

Current TB Grants from USAID's Child Survival Health Grants Program

Title of Project: **Maguindanao TB Control project (MTCP)**

Prime Implementing Agency: **Catholic Relief Services – USCCB Philippine Program**

Project Partners: **Integrated Provincial Health Office - Maguindanao**

Project start date: **October 1, 2005**

Project end date: **September 30, 2009**

The Maguindanao Tuberculosis Control Project (MTCP) is a four-year partnership project of Catholic Relief Services (CRS) USCCB Philippine Program and the Integrated Provincial Health Office (IPHO)-Maguindanao, with funding assistance from United States Agency for International Development (USAID).

The overall goal of the project is to contribute to the reduction of tuberculosis morbidity and mortality in the 28 municipalities that comprise the province of Maguindanao by 2009 through increased detection rate (69% to 75%) of smear positive cases and increased cure rate (72 % to 85%).

The project works on building the capacities of IPHO by upgrading health facilities and training of health workers to become more responsive and effective at managing tuberculosis (TB) cases. Behavior Change Communication (BCC) interventions are being directed toward improving key behaviors that are critical in increasing compliance of TB patients to Direct Observed Treatment Short Course (DOTS) treatment protocols, adherence to the treatment protocols by health workers and increasing participation of Local Government Units (LGUs) in TB control. Social mobilization also forms part of the strategy particularly in advocacy to LGUs for resource allocation for TB control activities, community education and in providing TB patients access to health care. As frontline workers at the community level, Barangay Health Workers (BHWs) are trained to improve skills in social control for quality TB services.

The MTCP sustainability strategy is to engage all key stakeholders in the project implementation at different levels to seek for feasible and sustainable solutions for the TB burden in Maguindanao.

The MTCP targets 475,056 individuals aged 15 and above living in Maguindanao. During the life of the project, an estimated 5,152 smear positive cases will be detected and will be treated under the DOTS protocol.



Successes:

- Upgraded microscopy centers of 18 Rural Health Units (RHU)
- Accreditation of 18 RHUs for Sentrong Sigla and 21 RHU for TB DOTS Center
- Formation of Support Group such as Microscopy on Wheels and TB Clubs
- Increased enrollment of symptomatics due to heightened education campaign and mobilization of community groups 4,205 in 2004 to 6,065 in 2007
- Improved TB indicators CDR of 69% in 2005 to 86 in 2007 and Cure Rate of 72% in 2004 to 78 in 2007. Percentage of symptomatics submitting 3 sputum specimen improved from 77% in 2004 to 96% in 2007. Trainings on DOTS and Sputum Collection and Smearing made a substantial contribution in these successes.
- Advocacy efforts resulted in the reactivation of 11 Local health Boards and increase support of LGU to health programs e.g. hiring of LGU of microscopists, enrolment of indigents to PhilHealth
- Contributed to building human resources of IPHO by training health personnel and community volunteers on TB case management thereby improving TB care services up to the community level to date, training activities of the project had accomplished the following:DOTS Training - 166 midwives, 12 doctors, 35 nurses, 1 medical technologist and 473 Barangay Health Workers (volunteers)
- Enlisted participation of 135 Muslim Religious Leaders in TB campaign

Lessons Learned about community-based TB programming:

- Participation of community –based health volunteers and community-based TB support groups in TB control can significantly reduce stigma against the disease.
- A built –in mechanism for sustaining the interest and enthusiasm of community-based health volunteers is a MUST.
- Community support groups need to be well-oriented to be effective in the performance of their roles and responsibilities.
- A community-based information system that is linked to the health facility provides valuable information on the contribution of health volunteers to TB control.

Constraints:

- Volatile security condition of Maguindanao which causes the displacement of thousand of families including TB patients. Natural calamities which occurred both at the mountainous areas and flood in the flood plains (marsh) hampered delivery of health services.
- Moratorium in the accreditation of RHUs for quality seal. A harmonized accreditation of RHUs (Sentrong Sigla, TB DOTS Center and PhilHealth) has been transferred under the auspices of Philippine Health Insurance Corporation (PhilHealth). To date, Philhealth has not yet issued a guideline for accreditation, hence accreditation of the 7 remaining RHUs of Maguindanao could not yet be discerned despite preparation until PhilHealth issued the guideline.
- Appreciation of Peso against dollar also affected the project. The costing of activities original was based on P55/ 1 dollar. With the appreciation of peso to P46/dollar without any significant effect on local prices, project budget in peso decreased. In addition, obligated amount for funding has been reduced. The management is then obliged to review project activities and prioritized what is needed and doable within the available funds.



Project Contact:

Mila Lasquety

CRS-USCCB Philippine Program, 2F CBCP Building, 470 Gen. Luna St., Intramuros, Manila, Philippines

Phone: (632)5278331

Email: mlasquety@ph.seapro.crs.org