TB/HIV Policy & Communication Strategy Dissemination

July 1-10, 2009

Kabarole, Kabale, Mbarara & Masaka Centres

The Johns Hopkins University Bloomberg School of Public Health
Centre for Communication Programs
Health Communication Partnership (HCP)
Plot 77, Luthuli Avenue, Bugolobi, Kampala
P.O. Box 3495, Kampala - Uganda
Tel. +256 414 250 183, 256 414 237 222
1.0. BACKGROUND AND INTRODUCTION

The Ministry of Health launched the TB/HIV policy guidelines and communication strategy in May 2006. Since then implementation of TB/HIV collaborative activities has been augmented in several districts with support from Ministry of Health, districts and partners. Some the activities implemented include training of health workers, active identification of TB among patients and routine counseling and testing among notified TB clients. Despite this progress, dissemination of policy guidelines and communication strategy has been very slow with the majority of the districts and health centres reporting to have no copy of either the policy or communication strategy.

In a bid to accelerate implementation of a full package of TB/HIV collaborative activities; the National TB/ Leprosy Programme and AIDS Control Programme of the Ministry of Health with support from partners; WHO, Health Communication Partnership (HCP) and NUMAT agreed to print and disseminate the TB/HIV policy guidelines and communication strategy to the following 66 districts:-

WHO, HCP and NUMAT TB/HIV policy dissemination rollout plan

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GROUP A: Central Region</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Workshop 1: Wakiso, Luwero, Mityana, Mubende, Nakaseke &amp; Nakasongola</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Workshop 2: Ssembabule, Rakai, Masaka, Lyantonde &amp; Kalangala</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GROUP B: Western Region</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Workshop 3: Mbarara, Kiruhura, Bushenyi, Isingiro, Ibanda, Kabale, Ntungamo, Rukungiri, Kisoro &amp; Kanungu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Workshop 4 Kasese, Bundibugyo, Kabarole, Kyenjojo, Kibaale &amp; Kamwenge</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GROUP C: Eastern Region</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Workshop 5: Jinja, Palisa, Kamuli, Kaliro, Iganga, Busia, Bugiri, Tororo, Butaleja, Namutumba &amp; Bududa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Workshop 6: Sironko, Kapchorwa, Bukwa, Budaka, Kaberamaido, Katakwi &amp; Amuria</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GROUP D: Karamoja</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Workshop 7: Karamoja Sub-Region: Abim, Kaabong, Kotido, Moroto &amp; Nakapiripirit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Workshop 8: West Nile: Adjumani, Yumbe, Moyo, Koboko, Maracha-Terego, Arua &amp; Nebbi</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

WHO and NUMAT conducted policy and communication strategy dissemination in 39 of the above districts in the regions of; Acholi, Lango, Eastern Uganda, West Nile and Karamoja and left the remaining 3 regions of; central, south western and western to HCP. This report presents dissemination for the remaining 27 districts in central, western and south western regions of that was conducted with financial and technical assistance from HCP.

1.1. OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the dissemination exercise were:-
i. To disseminate the TB/HIV policy guidelines and communication strategy to districts and health sub districts.

ii. To discuss and generate consensus on the role of districts and health sub-districts in implementing TB/HIV Policy Guidelines and Communication Strategy.

iii. To agree on action points to speed-up implementation of TB/HIV collaborative activities at strict and sub-district levels.

2.0. HCP supported Workshop in central, western and south-western regions

Between July 01-09, 2009, HCP worked with NTLP, ACP and WHO to conduct four regional dissemination workshops in Kabarole, Kabale, Mbarara and Masaka. The workshops brought together 20 districts and 250 participants including; DHOs, DHEs, TB/HIV Focal persons, Secretary for Health, Medical Superintendent, In-charge of Health Centre IVs, District TB and Leprosy Supervisors (DTLS), among others. The following section of the report therefore gives an account for each of the workshops:

2.1. Workshop 1: FORT PORTAL

The workshop in Fort Portal was held at Toro Resort Hotel on July 01, 2009 and attracted 56 participants from the districts of; Kabarole, Kyenjojo, Bundibugyo, Kamwenge and Kasese. Participants included; DHOs, DHEs, TB/HIV Focal persons, Secretary for Health, Medical Superintendent, In-charge of Health Centre IVs, District TB and Leprosy Supervisors (DTLS) and politicians. The workshop was facilitated by Dr. Alexarious Ario from the Aids Control Program (ACP) Ministry of Health, Dr. Justus Asiimwe, from the National TB and Leprosy Program (NTLP) and Amos Zikusooka from Health Communication Partnership (HCP). They presented the TB/HIV policy guidelines, communication strategy and new TB/HIV materials/posters to district officials.
and health workers from health sub districts and in-charges of health centre IVs. In addition to disseminating the policy and communication strategy, each of the participating districts received 250 copies of the policy guidelines, 200 copies of the communication strategy as well as 250 posters on TB/HIV for wider dissemination to health centers.

Participants were also divided into groups according to their districts and they were told to develop action plans for implementing TB/HIV collaborative activities in the 2009 financial year. Districts came up with the following action points:-

**2.1.1. Action points for consideration in the district work plan 2009**

- Staff training in TB/HIV collaborative activities
- Lobby and involve political, religious and community leaders
- Increasing the number of health centers that provide TB/HIV services by procuring more microscopes
- Conduct community mobilization and sensitization activities using mass media and drama.
- Carry out joint counseling for both TB and HIV.
- Identify and support local persons at health unit level using PHC funds
- Adequate supply of drugs and test kits
- Introduction and updates of timely reports
- Implementation OF DOTS

A participant from Fort Portal sorts out the posters for his district. During the workshops, participants also received copies of the newly designed TB/HIV posters.

**2.2. Workshop 2: KABALE**

The workshop was held at White Horse Inn on July 3rd, 2009. There were 66 participants comprising of DHOs, DHEs, TB/HIV Focal persons, Secretary for Health, Medical Superintendent,
In-charge of Health Centre IVs, District TB and Leprosy Supervisors (DTLS) and politicians. Dr. Alexarious Ario from the Aids Control Program (ACP) Ministry of Health, Dr. Justus Asiimwe, from the National TB and Leprosy Program (NTLP) and Amos Zikusooka from Health Communication Partnership (HCP) facilitated the workshop. They presented the TB/HIV policy guidelines, communication strategy and new TB/HIV posters to district officials and health workers from health sub districts and in-charges of health centre IVs. In addition to disseminating the policy and communication strategy, each of the participating districts received 250 copies of the policy guidelines, 200 copies of the communication strategy as well as 250 posters on TB/HIV for wider dissemination to health centres.

Participants were also divided into groups according to their districts and they were told to develop action plans for implementing TB/HIV collaborative activities in the 2009 financial year. Districts came up with the following action points:

2.2.1. Action points for consideration in the district work plan 2009

- Improve supervision, monitoring and evaluation of TB/HIV collaborative activities.
- Train health workers at all levels on TB/HIV collaboration
- Develop and translate TB/HIV IEC materials in the local language
- Engage politicians in the HIV/TB collaboration activities
- Recruitment of lab personnel
- Sensitize communities about TB/HIV collaboration
- Integrate HIV/TB clinics
- Orient VHTs about HIV/TB collaboration
- Timely ordering of supplies
- Increase on the current 62% HCT to 80%
- Form district coordination committees
- Disseminate the policies on TB/HIV collaboration and communication strategy to health facilities and health workers.
- Integrate TB/HIV in work plans at all levels
2.3. Workshop 3: MBARARA

The workshop in Mbarara took place on 7th July, 2009 and was held at Pelikan Hotel and attracted 35 participants from the districts of; Ibanda, Isingiro, Bushenyi, Kiruhura and Mbarara. Participants included; DHOs, DHEs, TB/HIV Focal persons, Secretary for Health, Medical Superintendent, In-charge of Health Centre IVs, District TB and Leprosy Supervisors (DTLS) and politicians. Dr. Eric Ikoona from the Aids Control Program (ACP) Ministry of Health and Amos Zikusooka from Health Communication Partnership (HCP) facilitated the workshop. They presented the TB/HIV policy guidelines, communication strategy and new TB/HIV posters to district officials and health workers from health sub districts and in-charges of health centre IVs. In addition to disseminating the policy and communication strategy, each of the participating districts received 250 copies of the policy guidelines, 200 copies of the communication strategy as well as 250 posters on TB/HIV for wider dissemination to health centers.

Participants were also divided into groups according to their districts and they were told to develop action plans for implementing TB/HIV collaborative activities in the 2009 financial year. Districts came up with the following action points:-

2.3.1. Action points for consideration in the district work plan 2009:-

- Mobilization and referral of TB patients and suspects
- Conduct periodic meetings on HIV/TB collaboration
- Plan for HIV/TB collaboration activities at all levels
- Strengthening HIV/TB activities at all district levels
- Recruit laboratory trained personnel and retain them
- Bring on board all other stake holders e.g. CBOs, NGOs
- Encourage the districts to locally fund HIV/TB activities
- Work out an integrated work plan of HIV/TB activities
- Close support supervision of health workers
- Joint planning for HIV/TB activities
- Increasing number of HIV/TB diagnostic centres
- Consistency in sending and submitting supply orders
- Train health workers at all levels on TB/HIV collaboration
- Advocate for opening up more ART clinics

2.4. Workshop 4: MASAKA

The workshop in Masaka was held at Brovad Hotel on 8th of July, 2009. A total of 69 participants from the districts of; Kalangala, Lyantonde, Rakai, Masaka and Ssembabule attended this meeting. These included; - DHOs, DHEs, TB/HIV Focal persons, Secretary for Health, Medical Superintendent, In-charge of Health Centre IVs, District TB and Leprosy Supervisors (DTLS) and politicians. Dr. Eric Ikoona from the Aids Control Program (ACP) Ministry of Health and Amos Zikusooka from Health Communication Partnership (HCP) facilitated the workshop. They presented the TB/HIV policy guidelines, communication strategy and new TB/HIV posters to district officials and health workers from health sub districts and in-charges of health centre IVs. In addition to disseminating the policy and communication strategy, each of the participating districts received 250 copies of the policy guidelines, 200 copies of the communication strategy as well as 250 posters on TB/HIV for wider dissemination to health centers.
officials and health workers from health sub districts and in-charges of health centre IVs. In addition to disseminating the policy and communication strategy, each of the participating districts received 250 copies of the policy guidelines, 200 copies of the communication strategy as well as 250 posters on TB/HIV for wider dissemination to health centres.

Participants were also divided into groups according to their districts and they were told to develop action plans for implementing TB/HIV collaborative activities in the 2009 financial year. Districts came up with the following action points:-

### 2.4.1. Action points for consideration in the district work plan 2009:-

- Plan for TB/HIV collaboration activities and communication strategy
- Train CB-DOTS and community volunteers
- Install solar power at every health unit
- Recruit laboratory personnel and facilitate their stay on the island
- Avail enough testing kits at the health units
- Lobby M.O.H for more PHC funding
- Increase provision of IEC materials
- Community education on HIB/TB co-existence
- Increase follow up of HIV/TB cases
- Sensitization of ART team about TB/HIV collaboration activities
- Priotize TB/HIV collaboration activities and make a work plan for them
- Lobby for funds from the local government through secretary for health to procure motorcycles that will used in sensitization activities
- Ensure political leaders lobby funds to booster HIV/TB activities

### LESSONS LEARNT AND OBSERVATIONS

TB/HIV policy and communication strategy exercise was very successful. The objectives of the dissemination were met. In addition to disseminating the policy and communication strategy, districts were able to discuss the implementation of TB/HIV collaborative activities as well as develop action plans for implementing these activities in their respective districts. The following were the key lessons learnt:

- Most districts are aware of the need for collaboration and joint planning between TB and HIV programs but have not yet started to do so.

- Majority of districts are already implementing several TB/HIV collaborative activities such as; sensitization, joint planning, training of health workers and setting up diagnostic centres for TB screening.

- Most districts in the western and south western regions do not have partners supporting TB/HIV activities. They are therefore waiting for new partners to help them speed up implementation of activities.
• New policies should be disseminated as soon as they have been developed to enable districts start on implementation as soon as possible. The majority of districts complained that the ministry has taken so long to disseminate the TB/HIV policy.

• All districts are doing something about TB/HIV collaboration. They only need to improve in the areas of TB case detection, HCT, sensitization and community education, involvement of political leaders and more joint planning and implementation of activities.

• Shortage of drugs and HIV testing kits is common in all the regions.

• Although district officials have enough knowledge on TB/HIV, there is limited knowledge of TB/HIV collaboration among health workers and the community.

• All regions have a shortage of IEC materials on TB and TB/HIV.

RECOMMENDATIONS AND WAYFORWARD

• NTLP and ACP should follow-up with the districts on proposed action plans to ensure that they are implemented.

• NTLP and ACP should lobby for more partners to support TB/HIV activities in districts.

• HCP could not disseminate the TB/HIV policy guidelines and communication strategy to the 6 remaining districts of; Wakiso, Luwero, Mityana, Mubende, Nakaseke & Nakasongola. There is need to disseminate the policy to these districts too so that the whole country is covered.

• NTLP, ACP and partners should develop and disseminate more TB/HIV IEC materials. Districts reported a glaring lack of IEC materials to support community mobilization and sensitization.