

Call for integrated efforts to control HIV/Aids

By Our Reporter

ISLAMABAD, Feb 4: Planning Commission Deputy Chairman Dr Ashfaq Ahmad has stressed the need for integrated efforts from all segments of the society to control HIV/Aids.

In a meeting with Special Adviser to UN Secretary-General on HIV/Aids in Asia Dr Nafis Sadik here on Thursday, he said Pakistan was taking all steps with the assistance of donors to implement the enhanced HIV/Aids control programme at the grassroots level.

Dr Sadik, who is also former executive director of the UN Population Fund (UNFPA), called for integrated efforts by the ministries of health and education in collaboration of

provincial health departments for HIV/Aids advocacy and information. She said the services should also be enhanced at district level all over the country.

Dr Sadik, also a member of the board of commissioners of the International Initiative for Impact Evaluation (3ie) regretted that Pakistan had not yet contributed to the organisation which had been created to enhance development effectiveness through promotion of evidence-based policy-making.

Dr Ashfaq informed the UN envoy that the National Aids Control Programme (NACP) launched in 1986 focused on the development of a laboratory-based HIV sentinel sur-

veillance system, adding later an enhanced HIV/Aids control programme was launched with the support of the World Bank.

The project focused on provision of HIV prevention services to high risk groups, advocacy and behaviour change communication campaign for HIV prevention among general public, services to prevent HIV transmission through blood and capacity building programme management and developing HIV surveillance system.

According to a survey, only five per cent of the infected people got registered out of 100,000 cases. The deputy chairman emphasised that the epidemic could be control-

led by educating women folk because women vulnerability to HIV/Aids was higher than men. Proper awareness and advocacy could help reduce maternal mortality rate and infant mortality rate, he added.

Dr Ashfaq said 100,000 lady health workers working in 14,000 rural health centres should be trained and utilised for the HIV/Aids control programme.

A Reporter adds: The World Bank has reiterated its commitment to continue its support for the HIV/Aids control programme in Pakistan. In a meeting held here Wednesday, Dr Kees Kostermans,

Lead public health specialist, World Bank, reassured the health ministry that the bank's funding for the entire programme, including all provinces for the next five years, would be finalised by its 'Preparatory Mission'. The mission would visit Pakistan next month. The meeting was held to discuss the roadmap for the second five-year phase (2010-2014) of the ongoing programme.

Dr Hassan Abbas Zahoor, national manager of the programme, briefed the meeting about the accomplishments made and challenges faced during the first phase of the project's implementation that concluded on December 31, 2009.

Dr Kees Kostermans, Lead Public Health Specialist, World Bank, Washington DC, expressed these views during his meeting with the Secretary Health Khushood Akhtar Lashari here Thursday.

The meeting was held to discuss the roadmap for the second five-year phase 2010-2014 of the on-going HIV/Aids Control Programme in Pakistan.

The World Bank reassured the Ministry of Health that the WB funding for the entire Programme including all the provinces for the next five years would be finalized by its Preparatory Mission, which would visit Pakistan next month. The mission lauded the achievements made to control the spread of HIV/Aids in Pakistan.

They particularly noted the outstanding performance of the National Aids Control Programme in mobilising civil society including marginalised and high-risk groups — APP

DAWN Islamabad, SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 6, 2010

WB reiterates commitment to support HIV/Aids programme

The World Bank has reiterated its commitment to continue to support the HIV/Aids Control Programme in Pakistan. Dr Kees Kostermans, Lead Public Health Specialist, World Bank, Washington DC, expressed these views during his recent meeting with the Federal Health Secretary Khushood Lashari in Islamabad.

The meeting discussed the road map for the second five-year phase (2010-2014) of the ongoing HIV/Aids Control Programme in Pakistan. Dr Hassan Abbas Zahoor, National

Manager HIV/Aids Control programme briefed the meeting about the accomplishments made and challenges faced during the first phase of the project implementation that concluded on December 31, 2009. He stated that the government's commitment to the programme is reflected by the approval of the PC-1s for the next phase (2010-14) by ECNEC in August 2009. The next five-year phase of implementation envisages a scaled-up response with enhanced geographical coverage.

Integrated efforts needed against HIV/Aids

OUR STAFF REPORTER

ISLAMABAD - Only 5 percent of the HIV and Aids infected people got registered out of 100,000 cases and the epidemic can only be controlled by educating women folk specially, Deputy Chairman Planning Commission, Dr. Ishaq Ahmad said while quoting a survey.

He said this in a meeting with the United Nations Secretary General's Special Envoy for Population and the HIV/Aids, Dr. Nafees Sadik, here on Thursday.

"Women vulnerability to the HIV/Aids is higher than men due to multiple factors. Proper awareness and advocacy can help reduce the maternal mortality rate and infant mor-

tal rate in Pakistan," he fur-

ther maintained. He said the Government is taking all steps with help of the donor agencies to implement the Enhanced HIV/Aids Control Programme at the grass root level.

He highlighted the salient features of the Programme and said that all the quarters of the society should make integrated efforts to get the required results of the Programme, added the Deputy Chairman.

Dr. Nafees said that Pakistan is the member of 31's (Tri-Impact Evaluation) organization. All the members of this organization are meant to pay money for the betterment of the developing countries, but Pakistan and Rwanda being developing countries are not paying anything. The idea be-

hind it is to make this programme specific for the help of developing countries.

While discussing the population programme in Pakistan, Dr. Nafees appreciated the work done by the Ministries of Health and Population. She endorsed the view of Deputy Chairman that the integrated efforts are needed by both the ministries of health and education in collaboration of provincial health departments for spreading awareness about the HIV/Aids. The services should also be enhanced to all the districts.

Pakistan has highest TFR (Total Fertility Rate) in South Asia. It directly affects the economy and is one of the major causes of unemployment, law and order situation and poverty in the country.

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World Bank to support Aids programme

Islamabad

The World Bank (WB) has reiterated its commitment to continue its support to National HIV/Aids Control Programme in Pakistan. The World Bank's approval process is expected to be completed within the current financial year to ensure continuity in programme implementation.

Dr Kees Kostermans, Lead Public Health Specialist, World Bank, Washington DC, expressed these views during his meeting with the Secretary Health Khushood Akhtar Lashari here Thursday.

The meeting was held to discuss the roadmap for the second five-year phase 2010-2014 of the on-going HIV/Aids Control Programme in Pakistan.

The World Bank reassured the Ministry of Health that the WB funding for the entire Programme including all the provinces for the next five years would be finalized by its Preparatory Mission, which would visit Pakistan next month. The mission lauded the achievements made to control the spread of HIV/Aids in Pakistan.

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