UNDP is a key partner and the Principal Recipient to the Global Fund to fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria (GFATM) in Tajikistan. UNDP provides support to the National Programmes on HIV/AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria in the Republic of Tajikistan. The overall goal of the projects is to prevent deaths caused by diseases, to reduce the burden of HIV and Tuberculosis, to interrupt transmission of malaria, to reduce morbidity, and to contain and prevent malaria outbreaks.
At the initiative of the Ministry of Health of RT in partnership with UNDP and WHO, a trans-boundary coordination meeting on malaria control issues was conducted in Kurgantube (Khatlon region) on 11-13 October 2010 with participation of experts from two countries - Republic of Tajikistan and Islamic State of Afghanistan (ISA).

Over 50 participants representing WHO/ISA, ISA Centre for leishmaniasis and malaria control, MoH of RT, National Coordination Committee to fight HIV/AIDS, TB and Malaria of RT, State sanitary and epidemiological surveillance services, Republican centre for healthy lifestyle, tropical diseases centres (TDC) at regional level and districts bordering with Afghanistan, as well as international organisations participated in the meeting.

During the meeting the participants discussed the epidemiological situation on malaria in the Republic of Tajikistan and ISA. Presentations of WHO/ISA specialists, representatives of regional TDCs and representatives of international organisations, who assessed malaria situation in bordering districts of Tajikistan and Afghanistan, were discussed as well. Special focus/emphasis was made on issues related to simultaneous implementation of anti-malarial activities in bordering districts of neighbouring countries.

On the third day of the event, the participants got an opportunity to visit malaria foci in Shahrtuz and Jilikul districts of Khatlon region, previously covered with anti-malarial activities (including IRS, distribution of bed-nets to populations and gambusia fish to stagnant ponds and rice fields).

By the end of the meeting a resolution for trans-boundary cooperation between RT and ISA, targeted at strengthening of joint coordination efforts of two countries on malaria prevention was signed.

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**24 - OCTOBER UNITED NATIONS DAY, THE DAY OF PEACE AND STABILITY**

Every year on 24 October the International Community celebrates the day of establishing the United Nations Organization. This year the UN has marked its 65th anniversary and, on this occasion, a number of events and activities were organized in Tajikistan such as the thematic cinema-week (on peace, stability around the world, human rights, and gender equality), a concert with participation of popular national singers etc.

Tajikistan joined the UN as a full member right after gaining its independence. This organization has played a key and mediating role, particularly, in bringing peace to Tajikistan. Despite any threats, the UN had been present in all Tajik negotiations held in many countries of the world.

After establishing peace and stability in Tajikistan, the UN started providing multi-sided support to this young country in its economic development.

Now, the UN contributes in all fields of the country development, particularly, education, health, border defense, etc. The UN agencies - UNDP, UNICEF, WFP, WHO, UNAIDS, UNFPA, ILO, UNODC, UNHCR and UNESCO -are assisting Tajikistan in attaining the Millennium Development Goals.

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**FIRST TREATMENT SUCCESS OF MDR-TB PATIENTS**

About 80% MDR-TB patients had negative culture results according to the preliminary testing analysis of the first MDR-TB cohort. It’s a good achievement of MDR-TB treatment when patients are not infectious anymore for people around. Moreover it confirms that MDR-TB is also curable.

As of today 250 MDR-TB patients receive treatment within the MDR-TB pilot project supported by the UNDP/GFATM and 70 % of them receive treatment at home under direct observation of responsible health providers from the nearest facilities. First cohort patients were registered in quarter III, 2009. The total duration of MDR is 18 to 24 months.
**INFECTION CONTROL MEASURES IN TB LABORATORIES**

**25 to 28 October** Infection Control Training was conducted for the regional level laboratory specialists of the NTP with involvement of international facilitator Ms. Nestan Tukvadze, KNCV and UNDP lab specialist.

TB lab specialists were trained in risk assessment methods, use of engineering and personal protection methods. Moreover trainees obtained knowledge on adequate and safety use of lab equipment, safety transportation and disposal of infectious materials. In the course of training specialists trained in independent calculation of air interchange in the labs and recommendation on how to organize well functioning laboratory with considerations of infection control requirements.

**PROACTIVE TB AWARENESS RAISING ACTIVITIES IN TAJIKISTAN**

«TB is curable if detected on time», «TB diagnosis and treatment is free of charge», «If symptoms observed immediately go to a closest health facility» are part of key messages on TB that got across Tajik population through information and educational activities supported by UNDP/GFATM.

One of such activity was a Talk Show on TB Situation in Tajikistan televised by the Popular TV Safina. Experiences specialists, NTP coordinators responded to the different questions of the medical colleagues’ students and the TV channel audience. Thousands audience received information on TB situation in general, TB symptoms, prevention measures and diagnosis and treatment opportunities.

UNDP supports awareness raising projects at community level implemented by seven local and international NGOs in Dushanbe, DRS, Sogd, Khatlon and GBAO (Aga Khan Foundation, Red Crescent Society, Nakukor, Gender & Development, Nabzi Solim, Sadoi Umed and Bonuvoni Fardo).

Essential element of NGO approach in community activity is direct involvement and participation of communities in improving public health and solution of health related problems. Local communities act through social mobilization and voluntary support. The NGOs established a network of trained volunteers and trainers who basic activity is raising awareness (TB reasons, detection, prevention, transmission), reduce stigma and increase TB treatment adherence as in general population same in risk groups (migrants, IDUs, TB contacts).

**ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE NATIONAL TB CONTROL PROGRAM**

Key achievement of the NTP in the current year is the growth of TB patient notification rate in Tajikistan. Number of all TB cases notified in quarters I to III, 2010 is increased to 6096 in comparison of 5843 notified in the same period of 2009 (see diagram below).

In October TB Coordination Council meeting was held in the Republican TB Control Center with participation of representatives of the Ministry of Health, managers of the regional and district TB centers, TB partners and other stakeholders.

Other NTP achievements are improved HIV testing of TB patients, opportunities of TB patients for culture investigations in bacteriologic laboratory of Sogd Regions, active and broad awareness raising activities on TB among population in different regions and districts of the country. Results of monitoring, issues rose during implementation of different program components and plans to overcome the problems were also as discussion points in the meeting.
OUR PARTNER: INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATION AIDS FOUNDATION EAST-WEST (AFEW)

Project’s name: Scaling-Up Efforts to Support the National HIV Strategy in Tajikistan

Location: Republic of Tajikistan

Partners: Ministry of Health of Tajikistan, Department of Corrections under the Ministry of Justice of Tajikistan, Province Regional Department of Health, the Regional Narcological Centres, Regional AIDS Centres, Regional and city Departments of Internal Affairs, the Regional and city Dermatology and STI Centres, the Regional and city TB Dispensaries and the Regional Departments of Social Support and Welfare, local Tajik NGOs and social bureaus established under earlier AFEW projects

THE OVERALL OBJECTIVE of the project is to deliver financial and technical support for state and NGO service providers who work with vulnerable people, prison and civil healthcare units, religious and community leaders, police officers, politicians and media representatives.

AFEW’s role will include the provision of sub-grants and educational materials, as well as training for outreach workers, medical staff, counselors (including peer counselors recruited from local communities) and social workers. Finally, research will be conducted by international and local partners to innovate and fine-tune new methods of conducting outreach work among key populations in Tajikistan. For prison, police and medical officers employed in state services, AFEW will develop and implement e-learning modules and materials for use in future training on working responsibly with key populations affected by or at risk of HIV. In order to curb the spread of infectious diseases within prison settings and into local communities, AFEW will assist in setting up a transitional case management programme for inmates that works with them from the 60 days prior to release and up to 90 days after release.

Activities implemented within the project to date.

A meeting on strategic planning of the project “Scaling-Up Efforts to Support the National HIV Strategy in Tajikistan” conducted by AFEW, took place in Dushanbe from 19 to 20 October 2010. The participants of the meeting – managers and key staff from 19 non-governmental organizations, who have received sub-grants to implement the mentioned project.

A unified strategy outlining activities on HIV prevention in three directions: vulnerable women; prisoners; treatment, care and support for people living with HIV were developed as result of the meeting.

From 27 to 29 October 2010 AFEW organized training for journalists named “Role of media in cutting out stigma and discrimination against HIV/AIDS”. Journalists representing all the regions of Tajikistan were invited for the training.

More than 25 journalists have mastered ethical norms on communicating HIV/AIDS issues in the course of the workshop. In order to enhance the skills of participants, a number of meetings with representatives from HIV-service organizations working in Dushanbe were called. Also, a contest among the participants on the best coverage of HIV/AIDS has been scheduled.

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