self-testing (HIVST) among sexual minority people and their sexual partners" by icddr,b

