

SIAPS BANGLADESH

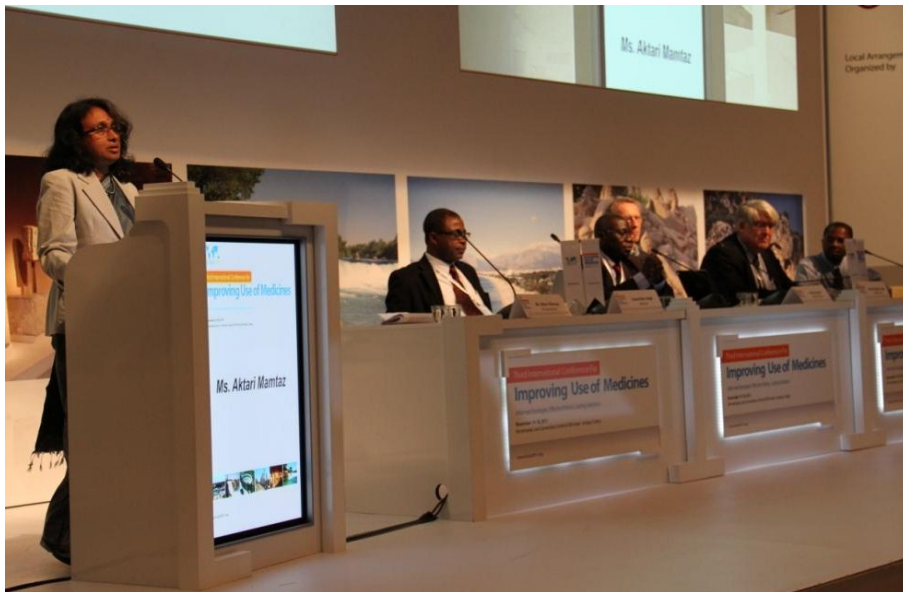
Quarterly Newsletter

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BANGLADESH PARTICIPATED AT THE 3RD ICIUM CONFERENCE



Aktari Mamtaz shared the government's current efforts to strengthen pharmaceutical systems in Bangladesh.

The third ICIUM (International Conference for Improving Use of Medicines), which aims to build consensus on how to improve, expand, and sustain the use of medicines in low- and middle-income countries, was held November 14–18 in Antalya, Turkey. Management Sciences for Health served as one of eight organizing partners for the conference, along with WHO, the Health Economics and Policy Association, the Harvard Department of Population Medicine, Boston School of Public Health, INRUD (International Network for Rational Use of Drugs), Karolinska Institutet, the Turkish Ministry of Health, and the Turkey General Directorate of Pharmaceuticals and Pharmacy.

This year, Systems for Improved Access to Pharmaceuticals and Services (SIAPS) sponsored Aktari Mamtaz, Joint Secretary, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MOHFW), to attend the conference. She made a presentation on pharmaceutical system strengthening in Bangladesh in an open satellite session entitled “Pharmaceutical System Strengthening: Is There a Need for a New Paradigm?”

This year's ICIUM conference focused on informed strategies, effective policies, and lasting solutions. More than 600 experts from



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over 70 countries participated and evaluated more than 500 research projects conducted since ICIUM 2004. Based on discussions of the latest evidence, participants generated recommendations for policies and programs to improve access to and use of medicines.

LOGISTICS AND SUPPLY DIRECTOR PRESENTS AT FAMILY PLANNING CONFERENCE

SIAPS sponsored Md. Kafil Uddin, Director, Logistics and Supply, Directorate General of Family Planning (DGFP) to attend the second International Conference on Family Planning: Research and Best Practices. He made an oral presentation on December 1, 2011, on “Web-Based MIS for Contraceptive Supply Management in Bangladesh” and then demonstrated the DGFP Supply Chain Information Portal (SCIP; www.dgfplmis.org) in the interactive session on innovative analytic tools for family planning.

The conference was co-hosted by the Bill & Melinda Gates Institute for Population and Reproductive Health at the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health and Senegal’s Ministry of Health and Prevention. The conference was held November 29–December 2, 2011, at Le Méridien Président, in Dakar, Senegal. The 2011 conference is the second of its kind (the first was held in 2009 in Kampala, Uganda). As in 2009, the 2011 conference brought together 2000 participants to share research, best practices, and progress on national strategies to deliver family planning (FP) services, with the ultimate goal being universal access to FP. The conference examined cutting-edge research and programs that are advancing the health and wealth of families and nations worldwide.

PROCUREMENT TRAINING FOR DGFP

The responsibility for procuring reproductive health commodities falls onto the Logistics and Supply Unit of the DGFP. On the other hand, the procurement desk officers are not familiar with widely held principles of good public procurement nor do they have in-depth experience with international competitive bidding, international trade practices, preparing procurement documents (bidding documents, invitations for bids, terms of reference, requests for proposals, evaluations, contracts), and World Bank procurement requirements. In this context, project managers and procurement officers

are challenged by a complex legal and political environment for which they have not necessarily been prepared. As a result, the procurement process was ineffective, which led to significant delays in order processing, budget overruns, disbursement difficulties, legal actions, and deliveries of commodities.

To enhance the capacity of the staff of this unit, SIAPS sponsored three DGFP procurement desk officers in an international training course on “Procurement of Goods and Services.” The course was held in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, October 31 to November 18, 2011, and was conducted by SETYM International.

MEETING ON CONTRACEPTIVES BETWEEN SMILING SUN PROGRAM AND SIAPS

The Smiling Sun Franchise Program (SSFP) and SIAPS held a meeting on November 17, 2011, to explore ways for the two programs to collaborate. Participants of both the programs shared their experiences and problems getting supplies and regular and adequate supplies of contraceptives from upazila family planning offices.

To overcome these problems, it was decided that SIAPS program associates would provide the necessary technical assistance to SSFP and nongovernmental organization clinic staff (who deal with logistics) during their regular visit to any upazila family planning office and ensure the availability of contraceptives.

MEETING TO STRENGTHEN TB CONTROL PROGRAM

A meeting on possible collaboration with WHO and the University Research Co., LLC (URC), to strengthen the National TB Control Program (NTP) was held November 24, 2011, at the SIAPS office. At the outset of the meeting, Dr. Zubayer, SIAPS Country Director, made a presentation on the SIAPS program and its overall goals; he shared the objectives, sub-objectives, and associated activities to strengthen pharmaceutical management systems for TB.

It was decided that a TB partners’ coordination meeting would be held the last week of each month, and participants from NTP, Global Fund, WHO, URC, the Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee, and the Damien Foundation would be joining the consortium. SIAPS will play the secretarial role and organize the

meeting. In addition, SIAPS will also provide all technical support to roll-out e-TB Manager to new sites and will provide support to enhance the system including ensuring functionality at every level.

9TH LOGISTICS COORDINATION FORUM MEETING

The ninth quarterly Logistics Coordination Forum (LCF) was held on October 10, 2011 at the DGFP IEM conference room. M. M. Neazuddin, Director General of the DGFP, chaired the meeting.

Officials from DGFP and representatives from various national and international organizations (USAID, World Bank, UNFPA, German Development Bank [KfW], Social Media Corp., Family Planning Association of Bangladesh, Japan International Cooperation Agency) attended the meeting. The main objective was to review and update the contraceptives requirements, medical and surgical requisites, consumption trends, stock status, pipeline positions, and procurement status of packages. In addition, the attendees made recommendations for capacity building and system improvements in DGFP's procurement, storage, and supply chain.

The chairperson of LCF emphasized quick procurement of 3.8 million DMPA (Depo Provera) injectables funded by the KfW, preferably by December 2011. The World Bank suggested that DGFP should do procurement processing for two years at a time (i.e., double the quantity), instead of the present practice of once a year procurement. This will not affect the yearly budget because payment will be made on a yearly basis; the proposed two-year processing will reduce the workload and save time. The World Bank also emphasized increasing competition in bids.

E-ASIA 2011: E-TECHNOLOGY CONFERENCE AT DHAKA

e-Asia 2011 is the annual international information and communication technologies development event with the objective of reinforcing the technology and knowledge-centric growth needs of Asia, vis-à-vis Bangladesh, through capitalization of the market economy and boosting human development. The three-day conference was held in December 2011 at the Bangabandhu International Conference Hall at Dhaka. The conference's slogan, "Realizing the Digital Nation", focused on the progress, prospects, and problems of e-technology in Bangladesh.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina inaugurated the conference by calling for wider use of IT in Bangladesh. Experts from home and abroad spoke at the different sessions, attended by IT enthusiasts in the hundreds. Products and services were exhibited by different IT manufacturers and service providers. Different Ministries of the Government also demonstrated their e-services. Officials from the DGFP demonstrated the SCIP (www.dgfplmis.org).

BASIC TRAINING ON UIMS FOR FAMILY PLANNING STAFF

A two-day basic training course on the Upazila Inventory Management System (UIMS) version 2, organized by the DGFP and facilitated by SIAPS, was held in November 2011. UIMS 2 helps upazila family planning stores maintain stocks of commodities, monitor field reporting, generate supply plans, issue vouchers automatically, and generate monthly logistics management reports. The objectives of the training included—

- Training store personnel on the UIMS
- Having store personnel use the UIMS to maintain the inventory easily and efficiently
- Bringing all the upazila family planning stores under an integrated inventory management system that enables automated data consolidation and monthly report



A SIAPS program associate provides hands-on training to the participants.

A total of 84 DGFP staff from 28 upazilas (3 persons from each) participated in the basic training. With the 28 new upazilas, the number of UIMS installed is now 173.

POSSIBLE SUPPORT FROM GRAMEENPHONE EXPLORED EQUIPMENT LIST PREPARATION WORKSHOP

The purpose of the October 25, 2011, meeting with the GrameenPhone (GP) staff was to explore the possibilities of a long-term collaboration with GP to equip upazila and regional DGFP warehouses with modems and Internet capabilities to ensure UIMS and Warehouse Inventory Management System operations. SIAPS also explored the possibility of collaboration with the telecom company to pilot an electronic upload procedure from the service delivery points by using hand-held devices to reduce data transfer time and data entry error.

SIAPS plans to submit a formal letter to GP, asking that GP initially provide 21 modems with SIMs (consecutive numbers) including a 1-GB Internet package for the 21 regional warehouses in February 2012.

STRATEGIC PLANNING WORKSHOP ON PROCUREMENT MANAGEMENT

SIAPS facilitated a three-day (December 2011) off-site workshop at Sylhet entitled “Strategic Planning Workshop on Procurement Management” for MOHFW. The purpose of the workshop was—

- To obtain consensus on goals and objectives for a strategy to strengthen procurement management and monitoring in MOHFW and its agencies
- To agree on a timeline, steps, and responsibilities for finalizing a strategic plan, including development of an implementation plan

Senior officials from MOHFW, DGFP, Directorate General of Drug Administration (DGDA), Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS), Central Medical Stores Depot (CMSD), Sylhet Medical College and Hospital, Health Engineering Department (HED), USAID, and SIAPS were present at the workshop.

The workshop was interactive with the subject-matter presentation followed by a group exercise, group presentation, and open discussion.

In concluding remarks, Md. Humayun Kabir, Secretary, MOHFW, emphasized the importance of embracing technology to improve outcomes. In a digital Bangladesh, moving to e-Procurement was a necessary step in the right direction. He also gave thanks to SIAPS for organizing and sponsoring such an important workshop.

A half-day session, facilitated by SIAPS, on equipment list preparation for MOHFW’s procurement management portal was held on December 12, 2011, at the Spectra Convention Center in Dhaka. The session was chaired by Ms. Aktari Mamtaz, Joint Secretary (Development and Medical Education), MOHFW, and moderated by Prof. Dr. Abul Kalam Azad, Additional Director General (Planning), DGHS. The specific objective of the workshop was to collect the lists of equipment with specifications from tertiary-level and teaching hospitals and the CMSD.

Dr. Zubayer Hussain, Country Project Director, SIAPS, and his team gave a brief on the status of the MOHFW product catalog. He requested that participants contribute to defining the departments that will be in the portal. It was also agreed that the medical device list would be finalized after the technical working group (TWG) includes input from stakeholders. MOHFW formed a high-powered TWG to develop the portal, especially the product catalog. SIAPS has been selected as the member secretary of the group. As part of technical assistance, SIAPS would recruit a biomedical engineer to review the appropriateness of the current specifications for the 2011–12 devices procurement list and make recommendations, if necessary. In addition, the engineer would review submissions from the table of equipment to rationalize the requirement with support from Hospital Services Management, DGHS.

HEALTH SECRETARY’S INPUT ON PROCUREMENT MANAGEMENT PORTAL

The demonstration session for MOHFW’s procurement management portal was held December 14, 2011. The program was chaired by Md. Humayun Kabir, Honorable Secretary, MOHFW. Dr. Zubayer Hussain, Country Project Director, and Mr. Mahmud, IT Consultant, both of SIAPS, made a joint presentation on the recent development of the portal including a live demo. The session was attended by MOHFW senior officials, line directors, program managers, and deputy program managers and representatives from the Health Engineering and Public Works Departments and USAID.

Objectives of the session—

- Share the updated demo version of the portal with key stakeholders for common understanding

- Seek inputs for further development of the portal
- Agree on next steps and actions for the portal

Accepted next steps and actions by the MOHFW secretary—

1. Finalize the product catalog by the end of February 2012
2. Finalize the procurement plan and tracking modules by the end of February 2012

3. Begin user acceptance testing on procurement planning, packaging, and tracking for all 32 OPs by March–April 2012
4. Launch April 2012
5. Develop equipment inventory and maintenance tracking module

At the end of the meeting, the secretary of MOHFW expressed his satisfaction with the progress made on the portal, accepted the timeline proposed by SIAPS, and concluded the meeting by thanking all for their participation.

SIAPS/BANGLADESH

Despite several advances made in supply chain management of reproductive health commodities in Bangladesh, with support from USAID over the past few decades, procurement faces a challenge in supporting adequate and timely program implementation of the health and population sector. To address these challenges, in 2009, the USAID Mission in Bangladesh requested that the Strengthening Pharmaceutical Systems (SPS) Program work on improving the procurement of reproductive health commodities, strengthening the existing distribution and management information systems, and building local capacity to strengthen health systems. The Systems for Improved Access to Pharmaceuticals and Services (SIAPS) Program, the follow-on program to SPS, started its five-year journey on September 23, 2011.

SIAPS builds on the experiences of SPS and will continue the technical leadership role in Bangladesh; however, as a next-generation program, it incorporates patient-centered pharmaceutical services in addition to focusing on product availability. SIAPS will advance the science and “art” of strengthening pharmaceutical management systems.

The overall goal of the SIAPS/Bangladesh program is to build the capacity of MOHFW and its key directorates—DGFP, DGHS, DGDA, and HED—and other indigenous institutions to efficiently and effectively manage their procurement and supply chain management activities. Special focus will be given to TB commodity management at all levels.

SIAPS/Bangladesh will achieve these goals through a set of performance indicators, approaches, and activities that are directly linked with expected outcomes. By involving key stakeholders, available skills utilization, and transfer, SIAPS has developed six specific, key objectives—

- Improve the availability of commodities to support care and treatment of priority health conditions by strengthening procurement management systems of MOHFW and component procuring entities
- Strengthen warehousing, distribution, and logistics management systems of DGHS and DGFP to improve availability and access
- Support evidence-based decision making by strengthening commodity management information systems
- Promote commodity security by building the capacity of MOHFW and its directorates, including national institutions and networks, to coordinate and manage information relating to health commodity management
- Improve the drug registration system by providing technical assistance to the DGDA
- Strengthen pharmaceutical management systems for TB

WE WOULD BE HAPPY TO HEAR FROM YOU

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

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