

## **PRESS RELEASE**

### **SAARC Regional Programme Manager's Meeting on Cross Border Issues related to Tuberculosis and HIV/AIDS in the SAARC Region.**

With the rapid pace of Globalization leading to increasing mobility of people, goods and services both within and outside the region, it has raised a serious concern on the public health safety of all the countries experiencing increasing trend of cross border migration. Therefore taking this into consideration, the SAARC Tuberculosis and HIV/AIDS center under SAARC Secretariat has recently hosted the **'SAARC Regional Programme Managers Meeting on Cross Border issues related to TB, HIV/AIDS & Malaria'** in Thimphu from 29-31 May, 2017. Delegates from six member states including the host country participated in the three days meeting.

The main objective of the three days regional meeting was to enhance regional collaboration and coordination on tackling the cross border issues concerning the public health safety, and further to establish regional mechanism for cross border referral system of the people who are living with chronic diseases like HIV/AIDS. During the meeting, each member states presented the epidemiological situation of TB & HIV/AIDS in their respective countries highlighting the key challenges concerning cross border.

As a resolution from this meeting, the member states jointly agreed to come up with the regional policy framework to address cross border issues related to any priority communicable disease of regional concern, SAARC to open up its mandate beyond TB & HIV/AIDS, and urgent need for convening of cross border meeting engaging the bordering districts in all the member SAARC member states.

The opening of the three days meeting was graced by Hon'ble Health Minister, H.E LyonpoTandinWangchuk on 29<sup>th</sup> May, 2017. The three days regional programme Managers meeting formally concluded on 31<sup>st</sup> May, 2017 and Hon'ble Health Secretary formally closed the session after endorsement of seventeen key recommendations.