Situational Analysis of Practical Approach to Lungs (PAL) Health in Rupandehi District

Background: PAL is called as patient-centered approach for improving quality of diagnosis and treatment of common respiratory illnesses – pneumonia, acute bronchitis and other acute respiratory infections, TB, and chronic respiratory conditions including chronic bronchitis, asthma and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease in population above 5 years at first-level health facilities.

Objective: To explore burden of respiratory problems and the capacities of health facilities in term of resources in the district to implement PAL.

Methods: This was an exploratory study conducted by applying both quantitative and qualitative techniques. Five years trend of Tuberculosis indicators and general information of district were collected. Simple random sampling technique was used to select 18 health facilities. Along with GIS mapping 18 key KIIs and 5 in-depth interviews were also done.

Findings: In Rupandehi district, Out of 11 Illakas level health facility, Lumbini PHC has highest number of case load; asthma the number one. Respiratory problems accounts for 23% among all cases registered in OPD. Out of 16 respiratory related problems, ARI/LRTI accounts for 27%, URTI 21%, Asthma 9%, pneumonia 7%, COPD 4% and bronchitis 3%. TB case finding rate has decreased. Except in Zonal hospital none of public health facilities have required equipments for the case management of respiratory problem, essential for PAL implementation and majority have problem of Bronchodilators. However, private health facilities do have such equipments but it become expensive for general people to afford services.

Conclusion: Hence, Public sector health facility needs be equipped with required medical equipments, drugs and skill full technical health workers. In line with public Private Mix and equal engagement of private sectors health workers in every program and training is also considered to be the best way of effective implementation and sustainability of PAL program in district.