



P-ACT News

Volume 1/ Issue 2

October- December 2008

From the Desk of the Executive Director

In India 2.5 million people are estimated to be living with HIV/AIDS. Various factors like poverty, stigma and discrimination, unequal status of women, migration and mobility, disease burden among high risk groups and their interaction with bridge and general population make India vulnerable to HIV/AIDS. To reduce the incidence of HIV/AIDS in our country, it is crucial to address stigma and discrimination and enhance access to treatment, care and support services for People Living

with HIV/AIDS (PLHA). Population Foundation of India along with partner agencies are committed to provide care and support services in the fourteen states of India funded through The Global Fund. Our endeavor is to improve the quality of life of PLHA.

*A. R. Nanda
Executive Director
Population Foundation of India*

Message from the Project Director

The Global Fund Round 4 and Round 6 Programs are being implemented across 14 states in India and aim to strengthen care and support services for PLHA. The programs have strengthened 130 District Level Networks (DLN) of PLHA in the six high prevalence states and 56 DLNs in the 3 highly vulnerable states of Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan. The DLN is a registered community based organization of PLHA, which is a platform for them to provide mutual support and improve their quality of life. The DLNs coordinate with the ART centers and Community Care Centres to promote treatment education and facilitate adherence.

The program has been working closely with various tiers of the public health systems. At the state level regular Program Coordination Meetings are being organized with the State AIDS Control Societies (SACS) to discuss and review program planning and implementation. At the district level, coordination

with the Anti Reteroviral Treatment Centers, Community Care Centers and DLNs have been developed to improve the referrals and monitor adherence to ARV treatment. Advocacy meeting are being organized for Panchayati Raj Institutions, Integrated Child Development Scheme and other district and block level health services to mainstream HIV/AIDS and focus on reducing stigma and discrimination. Interaction meetings at the district level are being facilitated to break the barriers between different health structures like the ART centre, ICTC, other health programs and the PLHA. The meetings also provide an opportunity for PLHA to get insights into legal issues and their rights. The programs are being implemented in close coordination with the national plan to address the needs of PLHA and enhance their access to services.

*Dr Mary Verghese
Project Director
Population Foundation of India*

A success story from Bagolkot, CCSC, Karnataka

Mrs. Neelamma (name changed) is a thirty-eight year old illiterate widow living in Karnataka with her son. Ten years ago her husband who was suffering from HIV passed away. He was the sole bread winner of the family. After her husband's demise, her life was devastated and her health also started deteriorating. She visited a doctor who suggested a HIV test. She was found positive. She did not take any treatment and her health worsened. A health worker from CCSC Bagalkot visited her home and brought her to CCSC. By then, Neelamma had lost all hope and had developed suicidal tendencies. She was given physical care

and psycho-social counselling at the centre. At the centre she received in-patient care for seven days and learnt about HIV/AIDS, hygiene, CD4 count, Opportunistic Infections, nutrition, ART, side effects of ART and importance of adherence to treatment. This helped her to overcome her psychological problems and also agreed to start ART. On discharge, she was given nutritional support and gradually her health improved. She started earning. Now she extends help to other positive women who are still suffering and are in need of a friend.

Programme Updates

World AIDS Day 2008

World AIDS Day was observed on 1st December 2008 by PFI and the partner organizations of the Global Fund Round 4 and Round 6 programme. On this event Programme Management Unit (PMU), New Delhi released the first edition of its newsletter, 'P- ACT News' and a 'Peer Educator Kit' consisting of a diary for peer educator, two flip books on 'Living with HIV/AIDS' and 'Managing HIV/AIDS' and four leaflets on HIV/AIDS. The kit is available in six languages, namely, English, Hindi, Telugu, Tamil, Kannada and Marathi. This kit is meant for peer educators who are engaged in providing information on prevention, treatment, care and support.



'P-ACT NEWS', the first newsletter of Round 4 and Round 6 Programme on Care and Support being released on 1st December, 2008

PFI Nagaland unit along with Network of Peren District People Living with HIV/AIDS (NPDP+) observed the World AIDS Day under the theme 'Leadership- Lead, Empower, Deliver' at Jalukie. This day was observed for the first time in Jalukie and around 450 participants attended the program. Community Care Centers (CCC) of Rajasthan and Gujarat observed the World AIDS Day to spread awareness about HIV/AIDS among the general community. The day was marked by meetings, rallies, nukkad natak and Candle Night March in different districts of the states. PFI Andhra Pradesh Unit in collaboration with Freedom Foundation organized a get together for widow women living with HIV who are registered with Comprehensive Care and Support Centre, Guntur.

PFI state unit of Tamil Nadu along with Tamil Nadu Network of People with HIV/AIDS (TNP+) organized a rally and convention on the World AIDS Day. Around 600 PLHA including women and children participated in this rally. The rally was inaugurated by the Collector of Tiruchy, Thiru Sowdayya and MLA Thiru Anbil Periyasamy.

In congruence with the theme of World AIDS Day, a one day workshop titled "Take the Lead" was organized by PFI Regional Unit, Uttar Pradesh along with Uttar Pradesh Network of Positive People (UPNP+) on 8th December 2008, at MDC Training Center,



Rally of PLHA on the World AIDS Day in Tamil Nadu

Indira Nagar in Lucknow. Dr Rajeev Chaudhury (AD, Coordination, UPSACS), representatives from UNICEF, USAID, REVAMP- CARE India were present in the workshop. PFI and UPNP+ together declared a Youth Forum which would carry out advocacy with different stakeholders and ensure involvement of PLHA in government welfare schemes. The Forum would act as a bridge between the services and the community.

Cricket Match- Ashok Pillai Ever Rolling Trophy

Rajasthan Network of Positive People (RNP+) organized a state level cricket match for PLHA at the Sawai Maan Singh (SMS) Stadium in Jaipur, Rajasthan on 21st December 2008. The event



State level cricket match for PLHA at SMS Stadium in Jaipur, Rajasthan aimed to strengthen public and private partnership towards the cause of HIV/AIDS and to contribute resources to set up a holistic care home at Jalore in Rajasthan for children orphaned by HIV/AIDS. Mr. Parmesh Chand, Additional Chief Secretary, Mr. R. K Meena, Principal Health Secretary, Dr R. N. D. Purohit, Project Director, RSACS and Dr. Sudha Gupta, Director Doordarshan, Jaipur Rajasthan participated in the event. Nearly 400 PLHA including 80 children infected and affected with HIV/AIDS took part in this event.

Interaction meetings

Interaction meetings of PLHA and service providers were conducted at different districts of Round 4 and Round 6 programme implementation states. These meetings helped in



Interaction Meeting at Hotel Ambar in Bhuranpur, Madhya Pradesh

breaking the barriers between the different health care providers like the ART centre, ICTC, other health programs and the PLHA. It also gave them an opportunity to get insights into their legal rights and how and when they can avail legal help. Through these meetings, the participants were updated on HIV/AIDS, importance of treatment, treatment adherence and nutrition.

IEC Orientation

PFI- PMU had organized an IEC orientation workshop on 17th November 2008 for PFI and INP+ representatives from Round 4 and Round 6 program units. In continuation to the orientation, state units of Round 4 and regional units of Round 6 held similar IEC orientation workshops in their respective states. In these workshops the participants from District Level Networks, Positive Living Centres, Treatment Counselling Centres, Comprehensive Care and Support Centers and Community Care Centres were oriented to the content, effective distribution and utilization of IEC material. Participants performed role plays using the flip charts and leaflets for better understanding of the content. IEC kits were distributed to SDPs in the workshop.

Advocacy Meeting

An advocacy meeting was organized under the Round 6 PACT Program in Gorakhpur, Uttar Pradesh on 30th December, 2008. The workshop aimed to involve the district level departments and Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRI), promote accessibility of services to PLHA without stigma and discrimination and to mainstream HIV/AIDS. Ms. Sangeeta Pandey, Consultant of Mainstreaming Division, UPSACS, Mr Ajay Kumar Shukla, District Magistrate, Gorakhpur, Dr Mishra, CMO along with partner organizations- HLPPT, Gramin Sewa Sansthan and UPNP+ participated in the workshop. Mr Shukla, District Magistrate, said that opportunistic infections would be treated at all PHC and CHC level and PLHA would be included in all welfare schemes. Representative from the Zila Panchayat

invited the DLN members to participate in the Zila level meetings and sensitize the general population.

A state level advocacy meeting on mainstreaming HIV/AIDS was organized by PFI with the support of Madhya Pradesh AIDS Control Society (MPSACS), Madhya Pradesh Network for People Living with HIV/AIDS (MPNP+) and HLPPT on 15th December 2008 at Hotel Palash (Bhopal). State level functionaries from government departments, Health & Family Welfare, Women & Child Development, Police and representatives from UNICEF, HLPPT and MPNP+ attended the meeting. The meeting emphasized on providing travel concessions to PLHIV accessing ARV, greater co-operation from the Police in the Targeted Intervention projects especially among female sex workers, the need for improving voluntary HIV testing among pregnant women in the Anganwadi Centers and during the Mahila Jagriti Camps organized by the Women and Child department. It was felt that there is a need to improve coordination with Panchayati Raj Institutions, Integrated Child Development Scheme and ASHA workers under the National Rural Health Mission to promote voluntary testing among pregnant women and link them to Prevention of Parent To Child Transmission (PPTCT) services.

Improving the Quality of Services through COPE

Client-Oriented and Provider-Efficient (COPE) is a package of participatory QI tools and approaches developed by EngenderHealth for use in improving health care delivery in low resource settings. COPE has been implemented at Positive Living



Action Plan Development during COPE Implementation

Centre (PLC) Singarayakonda, Andhra Pradesh. The COPE exercise enabled staff to identify areas and issues pertaining to service delivery which need improvement at their site and develop action plan. Some of the areas identified include infection prevention, RTI/STI training, proper waste disposal, appropriate written policies on confidentiality and discrimination. Implementing COPE package is an effort to improve service provision at the care and support facilities with the involvement of the site staff.

Important Meetings and workshop

- **Regional Training Workshop on “Monitoring and Evaluation” was held in Cochin, India from 21 to 23 October, 2008.** The South and West Asia Regional Team of The Global Fund organized this workshop which was facilitated by The Global Fund Secretariat with input from technical partners. This training workshop aimed to strengthen the M&E capacity of Principal Recipients and the Sub Recipients to best utilize the Performance Based Funding system of The Global Fund. The workshop had an interactive focus and covered performance-based frameworks and The Global Fund reporting requirements, M&E Plans and M&E systems strengthening. The Workshop was attended by representatives of PFI, CBCI and HLPPT. Dr. Phanindra Babu, PFI made a presentation on best practices in M&E.
- **South and West Asia Grant Implementation & Management Meeting was held in Colombo, Sri Lanka from 10-12 November, 2008.** Participants from the South

and West Asian countries participated in this three day regional meeting. The meeting was inaugurated by the Hon’ble Minister of Health, Sri Lanka Mr. Nimal Siripala De Silva. From PFI, Dr. Mary Verghese, Mr. S. Vijay Kumar, Mr. Subrat Mohanty and Mr. Bijit Roy participated. In this meeting disease specific overviews were presented for AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria and important discussions on disease specific guidance on effective scaling-up and best practices took place.

- **SAARC Second Conference on “Working Together to Fight against TB, HIV/AIDS and Respiratory Diseases” was held on 15th to 18th December 2008 at Kathmandu, Nepal.** The Conference highlighted the achievements and challenges of TB and HIV/AIDS control, while emphasizing partnership building among different sectors involved in the control measures. From PFI, Ms. Rashmi Sharma presented a paper on “Treatment Adherence - Involvement of PLHA” at the conference.

Tale of a discordant couple

Mr. Karim Malik (Name changed), aged 26, lived in a joint family with his wife Ruksana and two children in a slum of Warrangal, Andhra Pradesh. He was also physically involved with some of his male friends. In the year 2004, he developed genital ulcers and suffered from frequent fever. He visited a doctor who prescribed him some medicines and referred him for HIV test. His test result was positive but he was not informed about its implications. After six months, Karim became severely ill. He visited government hospital where the doctors again referred him for HIV test. The test report was positive. The Counselor at Voluntary Counseling and Testing Center (VCTC) gave him complete knowledge about HIV/AIDS and referred him to the District Level Network (DLN). The DLN members counseled him on various issues like stigma, discrimination, positive prevention and disclosure. Karim was not ready to disclose his HIV status to his wife.

With the support of DLN he developed the courage to reveal his status to his family. After his status was revealed he was disowned by his family but his wife stood by him. His wife and the children were tested and were found negative. DLN team counseled Karim and his wife on safe sex methods for preventing the infection. With the support of DLN, he got a job in HIV/TB co-infection project as an outreach worker. Karim decided to work hard for his family. Ruksana also helped him by stitching dresses and adding to the family income. Their children are now studying in a good school. Ruksana gets her HIV test done after every six months. She is non-reactive for HIV in the recent test done in December 2008. DLN has played a significant role in the life of Karim. With the support of DLN, Karim has developed the confidence of living a healthy and positive life.

With Contributions from:

Partners

Indian Network for People Living with HIV/AIDS
Chennai
Ph: 044- 22254670-74

Freedom Foundation
Bangalore
Ph: 080- 65966445

Confederation of Indian Industry
Gurgaon
Ph: 0124- 4014060-69

EngenderHealth Society
New Delhi
Ph: 011- 26851948/49/50

Hinduathan Latex Family Planning
Promotion Trust
Noida
Ph: 0120- 4673673

Catholic Bishops’ Conference of India
New Delhi
011- 23344474

Population Foundation of India - Regional and State Offices

Population Foundation of India
B- 28, Qutab Institutional Area
Tara Crescent, New Delhi- 110016
Ph: 011- 42899770, Fax: 42899795
E-mail: popfound@sify.com
Website: www.popfound.org

PFI- Andhra Pradesh
Ph: 040- 65999770
E-mail: pfiapsco@yahoo.com
pfiapsco@gmail.com

PFI- Tamil Nadu
Ph: 044- 24329074
E- mail: pfi Chennai@gmail.com

PFI- Karnataka
Ph: 080-41285706
E-mail: pfi bangalore@gmail.com

PFI- Manipur
Ph: 0385-2445072
E-mail: pfimanipur@rediffmail.com

PFI- Maharashtra
Ph: 022- 65029710
E-mail: mahapfi@gmail.com

PFI- Nagaland
Ph: 03862- 234009
E-mail: popfound_nagaland@yahoo.co.in

PFI- Rajasthan
Ph: 0141- 2210680
E-mail: pfi rajasthan@gmail.com

PFI- Madhya Pradesh
Ph: 0755- 2550647
E-mail: pfi.madhyapradesh@gmail.com

PFI- Uttar Pradesh
Ph: 0522- 2353838
E- mail: pfiuttarpradesh@gmail.com