

Excellent results by the project and the training course for Italian doctors in Senegal

The first year of the three-year project to support the program of tuberculosis control in the health district of Dioffior in Senegal has ended achieving great results and the second year has started with the success of the first training course on TB for Italian doctors interested in international development cooperation.

The first week of February Stop TB Italia held the supervision of the activities in the fight against TB at the community level and organised the meeting to evaluate the project activities with all community health workers, nurses and doctors belonging to the health district of Dioffior.

The association presented the results of the year and gave an economic support for achieving the annual target, the finding of at least one TB case more than in the previous year. From 2012 to 2013 there has been a **26% increase in the detection rate of TB cases** (from 45% to 56%) and a 23% increase in the detection rate of sputum positive cases (from 32% to 39%). These data confirm the increased diagnostic capacity in the district. There has also been an **increase of 69% of patients in community-based directly observed therapy**, and an increase of 643% of the people involved in the information, education and communication activities carried out by the community health workers.

In addition to numerical data, there is a good reception and consideration of the project's activities, and in particular the activities of the community health workers, by the TB patients, the nurses of the 14 health structures of the district and the representatives of the communities rural areas, such as village chiefs and religious authorities. The active involvement of the whole community is leading to cultural growth and a greater awareness of the population.

From February 10 to 14 a group of 14 young doctors from various Italian regions participated in the training course on TB for Italian doctors interested in international development cooperation, held at the *Bois Sacré* in Djlor. The participants were extremely prepared, intelligent and curious. It was a great group that has created a pleasant and constructive atmosphere, confirming that the **residential training courses have an important added value in terms of learning**.

Update on TB but also confrontation with the health and cultural reality in Senegal, through visits to hospitals and local health structures, and meetings with doctors, patients and community health workers. This experience confirmed that the knowledge and respect of the local reality are indispensable to a constructive approach to international development cooperation.

Stop TB Italia takes advantage of this opportunity to thank all the participants who, with their enthusiasm and vitality, have helped to enrich the course, and to all the local collaborators who, with dedication and commitment, have achieved good results.