



Investing in our future

The Global Fund

To Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria

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Dr. Dasho Gado Tshering
Secretary
Ministry of Health
Thimpu, Bhutan

March 29, 2011

Honourable Secretary

Reference is made in connection with the Progress Update for the period 1 October – 31 December 2010 pertaining to Grant No BTN-607-GO4 T.

In reviewing the Progress Update, we would like to congratulate the Ministry of Health for the acceleration and positive progress made in controlling TB in Bhutan. In comparison to 2009, the case detection rate has increased. This is the result of training of laboratory technicians, availability of sputum microscope in all the health centers and due to effective BCC programs.

In Quarter 12 the program met 10 of 13 indicators with a quantitative rating of B1. However, we take note that there may have been challenges in obtaining reports from all the health units on time. We would like to request your good office if kind consideration can be given to ensure the submission of the reports from all the health units.

Further to a review of the program, we would like to bring the following issues to your attention:

1. We would like to kindly request for improved coordination between National TB Control Programme and Public Health Laboratory to ensure the acceleration of the training of laboratory technicians. A mechanism is required to identify who requires training, especially considering TB data from districts is crucial for TB control.
2. As per the grant agreement, the TB reporting forms and registers in line with international recommendations need to be developed to include reporting on MDR TB cases. We would like to request the team complete the process of developing the reporting forms.
3. In-depth information regarding MDR TB is required to be collected especially regarding mode of development of MDR TB. The information would be helpful to determine whether MDR TB is due to treatment failure or due to infection with MDR TB.
4. The quality of available data is good. We would like to request your good office to ensure the timely submission of reports from all districts. The reporting mechanism for some of the activities such as transport



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workers reached, Monastery DOTS providers trained etc is not well established.

5. The program oversight needs further strengthening to ensure the timely implementation of the envisaged targets.
6. We noted that the software for electronic TB registers has been developed and ToT has been provided. We would like to request your good office to introduce the electronic TB registering system and train the users.
7. The outcome and impact targets need to be reviewed and corrected. An agreement on which cycle to use, April-March or Jan-Dec to define one year is urgently required. We would like to request the National TB program to use the Jan-Dec cycle because the baseline values for comparisons have used this cycle, and also the population figures are available only on a yearly basis. For the calculation purposes, we would like to recommend to use the population projection figures as published by the National Statistical Bureau instead of old calculation of 1.3% population growth per year.

We anticipate your Ministry will fully address these issues with a view to further strengthen its reporting to the Global Fund. I take this opportunity to once again congratulate you and your team on the performance of this grant thus far.

Best Regards

Edward Greene
Fund Portfolio manager
The Global Fund

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