

# SIAPS BANGLADESH

## Quarterly Newsletter

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### E-TB MANAGER EXPANDED



*USAID handing over computers to MOHFW.*

Systems for Improved Access to Pharmaceuticals and Services (SIAPS), funded by the US Agency for International Development (USAID), has now rolled out the e-TB Manager—its Web-based tool to track data on tuberculosis (TB) patients—to more than 20 sites across the country. The system, initially piloted in 6 sites, was first launched in November 2010.

Greg Adams, Office Director of USAID's Health Program in Bangladesh, noted that the comprehensive tool would help increase the case detection rate to better fight the disease. "This system will ensure the availability of quality data in time and help managers to make evidence-based decisions," Adams said at an orientation workshop held on September 30, 2012, at Lakeshore Hotel, Dhaka.

Mohammad Humayun Kabir, Senior Secretary of the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MOHFW), who joined the workshop as the guest of honor, expressed his hope that program officials at the upazila level would ensure the quality of data used in the system so that informed, appropriate decisions could be taken at the policy level. At the orientation workshop, Mr. Adams handed over 20 new-model



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desktop computers with uninterrupted power supply and Internet capabilities to Secretary Kabir to make the system functional at the new sites. The latest World Health Organization (WHO) estimates suggest that TB and related diseases kill at least 64,000 people every year in Bangladesh, and that the country has more than 300,000 new TB cases per year. However, lack of timely reporting and validation of TB data contribute to the development of drug-resistant TB, including multidrug-resistant TB and extensively drug-resistant TB, which have created a significant health problem in Bangladesh.

The e-TB Manager provides key information consolidated online for rapid decision making and epidemiological surveillance where interventions are needed. The National TB Control Program has plans to introduce the system at 80 new sites from October 2012 to September 2013, with country-wide implementation expected to be completed by December 2014.

### WORKSHOP ON DGHS PROCUREMENT PLAN

A workshop was held on September 25, 2012, at the MIS auditorium at the Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS) in Mohakhali, Dhaka, on the DGHS's consolidation of the procurement plan (CPP). The workshop was organized by the Central Medical Stores Depot (CMSD) and facilitated by SIAPS. Brig. Gen. Syed Iftekhar Uddin, Director of CMSD, welcomed the participants and outlined the objectives of the workshop —

- Provide a clear understanding of expenditures under reimbursable project aid (RPA) and Government of Bangladesh funds in fiscal year 2011–2012 by individual line directors (LDs) through CMSD
- Provide a clear perception of funds required under “carried over procurement” by individual LDs
- Have the LDs finalize and endorse items under the new procurement plan under the CPP of 2012–2013 through RPA with on-the-spot addition or deletion of items
- Distribute plan and report on current stock status of items at the CMSD store

Next, opening remarks were given by Prof. Dr. A. F. M. Saiful Islam. Dr. S. M. A. Zahid, Assistant Director

(Procurement) of CMSD, then introduced the workshop methodology and challenges, such as the effects of frequent addition or deletion of items and identification of focal persons for different LDs. Participants split into six groups and worked on reconciliation/consolidation of each procurement plan and provided feedback to designated CMSD officials on 15 procurement plans under DGHS.

In his concluding remarks, Prof. Dr. Abul Kalam Azad, Additional Director General (Planning) of DGHS, requested that all LDs and their office representatives send the final version of their procurement plans with revisions (if any) by the next day so that CMSD could consolidate the final plan and send it to MOHFW for approval and secure “No Objection” from the World Bank.

### TRAINING OF TRAINERS ON THE UIMS

The Upazila Inventory Management System (UIMS) is a desktop-based tool used in 173 of 486 upazilas for day-to-day logistics management activities. At the end of 2009, the Strengthening Pharmaceutical Systems (SPS) Program took over UIMS from the USAID | DELIVER Project for maintenance and country-wide rollout of the system. Based on the lessons learned and users' demands, SPS upgraded the software, added some new features, and renamed it UIMS V2.

SIAPS (the follow-on program to SPS) began providing technical support to the Directorate General of Family Planning (DGFP) in backing up the database, managing user access, and fixing software defects. Based on the successful implementation of the system, MOHFW has asked SIAPS to rollout the system in the remaining 313 upazilas by December 2012.

SIAPS initially carried out an options analysis to identify a sustainable mechanism for rollout. Then, the idea of training of trainers (TOT) came up, and the SIAPS team established criteria to select the 20 most proficient UIMS users from 173 upazilas and 21 regional warehouses. SIAPS then facilitated the formation of five regional teams (each consisting of one technical advisor from SIAPS and three DGFP staff), which were approved by the DGFP.

A five-day TOT was organized by the DGFP and facilitated by SIAPS on September 1–5, 2012, at the Rigs Inn Hotel, Gulshan, Dhaka. Kafil Uddin, Director (Logistics & Supply), DGFP, was present at the inaugural session, and Delwar Hossain, Divisional Director of Dhaka, presided at the closing ceremony. During the TOT, the group of master trainers developed an action plan to rollout the UIMS V2 software to the rest of the upazilas. This TOT team will be responsible for conducting training and maintenance of the software.

### TRAINING IN PROCUREMENT BEGUN

With technical assistance from SIAPS, MOHFW will organize a comprehensive five-day training program for the Ministry and its key directorate staff to build capacity in procurement and supply chain management. In consultation with SIAPS, the Engineering Staff College, Bangladesh (ESCB), has prepared a course module and schedule and will also provide comprehensive logistics support for trainees; a memorandum of understanding

### DGFP SUPPLY MANUAL REVISED

The DGFP is a key directorate of MOHFW, responsible for planning and execution of all family planning and reproductive health programs in Bangladesh. The DGFP has been using its own supply infrastructure for storage and distribution of commodities through the Central Warehouse, 19 regional warehouses, and 485 upazila family planning drug stores.

The current supply manual (last revised in 2006) is a reference and guidebook for procurement, storage, and supply management for all staff of the Family Planning Program. Demand for revision of the manual has come from users at all levels, in response to numerous changes in DGFP supply operations. For example, DGFP now allows split deliveries and stock redistribution within upazilas and has begun using UIMS. Redefined roles of key supply personnel, the Supply Chain Information Portal (SCIP), and condemnation of unusable items have also been introduced since the last edition of the supply manual. The information in new government-issued circulars must also be incorporated into the updated version to reflect effective, current practices and policy and obsolete issues and practices must be deleted. SIAPS raised the need for revision at a quarterly Logistics Coordination Forum (LCF), and DGFP agreed to revise the manual without delay.

To address revision planning, DGFP constituted a five-member steering committee, with Md. Syful Islam, Additional Director, the Chief of the Central Warehouse, as convener; two representatives from SIAPS Bangladesh; one Logistics & Supply Unit desk officer; and one regional warehouse representative. The committee met January 18, 2012, to finalize strategies and share

chapter reviews by each member. The committee members met for a second time on February 7, 2012, to finalize the list of those participating in the revision process, ensuring representation of a cross-section of family planning service-delivery staff. The DGFP developed the participant list, workshop program, and other logistics with support from SIAPS.

Next, SIAPS facilitated a two-day consultative workshop at the BRAC Centre for Development and Management in Savar in March 2012. The steering committee met again in July 2012 at the Finalization Workshop on Supply Manual Revision, held at Manikgang Proshiks HRDC, with all consultative workshop participants. The Director General, DGFP, A. K. M. Amir Hossin; Md. Kafil Uddin, Director (Logistics & Supply); and Jahir Uddin Babor, Director (MIS), joined the workshop and provided valuable input to improve the manual.



*Group photo of the consultative workshop on revision of the supply manual.*



was recently signed between SIAPS and ESCB. The five-day program will provide basic training in various categories of procuring entities in the Health, Population, and Nutrition Sector Development Program (HPNSDP) of MOHFW and teach staff to perform and supervise procurement functions per the Public Procurement Act of 2006 and Public Procurement Rules of 2008. As of this writing, one batch of an expected nine batches of students has finished the training.

## HEALTH SECTOR PROCUREMENT SYSTEM GOES ONLINE

In a major development in the government procurement process, MOHFW has launched an online procurement system, the Supply Chain Information Portal (SCIP), accessible via the Ministry's website. The new online procurement system will end the cumbersome manual procurement system in the health sector and help to ensure transparency and accountability in public procurement, a step toward establishing good governance.

A total of 32 LDs from the Ministry and other directorates and departments have submitted their procurement plans through SCIP, which supports procurement planning for the 2012–13 and 2013–14 fiscal years. The LDs submitted their procurement plans at a workshop held at the MIS conference room at the DGHS at Mohakhali, Dhaka, in two separate sessions in July 2012. Senior Secretary, MOHFW, Md. Humayun Kabir, joined the workshop as guest of honor. Dr. Zubayer Hussain, SIAPS Country Director, and Aktari Mamtaz, Additional Secretary (Development & Medical Education), MOHFW, were also present.

"We are entering into the e-procurement system of the Ministry after submission of the procurement plan by line directors. It's a major advancement toward materializing the government's efforts for strengthening its procurement system, especially in the health sector," said Dr. Zubayer. Talking to BSS (the national news agency of Bangladesh) on the sidelines at the workshop, Dr. Zubayer said that introduction of the e-procurement system would immensely help ensure transparency and accountability, deterring corrupt practices in public procurement.

On May 9, 2012, the SCIP had been presented and demonstrated in a session chaired by Md. Humayun Kabir, Honorable Senior Secretary, MOHFW. At that time, the Health Minister and other stakeholders were briefed about the portal, the system was validated, and

next steps and actions regarding the portal (user acceptance testing session, buy-in workshop, hands-on training on the system, etc.) were decided.

Local IT firm SoftWorks developed the portal under the SIAPS Program with financial support from USAID.

## ASSESSING DRUG REGULATORY AND PHARMACOVIGILANCE SYSTEMS IN BANGLADESH

SIAPS has been working with the Directorate General of Drug Administration (DGDA) to strengthen its medicines registration and licensing systems. In collaboration with the US Food and Drug Administration and the University of Washington, SIAPS conducted two assessments on pharmacovigilance systems and the national medicines regulatory system in Bangladesh. To support the process, SIAPS facilitated a two-hour presentation on June 12, 2012, at Ikebana Hall, Lakeshore Hotel. The presentation was made by Andy Stergachis, PhD, Professor of Epidemiology and Global Health/Adjunct Professor of Pharmacy and Director, Global Medicines Program, School of Public Health, University of Washington. The presentation included global and Bangladesh perspectives on pharmacovigilance and regulatory systems, with details and examples of the assessment methodologies and expected assessment outcomes. It was followed by a two-day training of data collectors, which was conducted jointly by SIAPS and DGDA. The session was attended by the Senior Secretary Kabir and the Director General of DGDA, Maj. Gen. Md. Abul Kalam Azad.

The following outcomes are expected through these assessments—

- Greater awareness of the importance of strengthening regulatory systems
- Greater understanding of the current status of pharmacovigilance and post-market surveillance system components and their relationship to regulatory systems
- Identification of strategies for strengthening these systems
- Establishment of a baseline of regulatory and pharmacovigilance systems performance
- Catalyzing evidence-based action plans for the DGDA and other stakeholders

## DRAFT STRATEGIC PLAN FOR MOHFW TO BE FINALIZED SOON

The draft strategic plan to create an efficient and effective procurement management and monitoring system for MOHFW and its directorates will be finalized soon. "Although we are a bit late in finalizing this document, we will definitely be able to finalize it before the end of July this year [2012]," said Additional Secretary Mamtaz.

Presiding over the final workshop to draft the strategic plan at the BIAM Centre on May 27 and 28, 2012, Secretary Mamtaz gave a brief background on the development of this document as a major tool to strengthen the procurement and supply chain management system. USAID is supporting MOHFW in strengthening these areas. Technical assistance is provided to the Ministry through the SIAPS Program.

MOHFW recognizes the need for greater efficiency and effectiveness in procurement and supply chain management, as highlighted in a report by the HPNSDP. Speaking at the workshop as the chief guest, Senior Secretary Kabir said that preparing a good strategic plan was obviously a challenge but that the bigger challenge was to implement it in time.

Dr. Zubayer Hussain gave a welcome address to the workshop, and Raj Gonsalkorale, Senior International Procurement Consultant for SIAPS, who provided technical assistance for the preparation of the draft strategic plan, gave a brief description of its progress.

The plan will have five key components: organization for procurement management at MOHFW, procurement process improvement, quantification and supply planning, performance monitoring and management, and equipment installation and maintenance.

Each component will have defined strategic objectives, strategies, expected outcomes, and main interventions. These will be detailed as activities and subactivities, with time frames for completion, person/s or institutions responsible for coordinating each activity, a budget where applicable, and outcome measures that will determine the achievement of an outcome.

## BRAINSTORMING WORKSHOP FOR TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE TO THE DGDA

A half-day brainstorming workshop on developing short- and long-term action plans for technical assistance to the DGDA was held on May 12, 2012, at the SIAPS conference room, Dhaka. The session was chaired by Director General, Maj. Gen. Md. Abul Kalam Azad and moderated by Dr. Zubayer Hussain. The session was facilitated by SIAPS and organized by DGDA.

Dr. Zubayer welcomed the participants and clarified the objectives of the technical session. Then Mr. A. A. Salim Barami, Deputy Director, DGDA, gave an elaborate presentation on the DGDA's roles and structure, including major functions, existing committees, legislation, the drug testing laboratory, available checklists, the contents of the DGDA portal, and the reporting system.

Afterward, Maj. Gen. Azad stressed the need to introduce the DGDA portal to effectively and efficiently manage the processes under DGDA. He encouraged his colleagues to actively participate in the session and to develop an action plan (for both the short and long term) to be carried out with technical assistance from the SIAPS Program.

## INTRODUCTORY MEETING WITH OFFICIALS OF THE DGDA

A meeting was held to introduce the SIAPS team to the officials of DGDA on April 18, 2012, at the DGDA conference room. The meeting was chaired by Maj. Gen. Md. Abul Kalam Azad, Director General of DGDA.

The objectives of the meeting were to—

- Introduce Management Sciences for Health and the SIAPS Program supported by USAID
- Inform and validate the work plan related to the DGDA under SIAPS
- Share an understanding of the current status of the DGDA
- Agree on the next steps of joint collaboration

At the beginning of the meeting, Dr. Zubayer Hussain made a short presentation on the mandate of SIAPS to strengthen management and technical capacity, as well as the DGDA drug registration and licensing system. The DGDA team gave a brief on their ongoing programs and activities and earnestly requested specific technical assistance in various areas, mainly drug registration, licensing, and the pharmacovigilance system.

To coordinate the activities undertaken by SIAPS, during the meeting, the Director General selected three focal persons, namely, Md. Ruhul Amin, Assistant Director; Md. Akib Hossain, Superintendent; and Md. Shahidul Islam Khan, Education Team Leader, USAID.

## WORKSHOP ON FRAMEWORK AGREEMENT AND TWO-YEAR PROCUREMENT CYCLE

This workshop was the result of discussions between SIAPS and MOHFW, DGFP, DGHS/CMSD, and other procuring entities under MOHFW; the World Bank; USAID; and partners in the HPNSDP and LCF about how to save time, energy, and money in procurement for MOHFW and its departments. All the entities, specifically DGFP and DGHS/CMSD, procure many items and various kinds of commodities with a huge amount of Government of Bangladesh and RPA funding. The workshop was held on March 6–8, 2012, at Koitta, Manikganj, and was facilitated by SIAPS in collaboration with the World Bank. The objectives of the workshop were to—

- Build consensus on the use of a framework agreement, dispel misconceptions about what a framework agreement is, and clarify the difference between a multiyear contract and a call-off contract
- Reach a consensus on how to start piloting a framework agreement/framework contract by selecting a few items from Logistics & Supply/ DGFP and CMSD/DGHS
- Encourage the DGFP and DGHS to adopt a two-year cycle for international competitive bidding (ICB) procurement to reduce administrative time and the workload of desk officers

Dr. Zubayer Hussain gave the welcome address. The first day was chaired by Additional Secretary Mamtaz.

Her opening remarks emphasized that MOHFW needs interventions in the procurement process to make it efficient and that the use of the framework agreement and two-year ICB cycle would help improve the procurement process.

The UK Department for International Development (DFID) Technical Advisor to MOHFW, Dr. Jason Lane, thanked the organizers and SIAPS for taking the necessary steps to strengthen procurement management. He pledged his and DFID's support for any initiative to build the capacity of MOHFW. Mr. Shahidul Islam of USAID acknowledged the work being done by SIAPS to support MOHFW and promised the USAID Mission's continued assistance. Dr. Sameh El-Saharty of the World Bank promised his organization's continued collaboration with partners to assist the Ministry's efforts to strengthen procurement management.

Senior Secretary Kabir suggested that a few commodities from DGFP and DGHS/CMSD packages should be piloted for the fiscal year 2012–13 and that the process should begin right away.

## DGFP FORECASTING WORKING GROUP MEETING

The Forecasting Working Group (FWG), established in October 2010 to advocate at the highest levels for guaranteed funding, held its first meeting on March 18, 2012, at the DGFP-IEM conference room, facilitated by SIAPS. The program was chaired by M. M. Neazuddin, Director General, DGFP.

Ms. Sabina Parveen, Additional Director (Foreign Procurement), DGFP, delivered the welcome address and objectives of the meeting. She also gave a brief on the status of the quantification exercise facilitated by SIAPS and introduced the consultants working on the quantification. Director Neazuddin emphasized the need for the yearly quantification exercise; he also reviewed the consultants' presentation and expressed concern about the findings on the consumption of contraceptives. At the end of the meeting, Kafil Uddin, Director (Logistics & Supply), DGFP, expressed his satisfaction with the discussion between the FWG and the consultants and made some key decisions about the quantification exercise.

## CASE STUDY: RELIEVING OVERSTOCK OF ORAL CONTRACEPTIVES

As a part of routine monitoring of the SCIP, the Chittagong Regional Warehouse (CRW) logistics team found that most regional warehouses (RWHs) had a minimum stock of oral contraceptives, whereas two RWHs (Rangamati and Bandarban districts) had more than 40 months' worth of stock. In response, the supply officer and the storekeeper of the CRW decided to withdraw oral contraceptives from those two RWHs. (The overstock occurred because of receipt of a large supply of oral contraceptives from the Central Warehouse, which was kept as buffer stock). Meanwhile, the SIAPS logistics team actively worked with DGFP officials to take the necessary actions to withdraw the overstock of oral contraceptives from those RWHs.

Per its scheduled supply date, the CRW delivery vehicle supplied FP/RH commodities on July 7, 2012, to Rangamati and Bandarban districts and, at the same time, withdrew 300 cartons (432,000 cycles) of oral contraceptives (150 cartons from each district). The Central Warehouse vehicle received 150 cartons (216,000 cycles) of oral contraceptives on July 16, 2012, from Bandarban RWH and 150 cartons (216,000 cycles) on July 17, 2012, from Rangamati RWH and supplied to other warehouses.

This initiative for the withdrawal was taken locally, with immediate action facilitated by the SCIP's interactive dashboard that provided data on stock status. The system is being widely used by DGFP officials to make effective decisions in logistics as well as procurement.

## ASSESSMENTS CONDUCTED BY SIAPS

- TB pharmaceutical management by Vimal Dias and John Marmion: June-July 2012
- Warehouse and transportation assessment of DGFP and the National TB Program by Maurice Juma: July-August 2012
- Drug regulatory system by the SIAPS headquarters team: June-November 2012
- Pharmacovigilance system by the University of Washington and the SIAPS headquarters team: June-November 2012
- Five-year quantification exercise for reproductive health and TB drugs by A. Oumer, Dr. Giashuddin, and G. Kibria: March-April 2012
- Health technology by the University of Washington: April 2012

## WE WOULD BE HAPPY TO HEAR FROM YOU

Please send comments to Mohammad Golam Kibria at [mkibria@msh.org](mailto:mkibria@msh.org).

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For more information, please visit  
DGFP Supply Chain Information Portal  
<http://www.dgfplmis.org/>

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