



PULSE

UPDATING YOU ON HEALTH DEVELOPMENTS

PROGRESS OF THE TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE RESPONSE FUND A Flexible Fund for Supporting MoHP Initiatives

MAIN POINTS

- ▲ The Technical Assistance Response Fund (TARF) is a flexible fund that agencies under the Ministry of Health and Population (MoHP) can use to fund work that is not funded in their annual work plans and budgets (AWPBs).
- ▲ Up to June 2015 the TARF had received 26 proposals of which it had funded 22 and declined 3, with a further 1 under consideration.
- ▲ The fund is enabling important work to go ahead that would otherwise be unlikely to find a source of funding.

OBJECTIVES AND MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENTS

The TARF was established in September 2013 to rapidly fund extra technical assistance to the Ministry of Health and Population (MoHP) as new needs arise. The rationale for this flexible fund is that not all technical assistance needs can be predicted well in advance. Accordingly, it complements the more long-term planned assistance from NHSSP and other external development partners. The TARF is managing £500,000 of funds from the UK's Department for International Development (DFID).

The fund sits under the Policy, Planning and International Cooperation Division (PPICD) and is managed by the TARF Fund Management Team (FMT), which has representation from PPICD, DFID and NHSSP. The FMT decides on the funding of proposals in line with the fund's objectives. All proposals must be endorsed and submitted by the chief of the concerned MoHP agency. The FMT can refer more complex proposals to existing MoHP technical committees for review and is responsible for assuring the quality of funded work. Applicants may request the direct support of NHSSP advisers or other experts to devise quality assurance mechanisms.

PROGRESS

As of June 2015, the TARF has funded 22 projects under the following three categories:

1. Emergent MoHP priorities not funded in AWPBs; for example, training district health officials on financial management and reducing the number of audit queries.
2. Extra funding beyond that committed in AWPBs to meet the objectives of already identified priorities; for example, the provision of additional expertise and personnel to manage Logistics Management Division procurement works.

Concerned government agency: MoHP's Policy, Planning and International Cooperation Division (PPICD)

NHSSP support: Funding support (DFID). NHSSP is the TARF secretariat and is responsible for managing the procurement and contracting of funded projects.

More information: See updates on TARF funding in NHSSP's quarterly progress reports at:
http://www.nhssp.org.np/quarterly_rpt.html

Note that it is a condition of funding that contracted personnel work alongside government counterparts.

3. Preparing for Nepal Health Sector Support Programme (NHSP-3). Note that all TARF-funded work must be aligned to the objectives of NHSP-2 or the preparation of NHSP-3.

Amongst the 22 funded projects:

- ▲ seven are related to producing key health policies, strategies, plans or legislation;
- ▲ four are procurement-related, including an assessment of a major hospital building project in western Nepal;
- ▲ four are related to improving the provision of essential health care services, including guiding hospitals on reducing overcrowding and improving obstetric care; and
- ▲ three are related to financial management and two each are on human resources development and gender and social inclusion.

CONCLUSIONS

MoHP's AWPBs have to be compiled and approved several months in advance of each financial year. This means that any new priorities that emerge once the AWPB has been submitted will remain unfunded for at least one more year. Further, the pressure faced by MoHP's divisions, departments and centres to prepare accurate and timely AWPBs can also lead to key activities being overlooked or the costs of implementing them being underestimated. In having access to and control over a flexible and responsive technical assistance fund, such as the TARF, MoHP is better able to respond to changing circumstances and fill programming gaps. Accordingly the TARF has served as a rapid response tool and safety net that is highly valued by MoHP. For these reasons it is highly recommended to include such a fund in future MoHP AWPBs and to institutionalise its provision under PPICD.

PROJECTS FUNDED BY THE TARF TO EARLY JUNE 2015

	Project (govt agency)	Focal tasks/objectives	Implemented
A. Policies, strategies, plans and legislation			
1.	Finalisation of National Health Policy 2071 (2014) (PPICD)	Consultants facilitated workshops to expedite completion of this guiding policy for Nepal's health sector	Nov to Dec-13
2.	Development of Nepal Health Sector Programme (NHSP-3) (PPICD)	Two consultants and a secretary provided technical and administrative support to NHSP-3's Programme Development team (PDT)	Apr-14 to Apr-15
3.	Development of Comprehensive Health Act (MoHP HR section)	Two consultants are assisting MoHP to draft an act to legislate for the constitutional right to free health care	Nov-14 to Jun-15
4.	Preparation of MoHP's annual workplan and budget and business plan (PPICD)	Support for a finalisation workshop that enabled the 2014/15 AWPB and business plan to be prepared on time.	Jun to Jul-14
5.	Produce NHSP-3 Implementation Plan (PPICD)	Two consultants are supporting production the plan	Nov 14 to present
6.	Develop a health procurement reform strategy (Logistics Management Division)	A consultant developed a concept note and strategy in consultation with LMD's director	Dec-14
7.	Support Department of Health Service inputs into NHSP-3 (DoHS)	A consultant is facilitating DoHS inputs into NHSP-3's Implementation Plan	Jan to Jul-15
B. Procurement and infrastructure			
8.	Support LMD procurement management-1 (LMD)	The costs of 2 procurement specialists	Jan-14 to Jul-15
9.	Support LMD procurement management-2 (LMD)	The costs of 2 biomedical engineers, 2 procurement officers and 1 mechanical engineer	Jul to Nov-14
10.	Support LMD procurement management-3 (LMD)	The costs of 1 additional procurement specialist	Dec-14 to Jul-15
11.	Needs assessment on completing Mid-Western Regional Hospital and preparing master plans for Seti and Bheri Zonal Hospitals (LMD)	Supported 1 international and 5 national consultants and workshop and field visits to assess completion of building work at MWRH and on preparing Bheri and Seti Hospitals' master plans	Dec-14 to May-15
C. Essential health care services			
12.	Support the family planning work of the Family Health Division (FHD)	Family planning coordinator supported	Nov to Dec-13
13.	Mentor district hospitals on comprehensive emergency obstetric and neonatal care (CEONC) (FHD)	The improved provision of CEONC services	Dec-13 to Jul-15
14.	Support hospitals to address overcrowding of maternity services (FHD)	Senior safe motherhood adviser supported Nepal's referral hospitals to address overcrowding of maternity services	Dec-13 to Nov-14
15.	Strengthen skilled birth attendant (SBA) training (Nepal Health Training Centre)	A consultant is supporting the NHTC to strengthen SBA training	Sep-14 to Jul-15
D. Human resources development			
16.	Develop induction curriculum for training new health workers (NHTC)	Curriculum developed by consultant and now in use	Jan to Mar-14
17.	Organisation and management survey for deploying new human resources (MoHP HR section)	Supported implementation of an O&M survey to recommend where and how to deploy new health personnel. Survey finalised in Jan-15.	Jun to Dec-14
E. Financial management			
18.	Training on costing national health strategies (for use in NHSP-3) (PPICD)	Funded attendance of NHSP-3 consultant at training workshop on WHO's One Health Tool	Jul-14
19.	Build capacity of public health officials on public financial management and audit queries (DoHS)	A team of consultants developed a training course and will run regional training workshops for district managers and finance staff from all 75 districts	Nov-14 to Jul-15
20.	Develop a financial system and manual for managing health social security (Social Health Security Committee)	Facilitating the finalisation of a system and manual for managing health social security	Jun to Sep-15
F. Gender equality and social inclusion			
21.	Social audit training for district health officers (PHCRD)	Training workshops held at central and mid-western regional centres	Apr-14
22.	Train MoHP trainers on delivering mainstreaming GESI training courses (Population Division)	Consultant facilitated training of 24 officials from NHTC and regional training centres	Apr-14

The Nepal Health Sector Support Programme (NHSSP) is funded and managed by DFID and provides technical assistance for the implementation of the Nepal Health Sector Programme (NHSP-2). Since it began in January 2011, NHSSP has facilitated a range of activities in support of NHSP-2, covering health policy and planning, health financing, procurement and infrastructure, human resources for health, essential health care services, public financial management, gender equality and social inclusion, monitoring and evaluation, research and the preparation of NHSP-3. For more information visit www.nhssp.org.np and follow us on Facebook (Nepal Health Sector Support Programme) and Twitter (@NHSSP).