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20 Years of USAID Support to the National HIV/AIDS Response Shows Remarkable Progress

Kathmandu: Today, the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) organized a special event to commemorate the 20th anniversary of its partnership with the Government of Nepal and other stakeholders in supporting the national response to HIV/AIDS.

Over the last two decades, USAID has invested more than US \$80 million as part of its remarkable legacy of effective HIV/AIDS programs with the successful implementation of six consecutive, tailored and evidence-based HIV projects in the country (including the ongoing Saath-Saath project) and other smaller projects as well. USAID's continuous contributions through these pioneering projects have made real impacts in preventing new infections and increasing access to quality services for key affected populations.

During its 20-year partnership with key government agencies under the leadership of the Ministry of Health and Population, and in collaboration with multiple national, international and local stakeholders, USAID has:

- Reached more than 1.18 million individuals with quality HIV prevention services;
- Diagnosed and treated nearly 92,000 individuals for Sexually Transmitted Infections;
- Provided HIV counseling and testing services to nearly 135,000 individuals;
- Reached nearly 19,000 HIV-infected individuals with care, support and treatment services;
- Conducted HIV-related stigma and discrimination training for more than 80,000 individuals; and
- Distributed more than 82 million condoms.

Nepal, as one of the 20 original focus countries under the U.S. Government's Global Health Initiative, receives additional technical, management, and financial resources to make its health system more responsive to people living with HIV by increasing integration of HIV/AIDS within health services and facilitating their access to family planning and health care services, including maternal and child health. These activities are being carried out in close collaboration and coordination with the government, local civil society, international organizations, and other donors.

In today's event, the Chief Guest, Dr. Naresh Pratap K.C., Director of National Centre for AIDS and STD Control and Special Guest Ms. Sheila Lutjens, Acting Mission Director of USAID Nepal, unveiled a theme-tagline “एड्स रहित पुस्ताका लागि २० वर्षदेखि सहयात्रा” (“20 Years of Partnership Towards an AIDS-free Generation in Nepal”), which will be actively used to promote USAID's longstanding partnership with various stakeholders and increase awareness of Nepal's commitment to a comprehensive and evidence-based HIV/AIDS response. Speaking at the event, Ms. Lutjens remarked, “20 Years of Partnership Towards an AIDS-free Generation in Nepal – This is not just a mere phrase but a true reflection of our united and ongoing dedication to the achievement of that ambitious yet attainable goal of an AIDS-free generation, both in Nepal and around the world.”

USAID also announced a series of special events at both the national and district level to commemorate the progress made over the past 20 years, and more importantly, to further strengthen the relationship with the government, local and international partners, civil society, academia, and media, and encourage all to move forward by reinforcing Nepal's efforts in to realize the promise of an AIDS-free generation.

The event was attended by key stakeholders from the Government of Nepal, other development partners, USAID officials, civil society and media.

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Snapshot

Global HIV Epidemic (2012)

- Total living with HIV – 34.2 million
- New infections in 2011 – 2.5 million

National HIV epidemic (2011)

- Estimated living with HIV - 50,200
- Adult HIV prevalence - 0.3%
- New HIV Infections – 1,437
- Individuals on ART – 7,719
- ART Sites – 44
- PMTCT sites - 60

USAID-supported projects over the past two decades

- AIDSCAP I - 1993–1997 (9 districts)
- AIDSCAP II - 1997-2002 (16 districts)
- Research Support for Nepal Initiative - 2001–02 (16 districts)
- HIV/AIDS IMPACT mitigation project – 2001–3 (1 district)
- IMPACT Project – 2001-07 (32 districts)
- ASHA Project – 2007-11 (38 districts)
- Saath-Saath Project - 2011-16 (33 districts)

ART: Anti-retroviral Therapy

PMTCT: Preventing Mother-to-Child Transmission

AIDSCAP: AIDS Control and Prevention Project

IMPACT: Implementing AIDS Prevention and Care

ASHA: Advancing Surveillance, Policies, Prevention, Care and Support to Fight HIV/AIDS

Source: NCASC National Estimates 2012