

Finding and treating people with TB in

Nepal

- Migrants and other groups at risk are screened near the Nepal-India border to detect cases early
- More than 115,000 people screened and nearly 700 cases detected in the first nine months of the project
- Project cuts down transmission rates by screening contacts of TB cases



Rupandehi district - After four years working in Mumbai, India, 55 year old Dev Raj Tiwari returned to his home in Western Nepal. Illness had made it impossible for him to continue working and, the medical care he had thus far received having given him no relief, he had come home to die. While Mr. Dev was away in India, his home district of Rupandehi had begun to benefit from a campaign against tuberculosis (TB) through the services of FHI360 to screen migrants returning to Nepal. The project identifies these vulnerable, sometimes remote and isolated communities, ensuring appropriate TB treatment through innovative, active case detection conducted by workers sent directly into the targeted areas. Migrant workers, among the groups less likely to seek out health services, are contacted at the Nepal-India border, rather than waiting for them to seek out health services on their own. Other risk groups for TB such as injecting drug users and sex

workers are also targeted for screening. Additionally, contacts of TB cases are also sought out and tested, helping to cut down on the transmission of disease. FHI360 staff workers, learning of his symptoms, collected sputum samples from Dev and quickly identified TB disease. Although both Dev and his neighbours believed TB to be incurable, staff workers reassured him that his disease could be treated successfully. With careful follow-up for treatment compliance, Dev regained his strength and in the second month of treatment his sputum test was negative for TB. He is well on his way to being cured. He considers his recovery to be a miracle and has become a strong community advocate for TB screening. In the nine months since the project began, FHI360 has been able to screen over 50,000 migrants and about 66,000 other patients, finding nearly 700 cases of TB which might otherwise have gone undetected.

