

## FOREWORD

I am pleased to write a foreword for the e-Newsletter, second in series. During this period, the implementation research on “Overcoming Barriers to Scaling Skilled Birth Attendants Utilization in Improving Maternal, Newborn and Child health in Nepal” under WHO grant is on-going. The study on District Investment Case (DIC) in two districts with grant from UNICEF has been completed. We believe that it has contributed to technical capacity building for bottleneck analysis to design strategies to improve MNCH at district level. The project on Climate Changes and Health, focusing on ARI and Diarrhoea is continuing.

In regards to Public Health Lecture, a core activity of NPHF, which has been continuing for last three years on 30 June every year, Dr Mrigendra Raj Pandey was the key note speaker. He dwelt on the “Control of NCDs- a Scientific, Social and Spiritual Perspective” in a brilliant manner bringing back institutional memory of over half a century of his practice and putting a new dimension on the role of spirituality on NCD management. The lecture was well attended by public health experts, academia and medical students. Further the workshop on Pesticide Use in Agriculture, Health and Environment with support from DIALOGOS, opened a new area of activity on Occupational medicine for NPHF for finalizing a proposal.

Feedback from the readers will be much appreciated for improvement of the newsletter.

**Dr. Badri Raj Pande,**  
**Acting Chair**  
**Nepal Public Health Foundation**



## 1. Third Nepal Public Health Foundation Lecture on Control of Non-communicable Diseases in Nepal

Dr. Mrigendra Raj Pandey, a renowned cardiologist and the first Executive Chair of Nepal Health Research Council was invited to deliver the lecture on “Control of NCDs: a scientific, social and spiritual perspectives” on **30<sup>th</sup> June 2012** at Seminar Hall of MOHEGO building, TUTH.

The lecture program started with welcome address from Dr Badri Raj Pande, Acting Chair of Nepal Public Health Foundation. He said, “Third in series of Public Health Lecture, this is a core activity of NPHF to foster collective action of people around common agenda of public

health. Earlier, we were honoured to listen to inaugural lecture from an eminent person like Kul Chandra Gautam who has dedicated his life in public health and been a global leader in child survival. This lecture was followed by renowned public health scientist, Dr Mathura Shrestha. Today we are privileged to have Dr Mrigendra Raj Pandey, whose work in indoor pollution revolutionized thinking on NCD. He will dwell on scientific, social and spiritual perspectives in NCD control”.

Then after, Dr Tirtha Rana briefly introduced Dr M. R. Pandey highlighting his deeds and achievements. Mr. Kul Chandra Gautam, a former U.N. assistant secretary-general and a deputy executive director of the UNICEF in his remarks mentioned about the initiation of UN to tackle the global issue of NCDs. Similarly, Dr. Sharad Onta, secretary general of NPHF, said that NPHF is trying to raise the issue of NCD at national and regional level since its establishment and bringing together



From left to right: Dr Sharad Onta, Mr. Kul Chandra Gautam, Dr Badri raj Pande and Dr. Mrigendra Raj Pandey



From left to right: Dr. Gopal Prasad Acharya, Dr. Hemant Dixit and Dr Moin Shah



national and regional community to address the problem. The lecture was attended Dr. Nancy Gerrain, International Team Leader of Nepal Health Sector Support Program (NHSSP), Faculties of IOM, KMC, representatives from Mrigendra Samjhana Chikitsa Guthi and amongst others by the former deans of the Institute of Medicine- Dr Moin Shah, Dr Hemant Dixit and Dr Gopal Prasad Acharya despite June 30 falling on Saturday.



From left to right: Dr Tirtha Rana, Dr. Suniti Acharya, Dr Sharad Onta, Dr. Gopal Prasad Acharya, Dr Mrigendra raj Pandey, Dr Moin Shah, Dr. Hemant Dixit, Dr. Badri Raj Pande and Mr. Kul Chandra Gautam

The key note speaker, Dr. Mrigendra Raj Pandey started with the evolution of the NCDs in Nepal. He tracked back to 1940 when the first case of myocardial infarction in Nepal was documented when king Tribhuvan had a heart attack and an ECG machine was brought to Nepal from Kolkata.

Even though, the epidemiology of the four major NCDs such as CVD, Diabetes, Cancer, COPD has been discussed with its proportion of 33% among all hospital admission cases recorded in 2012 in Nepal, the problem remained unaddressed. Similarly, the four main Risk Factors such as Tobacco use, Harmful use of Alcohol, Physical inactivity, and unhealthy diet were discussed.

He further mentioned of the recent efforts for tackling NCDs at global level which have been started by building NCD alliance to combat the NCD epidemic by putting health at the centre of all policies. He felt that the issues and possibilities like starting implementation of NCD control program should be seriously addressed so as to meet the 2025 goals. In addition, refining and implementing critical document on the **NCD policy 2007 draft** has been lying idle which needs to be revitalized.

Dr Mrigendra Raj Pandey concluded his remarks with the note to bring into action as per the recommendations, political commitment though it is a challenge for MoHP and other stakeholders. We should focus on the national needs and ensure that the international commitment is focused to our real goals keeping on mind the spiritual perspective of every individual.”



## 2. Consultative Meeting on Intervention Package Development for Implementation on “Overcoming Barriers to Scaling Skilled Birth Attendants Utilization in Improving Maternal, Newborn and Child health in Nepal”

Nepal Public Health Foundation (NPHF) has been conducting a research project titled “*Understanding and overcoming barriers to scaling skilled birth attendant utilization in improving maternal newborn and child health in Nepal*” which is supported by the WHO/Geneva for the period of three years.

A meeting with various stakeholders and research team members was held on 20<sup>th</sup> June 2012, at Hotel Radisson Kathmandu. The purpose of the meeting was to finalize the already developed intervention package and its components to address the barriers to SBA services identified by baseline study through consultation with major stakeholders.

The meeting started with welcome remarks by **Dr. Badri Raj Pande**, Acting Chair, Nepal Public Health Foundation. He pointed out that there have been lots of investments by government and the external development partners in health sector particularly in MCH program. This implementation research would further add to benefit the poor, illiterate and disadvantaged women.

**Dr. Sharad Onta, Principal Investigator**, then gave details on the project, right from the call for research grant by WHO HQ, Geneva to the selection process and implementation of baseline survey. He then said that after the ethical approval, baseline survey was conducted after which a 16 months intervention package was developed.

**Dr. Senendra Raj Uprety, Director FHD, DoHS** on his opening remarks thanked Nepal Public Health Foundation on behalf of Family Health Division for inviting him in the consultative meeting. He expressed his commitment to support during the project period and utilize the evidence generated by this implementation research.

This was followed by the introduction of all the participants. Dr Gajananda P. Bhandari, Program Coordinator of the project highlighted on the findings of the baseline survey and informed on intervention and evaluation phase of the project which was followed by a lively discussion among the participants. There was suggestion to focus on the service provider and the user group with the practical intervention steps to be incorporated in the proposal.



### **3. Khotang Project**

At the request of Miles Levin Foundation for health and education a team of researcher from NPHF , Namita Bohara and Janak Thapa conducted a field study on the status of public health in the three VDCs Sundel, Rakha Dipsung and Rakha Bangdel of Khotang. The major findings of the study were amongst others the availability of hospital care limited to 30% of Khotang's population in general and in the study the state of unfilled vacant posts like MCHW, hiring of ANM on contract and absence of vaccinators, low retention and inaccessibility of human resources, inadequate infrastructure for basic health services, lack of medicine, cultural barriers regarding health services utilization in the community etc.

### **4. Proposal Development Workshop on Pesticide Use in Agriculture, Health and Environment**

In Nepal, agriculture is being commercialized day by day and levels of agro-chemical use are growing. This is beginning to raise concerns about the health and environment impacts of farm chemicals such as pesticides. A team from DIALOGOS, an NGO of Denmark had visited NPHF to discuss the possibility of joining hands for study on Pesticide Use in Agriculture, Health and Environment. NPHF welcomed the idea. In the process of preparation of a proposal, Nepal Public Health Foundation (NPHF) organized a workshop to address the problem on use of pesticide and its health effect with the support of DIALOGOS.

The Workshop started with the introduction of all the participants followed by a welcome note from Dr. Badri Raj Pande, Acting Chair of Nepal Public Health Foundation who highlighted on the importance of pesticides use in Agriculture and its adverse effect on health. Further he mentioned about the general people who are unaware about the side effects of consuming fruits and vegetables with high concentration of pesticides. He highlighted on the importance of this topic to be discussed and to address more relevantly for the better health of the future. He requested all participants to actively participate and discuss on the pertinent issues.

Then Mr. Dinesh Neupane, a MPH student at Southern Denmark University presented the overview of the project with its major objectives and the various component of the proposal that has been developed till date. He has been a key person in developing this proposal.



Dr. Gajananda P. Bhandari, Program Director at NPHF started a roundtable discussion as a moderator and encouraged all participants to express their views with the focus on the content of the draft proposal that was sent to all the participants via email earlier.

Finally, it was agreed to have another discussion on SWOT analysis and budget breakdown of the above mention project after incorporating all the inputs by the stakeholders presented at the workshop to finally start this project in Nepal.

## **5. Blood Donation Program**

Nepal Public Health Foundation organized a Blood Donation Program to address the scarcity of blood as reported by various newspapers in the recent days in coordination with Tushal Yuva Pariwar. The Program was a very successful with 100 participants interested to donate blood but only 62 participants were successful to donate.

NPHF in previous years also have been involved and concerned about the public health related issues. NPHF with the motive to address the health related problem of Urban Poor, had organized One day Health Screening Program in which the community leaders were invited for a general health screening who were screened by the Doctors in June 2011.

In addition, NPHF organized a general health screening at Shri Panchakanya Lower secondary School in Kathmandu -4 on 29<sup>th</sup> July 2011-, a government school where 250 students from different background come for education. Mostly the students were screened for dental health by dental team and students with other complaints were referred to pediatrician TU Teaching hospital and Kanti Children's Hospital. The students who needed further treatment were provided free service and care from the Hospital later.

## **6. Alliance for Human Resource for Health**

An Alliance for Human resource in Health (HRH) Nepal was established in September 2011 and represented by Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) and Non-state Stakeholders (NSOs) to start a loose network form under the initiative of Save the Children Nepal (SAVE). The stakeholder of this Alliance is primarily CSOs and NSAs and will also include professional organizations, Governmental agencies and external development partners.



The main objective of this alliance is to play a pivotal role to address crisis of HRH in the country by advocating, advising, engaging in policy dialogue in HRH areas with Government and lobby for managing HRH issues so that Government takes concrete actions to improve the HRH situation in the country.

The Alliance aims to widen its network countrywide covering all districts in a gradual manner. Dr. Tirtha Rana, Founder- and Board- member of the NPHF represents NPHF in this Alliance. Similarly Dr. Chhatra Amatya, a NPHF Board member has participated in skill building workshop on advocacy organized by the Alliance. The experts from the NPHF will contribute their time and expertise to address the issues related to HRH at national level by engaging in advocacy and policy dialogue with the government through Alliance for HRH Nepal.

## **7. Intra-household food security and its determinants in Nepal**

NPHF has a vision to ensure health as the right and responsibility of the Nepali people with its focus on major public health issues such as Health policy and Systems, Human Resource, Communicable Disease, Non-communicable disease, Malnutrition etc.

Nutrition is one of the leading agenda of NPHF. It is going to conduct a study on “Intra-household food security and its determinants in Nepal” in August with support from the Child Health Division, Department of Health Services and WHO Nepal. The study is designed with its objectives to explore the intra-household food security status in communities and its determinants in Nepal, specifically by exploring availability and accessibility of food in the households in the context of socio-economic, demographic and cultural determinants, the intra-household food distribution and consumption pattern in the family in terms of age, gender and family role/position and identifying the quality of food at household level focused to dietary diversity and other determinants limiting biological utilization (food behaviors and infection).



## 8. Participations

### a. SBA Intervention Package Development Workshop in WHO HQ Geneva

In preparation of the second phase of the Project, a proposal for intervention package needs to be submitted to get ethical clearance from the ethical review committee of WHO Geneva. To this effect, a workshop was organized by WHO HQ in which Dr Sharad Onta and Dr Gajananda P. Bhandari participated. The resource persons were Dr Matthews Mathai, Dr. Anayda Gerarda Portela, Dr Rajib Bahl, Dr Jose Carlos. They provided valuable inputs to bring the proposal in shape.



Dr Gajanada P. Bhandari and Dr Sharad Onta participating in the workshop at WHO HQ

As already stated NPHF has been conducting a research project titled *“Understanding and overcoming barriers to scaling skilled birth attendant utilization in improving maternal newborn and child health in Nepal”* which is supported by the WHO/Geneva for the period of three years. The first year of the project has been accomplished with the objective to gather baseline information. Further, the most important aim is the development of an intervention package, implementation of the intervention package and finally the Evaluation and scalability of package for the two remaining years.

### b. Proposal Writing Workshop on Global Nutrition CRSP Workspace

Mr Narayan Subedi, Mr Janak Thapa, Program managers and Ms. Nirmala Sharma, Program Officer at NPHF participated in the proposal writing workshop on Global Nutrition CRSP workspace on July 25-17, 2012 held at Institute of Medicine, Maharajjung. The major objective of the workshop was to make participants able to identify





research priorities and needs, develop quality research proposals, identify and articulate key research questions and propose rigorous methods to study them. It was also to identify and respond to funding sources and opportunities, have a clear understanding on how to respond to calls for research proposals (or research funding opportunities) and be able to evaluate and select appropriate funding opportunities.

**c. Coordination Meeting on sex selective abortion**

Ms Ami Maharjan, Admin & Finance Manager of NPHF participated in the Coordination meeting organized by Centre for Awareness Promotion (CAP) Nepal regarding female foeticide 19<sup>th</sup> June 2012 at Jayabageshowri.

**d. Seminar on diarrhoeal epidemic in Nepal**

A workshop was organized jointly by Epidemiology and Disease Control Division, Department of Health Services and Centre for Molecular Dynamics Nepal on 13 July 2012. The main speaker was Alejandro Cravito, Team Leader of UN Team to Haiti to investigate the 2010 diarrhoeal outbreak in the country. In this program Dr Badri Raj Pande, and Dr Gajananda P. Bhandari, NPHF participated.

**e. Library Maintenance Training**

Ms. Shila Bhandari, Administrative Assistant, participated on Library maintenance and documentation training organized by RECPHEC recently.



Media Watch



Valley water infected with coliform: A Bacteriological analysis conducted by the National Public Health Laboratory shows seven in 10 households in valley are receiving water that contains high levels of coliform bacteria which can cause vomiting and diarrhea. 6<sup>th</sup> August The Himalayan times



Dysentery Claims Eight in Gorkha; 50 fall ill: An outbreak of dysentery in the remotest and north most VDC of Gurkha claimed at least eight lives. The problem mentioned was unavailability of health care workers at local level. 3<sup>rd</sup> August The Himalayan Times

Taplejung without Caesarean service: Maternity caesarean section service has come to an end at Taplejung District Hospital for the past four month. The service has come to halt since mid July of 2012. 6<sup>th</sup> August Republica 2012

Dengue threat exists in Kathmandu Valley: Kathmandu District Public Health Office (DPHO) has identified traces of mosquitoes within Kathmandu Valley that carry the dreaded dengue ... 6<sup>th</sup> August



Lifeline soon for Pregnant Women: Family Health Division (FHD) under the MOHP is set to provide pregnant women with free blood during delivery in a move to reduce financial burden to their families. 27<sup>th</sup> July 2012

Rise in Road Accidents in Kathmandu: In comparison to 2067/068 in Kthmandu the accident have rise by 182 accidents in 2068/69 as per the report of Metropolitan Traffic Office : 24<sup>th</sup> July 2012, Annapurna Post

Health Inquiries? Dial 1115: The Government's Public Health hotline , put in Practice six months ago is seeing slow of phone calls from people needing information and doctor suggestions on Health ailments. 26<sup>th</sup> July 2012, The Kathmandu Post

