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TB CARE II
BANGLADESH

HONOURABLE US AMBASSADOR MR. DAN W. MOZENA VISITED USAID FUNDED TB CARE II PROJECT SITE IN SYLHET

Date: January 20, 2013

Time: 3: 00 - 4:00 PM

Location: Teliapara Tea Garden, Madhabpur Upazila, Habiganj, Sylhet.

Background:

Tuberculosis is one of the major killer diseases among adults in Bangladesh. The World Health Organization ranks Bangladesh as 6th among 22 high TB burden countries in the world. The country is responding very well to mitigate the burden of the disease. In 2010, the National TB Control Program successfully detected 74% of the estimated smear positive TB cases and treated more than 90% of the detected TB patients. Despite this commendable success, there is now a global consensus that meeting these targets alone is not enough to reduce morbidity, mortality and transmission of TB. The Government of Bangladesh, along with partners from the public and private sectors, is committed to ensure universal access to services for all forms of TB, strengthen the quality of diagnosis and treatment, address drug resistant TB and TB-HIV, strengthen health systems, empower people and the community, and undertake operational research. USAID supported TB Care II project managed by the University Research Corporation (URC) is working with the GOB to reach its desired targets and goal for the TB control in Bangladesh.

To supplement the Government's efforts to create an environment for the universal access to TB care, the TB Care II project has created opportunities to the local NGOs to work with the National TB control Program at different geographical locations. The TB CARE II partner NGOs work in different areas to aware the patients and communities, support early diagnosis and treatment, implement priority of controlling emergence of MDR TB and ensure participation of private sectors and civil society to strengthen TB control in the country. TB CARE II project also leverage technical and resource support to build capacity of local NGO partners so that they can manage the program in a standard and sustainable manner

The Health, Education and Economic Development (HEED) is a non Government Organization working with the TB CARE II project in Habiganj, Maulavibazar and Sylhet districts implementing advocacy, communication and social mobilization activities to increase awareness about tuberculosis among the tea garden workers and their families and among the local people and community around the garden. In those districts of Sylhet Division, the organization covers 157 tea gardens with a population of 650,000.

HEED also supports the activities of early and intensifying case detection by holding outreach sputum smearing centers, creating effective referral linkage with tea garden dispensaries, supporting treatment compliance and supplementing MDR TB prevention and control.

The HEED Bangladesh has long working experience in those three districts of Sylhet division since 1974 where they implement interventions of leprosy control and poverty elimination program. The

primary beneficiaries of HEED are the under privileged people and community living in those districts.

The Event:

Mr. Dan W. Mozena, honourable US Ambassador to Bangladesh, visited Teliapara Tea Garden at Madhabpur upazila under Habiganj district to observe a community awareness & education session for the garden workers. The session was conducted through an enter-educative pot song by a local folk song group under the supervision of HEED Bangladesh. The session is aimed to increase knowledge and improve care seeking behaviour of the infected and affected community for TB.



The honourable Ambassador was accompanied with Mrs. Grace Mozena and Mr. Richard Greene, Mission Director, USAID; Ms. Allyson Bear, Health Officer, OPHNE; Mr. Wasif Hasan, Development Outreach and Communication, USAID; Mr. Mike Harker, CAO and Mr. Firoze Ahmed Pol/Econ, USAID.



The visitors were greeted by Dr. Md. Shafiqur Rahman, Civil Surgeon of Habiganj district; Dr. Debasis Deb Nath, UH&FPO, Madhabpu; Dr. ABM Jahangir Alam, Team Leader, TB CARE II project; Dr. Mohammad Hossain, Sr. Technical Advisor, TB CARE II; Dr. Md. Manzur-ul-Alam, Program Specialist, TB CARE II Bangladesh and Activity Manager for Heed Bangladesh; Mr. Anwar Hossain, Executive Director, HEED Bangladesh, and Mr. Rezaul Karim, Project Coordinator, HEED, TB CARE II.

The Executive director of HEED greeted the guests with warm welcome and briefed the day's events. He invited all to participate in the sessions as the concerned issue is an important and vital one in context to healthy nation building in Bangladesh. He informed the honourable guest and the audience of the importance of participation of the local community and locally developed social and cultural instruments to build awareness against diseases including TB. HEED Bangladesh uses such local instrument e.g. **'POT SONG'** to create awareness among the people engaging members of their own community, the executive director said.



Dr. A.B.M Jahangir Alam, Team Leader, TB Care II Project, University Research Co., LLC briefed on National TB Control program and USAID funded TB CARE II project contribution and achievements. In his speech, he mentioned that Bangladesh government has been working for long

time to control TB but it is not possible for the government alone to reach the desired goals targeted in the MDG plan.



The USAID TB CARE II Project aims to provide support to improve managerial capacity and leadership in National TB Control Program (NTP) and other in-country partners to accelerate the implementation of TB DOTS, he mentioned. He stated that integrating TB and strengthening National Health System, adopting community based programmatic approach of controlling Drug Resistant TB, dealing TB and other co morbidities e.g. TB-HIV are the key strategies need to be addressed and TB CARE II rightly addresses those issues. With the support of TB CARE II, Bangladesh has introduced advanced and quick diagnostic tool such as Gene Xpert and been successfully implementing community based MDR TB management-he mentioned.

The Project coordinator of HEED for TB CARE II Bangladesh Project, Bangladesh shared the audiences the program strategy for controlling TB in Tea gardens by HEED Bangladesh and successes since the inception of the program in April 2012.

After the inaugural session ambassador Mr. Dan Mozena watched the educative pot song performed by the cultural team of HEED Bangladesh. The Pot song is an unique way of educating



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people through folk based songs where certain problems and solutions to the problems are narrated in the song or songs. Local people love this as it is presented in their own language and the performers are from their own community. The honourable US Ambassador, Mr. Dan W. Mozena, gave his speech after the event of Pot song and said that we’d to fight against TB and eliminate it from Bangladesh. ‘The USA has a dream that Bangladesh will be a ‘**Sonar Bangla** (Golden Bengal)’ where everyone will have balanced diet and nobody will die from diseases. But that dream will never come true if TB prevails. This is a battle

against TB and US government will continue support to fight the disease” –He stated. He also mentioned that the Bangladeshi people especially tea garden people are now conscious about their health and they know what TB is, what they need to do and where to go. He concluded saying that, the USA would be with Bangladesh and is happy to continue support the country to fight diseases including TB and advised all to go forward with their dreams!



Mr. Richard Greene also spoke on the occasion, thanks everyone concerned for organizing a nice and informative program. He also mentioned that this was an opportunity to know of the negative sides of TB through this special POT show and expected that the tea garden community who attended the cultural show would gain knowledge and disseminate message to others.



Dr. Md. Shafiqur Rahman, Civil surgeon, Habiganj gave vote of thanks to the Ambassador and the guests for giving their time for the event encouraging the local community people. He also thanked the community people for their participation in the sessions and the garden authority for their cooperation in organizing the event.

Ambassador visits the TB Stall:

