

## Launching of the 2<sup>nd</sup> phase of CCS project after the successful completion of the 1<sup>st</sup> phase

The CCS project of HASAB financially supported by Terre-des Hommes Netherlands has started its new journey towards the **2<sup>nd</sup> phase in April 2009** after the successful completion of its 1<sup>st</sup> phase (April 2006-March 2009). The project focused the areas mainly on: (i) Increase Awareness of target population and stakeholders towards HIV & AIDS risk, spread and prevention (ii) Care and Support services includes-Voluntary Counseling & testing and necessary Services for HIV infected and affected people; (iii) Capacity Building of the caregivers, service providers and staffs (iv) Rehabilitation of the infected and affected people. The findings and recommendation from last phase has been the key basis of the activities planned in the 2<sup>nd</sup> phase to provide comprehensive, integrated and need based support to the HIV Infected and Affected people. Without focusing the PLHAs, prevention program will never be successful as this is the bridging point of spreading HIV to the general population. Care and Support activity can be the major linkage area to strengthen HIV prevention activity through effective designing with due emphasis and addressing the needs of Infected and affected people towards reducing cause and consequence of HIV among them.

## A continuous motion of awareness raising

The process itself of increasing awareness of target population & stake holders on HIV/AIDS risk, spread and preventions is a continuous practice. From the reality based experiences, the 2<sup>nd</sup> phase of CCS project has been designed based on needs found from previous years implementation and evaluation.

### Intensive Family focused outreach activities:

The aim of intensive family focused outreach activities is to raise awareness of the family members, relatives and neighbors of HIV infected and affected people towards reducing stigma and discrimination. Proper knowledge and information about the risk, spread and prevention amongst the general populace as well as the infected and specially affected group needs to be dispersed. HIV affected families need a detail guidance on the issues regarding prevention, care and treatment. To meet these needs, a meeting was conducted in Sujapur Village, P.O. Nagori, P.S. Kaliganj, DS. Gazipur on 27 July 09, which covered 5 PLHA family members along with general mass, by the field organizer of CCS project. 34 persons including 32 females and 2 males attended this meeting. The meeting was organized to enhance awareness level and to reduce discrimination by discussing on the issue of risk practices, situation of HIV/AIDS of Bangladesh, way of transmission and protection and behavioral pattern and attitudes of the non-infected to the infected. Team Leader of HIV Mainstreaming project of HASAB accompanied CCS staff during this activity that created cross learning opportunity for both.



### Initial assessment of awareness



According to the project proposal, CCS project conducted 1 initial assessment of awareness among the primary beneficiaries of the project with the view to assess the PLHIV situation in country regarding Knowledge & awareness of HIV, Disease pattern, care and Support facility, Economic condition, psychological support, Stigma, Discrimination and Human rights. In order to get a deeper understanding of the needs and to provide even a better service this assessment conducted through appropriate methodologies includes individual interview and Focal Group Discussion with the PLHIV. Around 45 PLHIV

attended Individual interview at Half way Home and 22 attended FGD in 2 groups at Geon Health Foundation (GHF) and Mukta Akash Bangladesh (MAB). The information and situation came out through this assessment is thought to be much helpful in effective Care and Support to Infected and affected.

## Observation of International Candle light day

May 17 of this year was the annual 26<sup>th</sup> International AIDS Candle Light Memorial, a program of the Global Health Council, and one of the largest and oldest grassroots mobilization campaigns for HIV/AIDS awareness in the world. National AIDS/STD Program (NASP) organized a programme at the Biam auditorium in the city remembering people who died of AIDS in Bangladesh. The program at national level was organized by National AIDS/STD Programme (NASP) with Primary initiative from process. Other assistance and participation were from Mukta Akash Bangladesh (SHG of PLHIV), Bondhu Social welfare society (SHG of MSM), Family Health International, Save the Children USA, Action Aid Bangladesh, CCDB, Matra, ICDDR,B, HASAB, Confidential Approach to AIDS Prevention, BWHC, UNAIDS, UNODC. The program included a cultural show, documentary show, lighting the candles and sharing the moment together and valuable speeches from honorable government and non government officials.



**Bondhu Social Welfare Society** presented a cultural function titled 'Essence of Soul' on the occasion. The good impact of positive attitude towards PLHA was the closing remarks. **Ashar Alo Society** displayed a documentary show on AIDS named "**HARANOR ONUBHUTI**" that actually reflected the picture of discrimination & sorrow of HIV infected and affected. **HASAB**, besides participating in the national program took a different initiative regarding promoting services and it's access to the Infected and affected people in the country. a pamphlet was developed on this occasion ,which will be later used as sticker paper according to the project necessity.

## Consultation meeting /workshop

A consultation meeting with all the strategic partner organizations and other stakeholders was conducted on 24 August 2009, which introduced some new strategies, approach and activities of the CCS project (2<sup>nd</sup> phase) .The aim of this workshop was to share and make effective CCS' next initiative of enhancing advocacy, collaboration and networking amongst all the partner organizations working for Care and Support to HIV Infected and Affected directly or indirectly.



Participants from different GOs and NGOs both national and international which includes - Dr. Kazi Shahadat Hossain, Line Director, NASP and Dr. Shamsul Hoq Gazi, Deputy Programme Manager, NASP, Dr. S.R.Sarkar, Health Coordinator, TdH Netherlands, Md. Ehsanul Hoque, Project Officer, TdH Netherlands, representatives from UNIADS, UNICEF, Save the Children, Self help groups, and representative from other Local NGOs participated spontaneously at the workshop. With the impulsive input of all the participants, the consultation workshop ended with an optimistic note. From the discussion, activation of CCM and regular coordination among the Care and Support

network were recommended. HASAB also proposed to organize regular coordination meeting under NASP guidance to share and disseminate the findings of each organization, which will be

supported and arranged by NGOs respectively. Amongst the key issues that came out was the role of Government health centers to provide surgical treatment support to the PLHAs. In conclusion the NASP offered their continued support to HIV/AIDS care and support initiatives and gradually the comprehensive needs of PLHAs will be met by the joint initiative of the Government and development sector.

### **Implementation Planning & Team building workshop**

The implementation planning meeting was held on 25 August 2009 at HASAB Conference room, after the consultation meeting, was to share the Proposed Project plan and activities amongst all the team members towards a common understanding and detail planning with deep look and thoughtful discussion. During this meeting a work plan was developed which fitted the remaining first year activities into the next six months, as there was a deviation of first six months with appropriate rationale. The objective of this meeting was to design a detail work plan for the first year's activities with the reference to the CCS logical frame, Gantt chart and the recommendations from the consultation workshop. The meeting included only CCS project staff members.



### **Care and Support Services for HIV infected and affected**

Ensuring Care and Support to HIV infected and affected is one of the major objectives of the project. According to the proposal the care and support to HIV infected and affected includes VCT package service, general counseling, STI management, Opportunistic Infection (OI) management and CD4 count, counseling, pathological tests, half way home services etc.

#### **Peripheral VCT Center**

Based on the discussion of the joint evaluation with TdH-NL it has been decided that HASAB would set up the second mobile peripheral VCT center with the strategic partner Geon Health Foundation through a joint initiative. HASAB signed an agreement with GEON to ensure VCT support to High risk and vulnerable people including family members of PLHIV in the periphery of catchments area of Geon Health foundation (GHF) in Khulna Division under the terms and conditioned mentioned in it. According to the agreement, HASAB is responsible for providing mobile VCT service through Geon Health Foundation (GHF) in every two months. The man and machineries including the logistic support and lab technician would be provided by HASAB, whereas GEON Health Foundation is responsible for organizing the whole process by providing the space and potential clients. HASAB agreed to build capacity of the counselor of GHF time to time based on needs.

#### **VCT Package Service provided**

Being a care and support project, providing VCT service has been an integral part of CCS project. The VCT package service includes pre-test counseling, blood testing & post-test counseling and general physical check up with medication & referral with inputs from a technical expert for VCT and Care & Support. During this quarter a total of 115 clients received VCT services.

## Counseling

Being a non-curable disease HIV/AIDS, the name itself has been a source of panic and terror



in the community. Ignorance has always played a key role in spreading this disease. Counseling is a very effective tool in raising awareness to intervene and prevent it. CCS has always given grave importance on proper counseling. In this quarter, 416 people received need based counseling support, which includes 334 general populace, 82 STI clients and 26 IDUs from the PLHA group. Amongst them 308 of the general populace received this counseling support from HASAB Health Center. To provide counseling support to the young segment of society a counseling and information booth has been established at Teacher student center (TSC),

University of Dhaka. Anyone can avail this information and support service on every 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Tuesday of the month from 2.00-4.30 pm.

## Opportunistic infection management and CD4 count

During this quarter 15 clients including 9 male and 6 female received Opportunistic Infection (OI) treatment from CCS project for 49 times. Also 2 person got their CD4 count in this quarter.

## Sexually transmitted Infection (STI) management

In this quarter a total number of 82 patients including 49 male and 33 female received different STI services and 11 people including 4 male and 7 female were followed up. 18 people of contact tracing of STI cases were provided support. A new addition to this quarter was the starting of condom distribution.

## General medical & surgical treatment for HIV infected & affected and others

15 PLHAs including 9 male and 6 female received treatment for general ailments. 6 family members of PLHAs including 3 male and 3 female were provided treatment for general ailments. 31 people of general populace which included 14 male and 17 female received medical treatment .143 PLHAs including 98 male and 45 female received nutritional support whereas, 5 people were referred to other hospitals such as CAAP, AITAM, ICDDR,B , IDH Dental collage for better treatment.

## HASAB Health Center and Laboratory services

Under this initiative HASAB is going to enrich medical care facilities and establish Laboratory services for the Infected, affected and general people as well. It is under process and very soon it will start to serve people and generate income simultaneously from general people. The people in need are referred to other centers for laboratory services in between period.

## Halfway home package Service for HIV infected and/or affected

Considering the socio-economic condition of the PLHA of our country, CCS project of HASAB is providing a need based support through halfway Home services during their treatment period, Family refusal and Capacity building those who are coming from the distant places to Dhaka. Out of this package services, CCS project has provided the following services to 142 clients (131infected and 11affected).The services ensured from the half way home are: Counseling, Routine physical check up, Management of general ailments, Maternal Service support for PLHAs, Balanced diet, Enter-educative session, Study Tour, Referral services (specialized treatment and diagnosis, education, vocational training)

## Management of Catastrophic AIDS cases:

According to the project proposal, there was an additional support of a catastrophic AIDS case by providing necessary aid. A financial and referral support has been provided to an acute appendicitis surgical intervention for a PLHA.

**Capacity Building is a continuous initiatives towards quality and competence**

In order to enhance the Capacity of the partner NGOs of the International/Local Donors including the member organizations of the National STI/AIDS Network-HASAB has been working as a resource NGO to provide technical assistance for strengthening their capacity. Being a specialized organization on HIV/AIDS and having more than a decade long experience in capacity building of local NGOs/ CBOS in different areas of Bangladesh on various issues related to HIV/AIDS, HASAB is considered as one of the best training institutions in Bangladesh.

**Training on 'STI HIV & AIDS, VCT' For Health professionals**

CCS conducted a 5 days training on **“STI, HIV & AIDS, VCT” For Health Professionals** During 26 -30 July 2009 at HASAB training room in collaboration with the CREATE project of HASAB. The objectives of the training were to understand epidemiological aspects of STI, HIV& AIDS and National responses and Updating knowledge and skills on STI and syndromic Management as per National STI Technical guideline. Updating Knowledge on HIV AIDS and human rights issues of people living with HIV along with Improving Knowledge and skills on Counseling and VCT and understand the process of clinical risk assessment.



The objective also includes the Clarification of the role of health service providers for HIV and STI prevention and control program. A Total of **21 participants** from Urban Primary Health Care project including BAPSA, UTPS, Nari Maitree, Shimantic World vision and CCS strategic partner organization like Mukto Akash Bangladesh, Ashar Alo Society, Confidential Approach for AIDS Prevention, Geon Health Foundation and & HASAB attended the training.

**Training on Voluntary Counseling & testing (VCT)**



One of CCS's recent successful venture was to organize a 5 days **“Training on Voluntary Counselling and Testing (VCT)”** for the health service provider includes Counsellors, Peer counsellors, Counsellor's supervisor like Clinic Manager/ Clinic Doctors working with selective Partner NGOs. The training took place from 30 August to 3<sup>rd</sup> September 2009 at HASAB training room with collaboration of CREATE project, which was a joint venture of CCS and CREATE. The training content highlighted on Basic HIV information, HIV testing facilities, basic skill of Counselling, pre-test & post-test Counselling and target intervention.

The Objectives of training were to focus on Capacity building or enhance the knowledge & skills of the Counselors on HIV/AIDS and Voluntary Counseling and Testing (VCT)”, along with Orienting the participants on the rising importance of Voluntary Counseling and Testing (VCT) and developing skilled health service providers to address the need. The training also aimed on the role of VCT to enhance the quality services for HIV infected and affected as well as preventive counseling for behavior change to prevent further transmission. A total 13 participants attended the training who were from CCS project, HASAB's Strategic partners and some other organization providing VCT services.

## Rehabilitation

### Family counseling of the infected

It has been mentioned that for HIV intervention and prevention counseling plays an integral part. CCS conducted 13 family counseling sessions including 7 male and 6 female. 1 memorable success resulted from family counseling *was prevention of breakup of 1 newly identified sero - discordant couple.*

### Children of PLHA's enrolled in education

According to the project proposal for the 2<sup>nd</sup> phase of CCS project there is a provision to provide educational support to the infected and affected children with the concept of Family focused need based intervention. Therefore, 2 children have been provided this support through enrolment in school- 1 at primary section and another in secondary section. It has been planned to provide educational support to other 10 disadvantaged infected and affected children soon.

## Participation in Overseas training and workshop

### Project Coordinator-CCS participated TB/HIV Writing Workshop at Entebbe, Uganda

Worldwide International HIV/AIDS Alliance UK took an initiative to work on the issue of HIV/AIDS and Tuberculosis (TB) as they are very closely related to each other few years back. HIV/AIDS and tuberculosis (TB) are commonly called the "deadly duo" and referred to as HIV/TB. HIV weakens the immune system and so people are more susceptible to TB. People with HIV/AIDS are up to 50 times more likely to develop active TB in a given year than HIV-negative people. As a part of this they took the time need initiative to integrate all the good practice existing in different organization in Different Country who are actually Alliance's linking organization or partner.



International HIV/AIDS Alliance, UK invited participants to attend the TB/HIV Writing workshop to develop TB/HIV Good practice guide. After subsequent evaluation Dr. Tahmina Sultana, Project Coordinator, HASAB was selected to attend the workshop as she is working closely to implement successfully the Care and Support activity for HIV Infected and Affected people in Bangladesh through CCS (Continuum of Care and Support to the HIV Infected and Affected) project as well as maintaining strong liaison, Network and coordination with GO and NGO to response TB/HIV work in Bangladesh. She participated the workshop at Entebbe, Uganda from 01 to 04 June.

### Muslim Positive Leadership Training attended by Lutfunnesa Mukta at Thailand

Ms. Lutfunnesa Mukta, Field organizer of CCS project attended the training on Muslim Positive Leadership Training organized by AMAN at Bangkok, Thailand from 10-14 May, 2009. According to objective of the training she got the Leadership knowledge with it's micro component and strategy that facilitating her working skill towards ultimate objects of the CCS project.

### 9<sup>th</sup> ICAAP Asia Pacific Conference, Bali, Indonesia

Ms Lutfunnesa Mukta, Field organizer, CCS, HASAB attended the 9<sup>th</sup> ICAAP Asia Pacific Conference from 06- 13 August 2009 according to the Invitation from UNAIDS. The 9<sup>th</sup> International Congress on AIDS in Asia and the Pacific was held in Bali. This congress aimed to

address, among others, issues of mobility, migration, as well as gender and people with disabilities in order to empower the people and strengthen networks to effectively respond to AIDS. The theme of the 9th ICAAP is "Empowering People, Strengthening Networks".



This conference enriched the HASAB staff with Knowledge on strengthening Referral and Network among PLHIV for development and Empowerment in terms of Economic and Social perspective as well as Knowledge on necessity for Govt. involvement in the country for Reintegration and proper care and Support to PLHIV followed by Main streaming. The conference also helped to get a better understanding on the way how to work for reducing Stigma and Discrimination through Advocacy at different level of society including working govt. and Community.

## Conclusion:

CCS first phase was based on the idea and understanding of HIV/AIDS. But the 2<sup>nd</sup> phase has been designed on the evidence based root level experience. Therefore this phase addresses deeper issues. There is a wide range of needs of the people living with HIV/AIDS which needs to be taken care of. Keeping that in mind, the work plan has been carefully sketched out to meet the needs of the PLHAs as much as possible. Although it is not possible to meet the needs of PLHAs through one care and support project. But CCS is still giving its best effort to provide adequate service.

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