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April – September 2008

From the desk of the **Executive Director**



Population Foundation of India (PFI) is the first civil society Principal Recipient for the Global Fund grants in India under Round 4 HIV/AIDS. Subsequently PFI received another round of funding under Round 6 HIV/AIDS of the Global Fund. Both the programs aim at improving survival and quality of life of people living with HIV/AIDS and reducing HIV transmission.

The programs are being implemented in co-ordination with the National AIDS Control Organization (NACO) and are examples of public - private partnership in which NACO is providing Antiretroviral Treatment (ART) at public health facilities and the civil society is providing ongoing care and support.

I thank the PFI- Global Fund team for bringing out this news letter. I also congratulate all partners who are implementing the Round 4 and Round 6 programs in coordination with PFI.

> A.R. NANDA Executive Director Population Foundation of India



"I won the Nagar Panchayat election with support and encouragement of my peers". Mrs. Mashi DLN Member on ART, Sugnu, Manipur "I am able to face the society after enrolling in the DLN and meeting people like me".

"I didn't know anything about ART, but after attending the Support Group meeting and the counseling session, I can even tell others about ART".





Volume No.1/Issue I

Message from **Project Director**

It gives me immense pleasure that The Global Fund Round 4 Program, "Access to Care and Treatment (ACT)" and Round 6 Program, "Promoting Access to Care and Treatment (ACT)" is bringing out the first edition of its Newsletter.

The two rounds of the Global Fund gave us an opportunity to scale up our interventions in 14 states of India. Many organizations joined hands with us in implementing the programs and are able to accomplish their tasks effectively. These grants enabled PLHAs to enhance their capacity to manage their own offices, plan, implement activities and monitor and evaluate the project. There are challenges in implementing the program which we are able to overcome through continuous effort. The program has a widespread, encompassing different cultures and geographic locations. There is therefore a need to share the program learnings on a regular basis.

I hope this newsletter will share experiences and lessons learned to all who are providing care and support services to PLHAs and a wider audience interested in public health.

> DR. MARY VERGHESE Project Director Population Foundation of India

Member not on ART, (32 year old male), Thoubal DLN Manipur

Bishnupur DLN Member on ART (35 year old male), Manipur

The Program

The Global Fund Round 4 and Round 6 programs contribute in improving survival and quality of life of people living with HIV/AIDS and reducing its transmission with a focus on reducing morbidity and mortality associated with HIV/AIDS.

Round 4 - Access to Care and Treatment (ACT)

The 'Access to Care and Treatment (ACT)' program is being implemented in the six high prevalence states of India - Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Maharashtra, Manipur and Nagaland. The program is for 5 years (2005-2010) and is currently in its Phase II of implementation.

Partners in the Round 4 Program Indian Network for People living with HIV/AIDS

INP+ is the national network for People Living with HIV/AIDS. INP+ is involved in implementing both the Rounds of the Global Fund to provide care and support services to PLHAs. INP+ has to establish 130 District level Networks (DLNs), 50 Treatment Counseling Centers and 16 Positive Living Centers in the six high prevalence states.

Freedom Foundation

Freedom Foundation, a Trust formed under the Indian Trust Act, in Bangalore. Karnataka has been working in the area of comprehensive care and support in India. In the Round 4 ACT program, Freedom Foundation has to establish 4 Comprehensive Care and Support Centers (CCSC). The services available at these centers include clinical management, palliative care, psychosocial and nutritional support.

EngenderHealth Society

EngenderHealth Society (EHS) is a registered Indian NGO affiliated to EngenderHealth. EHS is responsible to build the capacity of service providers - peer educators who are people living with HIV/AIDS, social workers, counsellors, health care staff and outreach workers within the program, 160 NGO staff in home based care and to establish Continuing Education and Training Centers in the states of Tamil Nadu, Karnataka and Manipur.

Confederation of Indian Industry

CII is a non-government, not-for-profit, industry led and industry managed organization. CII is responsible to advocate with private sector for setting up 10 ART centres. CII has facilitated the establishment of 6 ART centers. These centers are providing counseling, opportunistic infections management and ART services.

Other than 4 core sub recipients in the Round 4 program, PFI has sub contracted St. Joseph Leprosy and HIV/AIDS Care Center at Tuticorin, Tamil Nadu, Development Association of Nagaland at Dimapur, Nagaland and Meetei Leimerol Sinnai Sang (MLSS) at Imphal, Manipur to establish Community Care Centers.

Round 6 - Promoting Access to Care and Treatment-(PACT)

The 'Promoting Access to Care and Treatment (PACT)' program is being implemented in eight highly vulnerable states of India, Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Bihar, Rajasthan, Gujarat, Chattisgarh, West Bengal and Orissa. It has a project cycle of 5 years (2007-2012), and is currently in its Phase I of implementation (2007 – 2009)

Partners in the Round 6 Program

Indian Network of People Living with HIV/AIDS

In Round 6 Program, INP+ has to establish 100 DLNs in the states of Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh.

Hindustan Latex Family Planning Promotion Trust (HLFPPT)

HLFPPT is responsible for managing 24 Community Care Centers (CCC) in the states of Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan.

Catholic Bishops' Conference of India (CBCI)

CBCI is responsible for managing 45 community care centers in the states of Bihar, West Bengal, Orissa, Chhattisgarh and Gujarat.

The CCCs in these states are linked to the ART centers. The CCCs manage minor opportunistic infections (OIs) and counsel for adherence to Anti-Retro Viral Treatment (ART).

Case Story-1

Vaishali (name changed) was married when she was 17. She had a son after 3 years and was happy with her life. After 6 years of marriage, her husband was found to be HIV+. He was extremely depressed and soon succumbed to death. Vaishali was shattered. Her family rejected her. She was also tested positive but her son was not infected. She struggled and finally came out of depression. Though rejected by her in-laws, she was supported by her parents. She stayed with them and completed her studies. She came in contact with Ms. Karuna, peer counselor, who introduced her to Network of Maharashtra for People Living with HIV/ AIDS. She joined the network as a peer counselor and desires to educate her son. She faced many instances of discrimination and a lot of financial problems. However, she was unperturbed and now lives a confident life for her son. She is on ARV treatment and is living positively with HIV over the last 11 years.

Case Story-2

Aruna (name changed) is a widow and living with HIV. After knowing her status and the death of husband, Aruna's in-laws separated her from her child. They feared that the child may get infected from her. She approached Bijapur DLN in Karnataka with the hope of getting justice. The District Level Network Officer went to her inlaws house and tried to convince them to accept her, but they didn't agree. Then DLN members along with Aruna decided to take up this issue with the local court. Out of fear of court action, the family agreed to give Aruna's child back. After repeated counseling by the DLN members, the family accepted her and her child. Now they are all staying together happily.

Program Updates (April –September 2008)

IEC Material Development

PFI has developed communication materials for the use of peer educators in the program. The content and messages were shared and pre-tested in specific regional locations. The communication materials consist of two flip books, four handouts and a diary for peer educators.

Exposition

Positive Voices

Expositions were conducted in the states of Tamil Nadu, Maharashtra, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, Nagaland and Manipur. Over 100 PLHAs from District Level Networks participated in the state level exposition between April and July 2008. The events provided a platform for DLNs to develop a better understanding on issues of access to care and treatment, share learnings and promote the concept of positive living.

Advocacy Workshop in Jodhpur, Rajasthan and Darbhanga, Bihar

PFI along with Rajasthan AIDS Control Society (RSACS) organized a workshop in Jodhpur on 25th May 2008. The meeting was chaired by Mr. Tara Chand Meena, Additional District Magistrate. 48 district and block level officials from Departments of Health, Women and Child Development; representatives from PRI and NGOs attended the meeting.



Honorable Dr. Bhola Singh, Minister, Urban Development, Government of Bihar addressing the workshop

"People used to stigmatize me before I joined DLN. After joining DLN I started giving my testimony TV, radio and newspaper. Now people in my locality have stopped pointing fingers at me".

"Support group meetings encouraged me to adhere to drugs and live a healthy life."

"Now I can rely upon myself due to network".

Stories

Case



Another workshop was organized in Darbhanga, Bihar on 26th September, 2008. It was inaugurated by Honourable Dr. Bhola Singh, Minister, Urban Development, State Government of Bihar and chaired by Mr. Arun Prasad, District Magistrate, Darbhanga. Ninety two participants including Member of Legislative Assembly, District Development Commissioner, Additional District Magistrate, PRI representatives, Block Development Officer, Child Development Project Officer -ICDS, Block Medical Officer-Health, ART Doctor and NGOs participated in the meeting. Basics of HIV/AIDS, services for prevention, care and support, and the potential role of PRI in addressing HIV/AIDS, especially in context of NRHM and NACP III were discussed.

Interaction meetings

Interaction meetings were conducted with district stakeholders in Round 4 and Round 6 program states. These meetings aim to bridge the gap between PLHAs and providers. The meetings were attended by DLN members, ART centre staff, District T.B. Officer, ICTC In-charge and counselors. Human Right Law Network. Adhyaksha of Zila Parishad. family members of the PLHAs and other organizations working on the issue of HIV in the district.

Operationalizing COPE package

Client-Oriented and Provider-Efficient popularly known as COPE® is a package of participatory Quality Index (QI) tools and approaches developed by EngenderHealth for improving quality of health care delivery in low resource settings.

Pre-testing of COPE tools was undertaken at CCSC in Guntur and PLC in Prakasam, Andhra Pradesh in September 2008. EHS is planning to implement COPE tools at seven service delivery points in the ACT program.



Thoibi, DLN Board Member, Thoubal DLN, Manipur

Mushfique Ali Ujjain DLN, Madhya Pradesh

Kailash Patel Ujjain DLN, Madhya Pradesh