



On March 31, 2016, Dr. Tarun Poudel, Director, National Centre for AIDS and STD Control (NCASC), Ministry of Health (MoH), Government of Nepal and Ms. Jannie Kwok, Deputy Director, Education and Family Planning, USAID Nepal handed over the 100 Millionth Condom to a group of beneficiaries amidst the function “Celebrating the Distribution of 100 Million Condoms” from USAID-funded HIV Projects in Nepal organized by the USAID-funded Saath-Saath Project (SSP). Since 1993, the USAID-supported HIV programs have been



promoting and distributing condoms free-of-cost to the beneficiaries along with social marketing. In the past 23 years of support, USAID has, cumulatively distributed 100 million condoms to the key affected populations (KAPs) in Nepal. Before this major event, the countdown on journey of USAID-funded projects along with photo slide-show of condom promotion and distribution activities and campaigns over the 23 years were shown to the audience.

USAID-funded Saath-Saath Project, together with USAID, NCASC, Family Health Division (FHD), Logistics Management Division (LMD) and representatives from District (Public) Health Offices {D(P)HOs}, SSP supported partners and other stakeholders celebrated the achievement of this remarkable milestone in Kathmandu with the theme ‘Partnership for easy availability of and accessibility to condoms’.

In deep appreciation for the continuous support to distribute the condoms free-of-cost to the KAPs, Deputy Director, Education and Family Planning, USAID Nepal, presented the Letter of Gratitude to the Director, LMD; Director, FHD; Director, NCASC; Chief, District Public Health Office, Kathmandu; Chief, District Public Health Office, Bhaktapur and Chief, District Public Health Office, Lalitpur of the

Government of Nepal during the function. The Letters of Gratitude were also announced for all the D(P)HOs of the remaining 30 districts where Saath-Saath Project is operating.

Mr. Satish Raj Pandey, Chief of Party (CoP), SSP welcoming the participants to collectively celebrate the achievement of the important milestone, emphasized that promotion and distribution of condoms have played a crucial role coupled with other interventions in the success of HIV programs in the country. He underscored that the distribution of 100 Million Condoms using the USAID-funded HIV Project's platform is a huge achievement. He expressed his gratitude to the NCASC, FHD, LMD and D(P)HOs for allowing Saath-Saath Project to collaborate with the Government to achieve the distribution of 100 million condoms (free-of-cost). In addition, the CoP acknowledged the USAID for its over 60 years of support to Nepal and expressed that he was delighted to mark this historical achievement in presence of USAID representatives. He also acknowledged the support and contributions of the SSP partner NGOs and the National Networks of KAPs to make this achievement possible.



Reminiscing the relentless efforts made to promote and distribute condoms through the USAID-supported HIV Projects in Nepal in the last 23 years, jingles and TV PSAs developed for the purpose were played at regular intervals during the program. Likewise, Ms. Archana Khadka, Outreach Educator of SSP NGO partner, who has been working with KAPs over the 18 years, shared about her experiences and challenges she had faced in the early days to talk about condoms, the importance of using the condom and about condom negotiation. She emphasized that over the years, the awareness on need of condom use have increased and she shared that now she is more confident to share about condom and its use. In addition, Ms. Chetana Gyawali, Project Coordinator of SSP partner NGO, STEP Nepal shared the perspective of beneficiaries on condom promotion, distribution and use. According to her, the key words used by the beneficiaries were Excuses, Enjoy, Trust, Stigma and Myths in terms of condom use. Furthermore, the community outreach process for condom promotion and negotiation skills using Wheel game was also demonstrated by the outreach staff from STEP Nepal.



Dr. Yadu Chandra Ghimire, Senior Integrated Medical Officer, NCASC presented on HIV situation and response in Nepal reflecting the Global and National scenario of HIV over the years and milestones of HIV response in Nepal since 1987. He highlighted that Government of Nepal is committed to achieve the challenging



and ambitious 90-90-90 targets by 2020 and ending the AIDS epidemic by 2030 and emphasized the need of high level commitment and efforts in National HIV response to achieve these ambitious targets. Likewise, Mr. Bhagawan Shrestha, Deputy Chief of Party, SSP presented on USAID's HIV-related project activities with special focus on condom promotion and distribution and use since early 1990 from AIDSCAP I to the current SSP including condoms as an effective tool for prevention of HIV, STI and unwanted pregnancy.

Ms. Bijaya Dhakal, President, Jagriti Mahila Maha Sangh (JMMS) emphasized the significance of free condom distribution and its promotion among the KAPs. She also acknowledged the MoH, NCASC and LMD for their contribution for free condoms supply to the SSP partner NGOs across the country including USAID for its continued partnership with FHI 360 Nepal over the years for HIV response.

Mr. Tony Bondurant, Business Unit Director, Asia Pacific Regional Office (APRO), FHI 360 acknowledged the MoH, Government of Nepal for leadership and guidance and USAID for close partnership to bring these important achievement over the span of more than two decades. He further acknowledged the efforts of civil society, beneficiaries and stakeholders for the acceptance of the fact that condom is only the key tool that human has explored over the years for HIV and STI prevention. He expressed FHI 360's commitments and emphasis on achieving 90-90-90 targets, treatment as prevention, pre-exposure prophylaxis and shared that condom still remains as a central public health tools for the years to come.



Deputy Director, Education and Family Planning, USAID Nepal in her remarks acknowledged the Government of Nepal, partners and stakeholders for the invaluable support for increasing availability of and accessibility to condoms to reach the distribution of 100 million condoms as well as for HIV prevention, care, support and services for KAPs in addition to emphasizing the contribution of over six decades of USAID's support to Nepal – helped reach close to one million individuals with quality HIV prevention services; serve nearly 231,000 individuals for STI examination; provide HIV counseling and testing services to nearly 200,000 individuals; reached reach nearly 23,000 people living with HIV (PLHIV) with care, support and treatment services; and conducted HIV-related stigma and discrimination training for more than 108,000 individuals. She also shared that HIV and STI prevalence among female sex workers (FSWs) has significantly decreased between 2001 and 2015.



Director, NCASC in his remarks emphasized that the distribution of 100 million condoms in the past 23 years is an important milestone and achievement in terms of number. He also highlighted that the

benefits and the results from the correct and consistent condom use that is prevention from HIV and STI transmission and unwanted pregnancy are more than the number of condom distributed. The results of the integrated bio-behavioral surveillance



(IBBS) survey shows the increase use of consistent condom use by FSWs with their clients. He acknowledged USAID’s support being pivotal to design and implement evidence-based, innovative and targeted behavior change communication program including condom promotion and distribution both for free-of-cost and social marketing in Nepal. Furthermore, he recognized that the achievement of this success have not been possible without the support of external development partners like USAID and other national and international partners and stakeholders. Finally, he thanked USAID for being the long-standing partner of NCASC from 1993 and congratulated USAID, its projects and partners for the remarkable achievement of distributing 100 million condoms.

Information related to USAID’s support to Nepal, National HIV response timeline, details on distribution of 100 million condoms through USAID-supported HIV projects in Nepal, picture collage along with other information were also displayed during the program.

