

EpiC Nepal Project

Monthly Update: June 2023

Objectives:

Objective 1 &2: Attain and maintain HIV epidemic control among at-risk adult men, women and PPs and KPs

Support group meeting:

Jhapa:

AMDA EpiC Nepal conducted support group meeting on 27th June, 2023 in Birtamode Field Office, Jhapa. A total of 6 PLHIV (3 male & 3 female) participated in the meeting. Meeting was facilitated by Case Manager, CBS & PN. Discussion was done about the U=U, importance of viral load and health insurance.

Sunsari:

AMDA EpiC Nepal conducted support group meeting on June 11th at Itahari Field Office, Sunsari. A total of 17 PLHIV (10 Female, 7 Male) participated in the meeting. Meeting was facilitated by PC, Case Manager and PN. Discussion was done on Viral load testing, ART continuing, Index testing, Health Insurance.

Morang:

AMDA EpiC Nepal conducted support group meeting on June 14th at Biratnagar Field Office, Morang. A total of 14 PLHIV (9 male and 5 female) participated in the meeting. Meeting was facilitated by Field Supervisor and PN. Discussion was done on Viral load testing, ART continuing, Index testing, Health Insurance.

Hygiene kit Distribution:

- Not done in this period.

Creative events:

- **Sunsari**

Conducted creative event on June 21st in Itahari City clinic. A total of 8 FSWs (PM) 4(1.2), 4(1.3) and 2(67) participated in the event. It was facilitated by PC, HA, DIC Operator and CBS. There was discussion on importance of current situation of HIV/AIDS, mode of transmission, treatment, preventive measures, services from city clinic, role of Peer Mobilizers, importance of PrEP and its continuation. Among them 1 STI services, 1 HTC services and 1 PrEP Follow up.

- **Morang**

Conducted creative event on June 20th in Biratnagar Field Office. A total of 13 FSWs 8(1.2), 5(1.3) participated in the event. It was facilitated by FS and CBS. There was discussion on importance of PrEP, its continuation, HIV/STI testing and its preventive measures. Among them 5 HTC/ STI and 2 PrEP_New, 1 PrEP Follow up during creative event.

- **Jhapa**

Conducted creative event on 14th June, in Birtamode City clinic. A total of 9 (FSWs) were participated in the event which was facilitated by HA, DIC, CBS & P.N. Discussion was done about the importance of PrEP its advantages, sexually transmitted Infections (STIs) and its

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effects. In this event, 11 KP tested for HIV, 2 enrolled in PrEP, 2 refilled & 5 restarted PrEP. Also, 11 KPs were screened for STI, 9 were diagnosed and 8 were treated. Similarly, quiz session was organized and key information was shared to KPs about HIV & AIDS.

Online Activities

- 9 PLHIV were followed through phone for HIV testing, ART adherence, index partner testing, viral load testing and 9 PPs were followed through Facebook for PrEP refill and Creative event.
- Similarly, 4 clients booked HIV testing services through MeroSathi & 3 arrived in the clinic & took the services .

Stigma and Discrimination Reduction Training:

- Not done in this period.

Monthly joint inter-Network meeting:

- In this period coordination meeting was done in Itahari City Clinic on June 24th, 2023. In the meeting there was presence of Senior HIV Advisor Dr. Teklu Welidegebeal, Ms. Ivana Lohar Team Leader, Mr. Suraj Chiomar from USAID Nepal also Project Director, Team Leader, Supply Chain Specialist, Provincial coordinator from FHI360 Nepal, CCM member Kamala Khadka, AFO and program office of Mahila Sahayogi Samuha(JMMS CBO) along with AMDA Nepal field office Mgmt team. In the meeting there was discussion of KP friendly environment is not maintained properly in outreach and in the clinic so that PM referral is low in the clinic also PrEP_New and PrEP_CT is low also there is still stigma and discrimination to KPs and PLHIV in the community which halts in the KPs to disclose their status and come for treatment.

Suggestions from USAID Nepal and FHI360.

1. KP friendly environment in the clinic and Outreach should be maintained by all staffs of AMDA Nepal.
 2. Staffs from KP group need to be focused during recruitment for field staffs.
 3. Identification of such areas in the district by CBOs and awareness program can be conducted in this AMDA Nepal will support for facilitation.
 4. To address PrEP_New and PrEP_CT currently PrEP dispensing can be done from MMS office as per need in this case AMDA Nepal will support.
- In this period conducted coordination and sharing meeting at Itahari Sub Metropolitan City on June 9th, 2023 in the presence of Sub Mayor Sangita Kumari Chaudhary, Chief Administrative Officer Mr. Ram Charitra Mehta, Health Coordinator Mr. Dinesh Chaudhary, Ward President Mr. Diwash Pokhel and other members of health section of Itahari SMC along with AMDA Nepal, Human Welfare Society, Astha Foundation, DPG, NAP+N, Prayash Mahila Samuha. In the meeting there was sharing of concept/introduction of HIV/AIDS with its mode of transmission, preventive measures, treatment, current status in the globe, nation, province and district with issues and challenges facing during program implementation in the district and local level. As previous year we have suggested to

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allocated separate budget for PLHIV treatment, education, nutrition of Itahari SMC in coming FY2080/81. Also Sub Mayor has committed to allocate separate budget in HIV/AIDS and address in Red Book of Itahari SMC.

- Participated at Interaction program of task force for CLM organized by Richmond Fellowship in association with Sparsha Nepal at Health Office, Sunsari on June 18th, 2023. The participants of the program were Chief of Health Office, Administrator, HIV Focal person, representative from District Coordination Committee, ART counsellor from BPKIHS & Inaruwa ART center and participants from Richmond fellowship. Discussion was done about the ongoing of Community Led Monitoring (CLM) program and sharing its achievement and plan for upcoming days.
- Coordination meeting was done at 27th June at Birtamode City clinic with presence of Medical Officer Dr. Manoj Shah, Mr. Birendra Das (District HIV Focal person), Health Inspector from Birtamod Nagar hospital, A.H.W from Sanischare PHC, CCC Incharge, ART counselor from Mechi & Damak hospital, CLM focal person from Richmond Fellowship, Senior Nurse from FPAN, staff from Marie stopes, participant from Mahila Jagaran Samaj, representative from Blood Bank Birtamode. Discussion was done about the project activities, Target Vs achievement till June and the availability of STI treatment Benzathine Penicillin among the participants.
- Participated in the Provincial level Global Fund consultation meeting for planning of HIV/Malaria/TV program in Nepal for FY2024-2027 on June 8th 2023 at Eastern Star Hotel, Biratnagar organized.
- In this period participated in the sharing of Key finding of Family Planning Survey of Koshi Province organized by New Era Nepal on June 11th ,2023.

Viral Load campaign

- **Jhapa**
In this period altogether 42 viral load sample collection was done from Mechi ART & 9 from Damak ART center in coordination with AMDA Nepal Jhapa, BDS Sub IPs, CCC and sent to NPHL and Koshi hospital respectively.
- **Morang:** In this period altogether 15 viral load sample collection done from Morang district in coordination with ART Center and BDS sub-IPs and send to Koshi Zonal Hospital. Also 25 reports are received in this month.
- **Sunsari:** In this period altogether 16 viral load sample were collected from Sunsari in coordination with ART Center, CCC and BDS Sub IPs and sent to Koshi Hospital for testing. Also 6 reports are received in this month.

Festival campaign social media posts and Day Celebration:

- **Not done in this period.**

Objective 3: Improve program management including HIS and HRH and financial systems to ensure attainment and maintenance of epidemic control; and

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Monthly review meeting:

In this period conducted monthly review meetings in Jhapa and Sunsari on 15th and 30th June to review the progress and decide way forward. In the meeting there was presence of PC, Admin & Finance Officer M&E Officer, HA, HA-ART CBS, PN, Lab staffs and DIC/M&E Associate. There was discussion on following:

- District and indicators wise target vs achievement.
- SIMS Visit & preparation
- Gaps in case findings, ART enrollment, viral load testing, PrEP initiation.
- PM mobilization in creative events
- Case detailing's of VL unsuppressed and not on ART Clients.
- Viral load testing of all eligible clients and follow up for unsuppressed clients.
- Data safety and Security.

Quarterly Review Meeting

- **Not done in this period.**

Data Quality Assessment:

- **Not done in this period.**

SIMS Visit:

In this period Site Improvement through Monitoring System (SIMS) visit was conducted at AMDA Nepal, Birtamode City Clinic, Jhapa on June 23rd, 2023. The participants of the visit were Senior HIV Advisor Dr. Teklu Welidegebeal, Ms. Ivana Lohar Team Leader, Mr. Suraj Chiomar from USAID Nepal also Project Director, Team Leader, Supply Chain Specialist, Provincial coordinator from FHI360 Nepal.

In the visit, the following document were reviewed, observed, interviewed with the staffs and verification was done:

- Stakeholders Engagement
- Condom availability
- Child Safeguarding, client rights, S & D policies
- Commodities Management
- Data quality and Assurance
- Infection Prevention Control (IPC)
- Key Population General (STI, Lube, Family Planning/HIV Integration)
- Care & Treatment- Key Population
- HIV Testing Services (Policies & guidelines)
- Laboratory

After verification of documents as per SIMS tool has sharing of the observation and findings to AMDA Nepal field office team. Overall visit was impressive and program related policy, guidelines, SOPs, documents were maintained as per protocol. In case of Viral Load unsuppressed follow clients register needs to be recorded with justification if not found or not done viral load in time. Also had sharing with of issues and challenges facing in Viral load testing transportation support, individual client report.

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Also, SIMS visit was done in Koshi Hospital (Laboratory and ART Center) on June 25th, 2023 by same team with same process and after visit there was sharing of findings. Over all visit was impressive need to updates personal files/JD of staffs, VL unsuppressed register, TPT stock need to be maintained.

Monitoring visits:

- In this period monitoring visit was done by Sr. M&E Specialist Mr. Upendra Shrestha from FHI360 at Itahari City Clinic and Birtamod City Clinic respectively on 2nd and 4th June 2023. He monitored M&E system monitoring, EPOA payment sheet, data error in prevention and clinical log sheet, monthly and weekly meeting minutes, IIT register, HMIS report, HTC/STI register with Issues and action matrix.
- In this period Psychiatric consultant for mental health services Anup Pokharel visited Birtamod city clinic and Itahari city clinic respectively on June 11th and 13th 2023 respectively. He monitored the process of counseling of case manager, peer navigator, Community Based Supporter of Mental Health with referrals mechanism.
- Supportive Supervision visit was conducted by Senior Lab Specialist Sanjit Pandit on 8th June, 2023 at Birtamod City Clinic.

Community monitoring Scorecard:

- Not done in this period.

Monitoring visit by GoN

- Not done in this period

Trainings and Orientations:

Domestic Resource Mobilization

- Participated in 3 days Domestic Resource Mobilization at Biratnagar Eastern Star Hotel organized by FHI360 from June 21st to 23rd 2023. The participants were from board members and program of implementing partners of EpiC Project of Koshi Province. There was discussion on the process and importance of DRM in the district engaging local government.
- In this period CBS+ and PN participated in Motivational Interviewing training organized by FHI360 in Kathmandu from June 20th to 23rd, 2023. There was discussion on process/method of counseling as per need of clients.

ART center Meetings

- **Mechi ART Center**

Quarterly ART center meeting was conducted at Mechi ART center of Mechi hospital on 25th June, 2023. In the meeting, there was presence of Physician, Hospital Administrator, ART counselor, Lab Incharge, M & E Officer, HA-ART & case manager from AMDA Nepal, Incharge

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from CCC & staff from Luvakush Ashram. In the meeting, discussion was done about the viral load status which had only 60% coverage in the reporting month. Hence the viral load program is planned twice in the reporting month Ashad. Also, discussion was done about Lost to Follow-up since there were more than 35 clients, all the supportive organization should coordinate and follow-up clients for linking them to ART for restart.

- **Inaruwa ART Center**

Quarterly ART center meeting was conducted at ART center of Inaruwa Hospital on June 8th 2023. In the meeting there was presence of Mesu, Hospital Manager, Medical Doctor, Pharmacy Incharge, Emergency Incharge, Lab Incharge, ART Counselor, HA_ART, Case Manager, PCs of EpiC Project. Meeting was started by the round of introduction, brief description on EpiC Project, current status of HIV/AIDS in national and district scenario with ongoing programs and areas supported by EpiC Project in the district. As per national data more seems in Viral load testing coverage and had discussed to increase VL testing in a weekly manner in the ART sites rather than fortnightly in Inaruwa ART center also consult with Koshi hospital for separate report of VL testing.

- **BPKIHS ART Center**

Monthly ART center meeting was conducted at ART center of BPKIHS Hospital on June 8th 2023. In the meeting there was presence of HoD of Internal Medicine, Medical Doctor, Lab Incharge, Tropical Ward Incharge, ART Counselor, HA_ART, M&E Officer, CHBC Coordinator of DPG. Meeting was started by the round of introduction, there was discussion of the brief description on EpiC Project, Viral load testing, EID sample collection and follow up for report IIT and transfer out clients tracking and reporting.

- **Ilam ART Center**

ART quarterly meeting of Ilam ART center is conducted on Saturday 24th June 2023 in the support of AMDA Nepal Epic Project. The medical superintendent Dr. Prabhu Shah and ART counselor Mr. Mahendra Rajbanshi inaugurated the meeting. There are 24 total participants from different stakeholders i.e district health office, Health office of Ilam municipality, Community care center, Family Planning Association Nepal Ilam, AMDA Nepal, Ilam Hospital, etc. In the meeting, the progress report of the Ilam ART Center is shown and discussions are done on different topics that are following,

1. Discussed the current situation of clients of ART center.
2. Due to floods and landslides, clients from Panchthar and Taplejung face difficulty to come for pill pick up
3. After discussion they suggest coordinating with the health office for ARV distribution to the clients from other districts and the chief of Health also approved it.
4. Client's privacy should be maintained at the ART center "Client's privacy is our first priority" should be maintained by ART counselors and supportive staffs of the ART center.

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5. Coordination should be done with local levels and health offices for an effective HIV program.

After discussion of each topics the meeting is closed by Chief of District Health Office Mr. Aditya Shakya.

Photos



Pics: A click with USAID Nepal and FHI360 Team during SIMS visit at Birtamod City Clinic.

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Pics: SIMS visit by USAID Nepal & FHI360 at Birtamod City Clinic and Koshi Hospital

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Pics: participation on Global Fund Province Level Consultation Meeting fro FY2024-27



Pics: Conducting Quarterly ART meeting at Ilam Hospital and Inaruwa Hospital.

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Pics: Coordination and sharing meeting at Itahari SMC in the presence of Sub Mayor and Chief Administrative Officer.



Pics: Participation on International Day Against Durg Abuse at Itahari SMC.