PRESS RELEASE

May 5, 2015, Monday,
Coalition «STOP TB Partnership, Tajikistan» (STBPT)

JOINT ACTIVITIES OF NATIONAL AND EUROPEAN TB COALITIONS TO STOP TB IN TAJIKISTAN.

A delegation from the TB Europe Coalition (TBEC) visited Tajikistan from the 13 to 20 April with the objective of strengthening comprehensive cooperation in the fight against TB. The TBEC together with Stop TB Partnership Tajikistan (STBPT) conducted important meetings with 14 concerned ministries, offices and international and local organizations to enhance TB care and control in Tajikistan.

The meetings concluded with an advocacy workshop held on 18-19 April, 2015 with the purpose of empowering civil society and Communities to play a big role in the fight against Tuberculosis in Tajikistan. Participants included 28 members of the STBPT and TB experts from several towns and cities of the Republic of Tajikistan.

Discussion points included the need of:
- Developing a common understanding of TB challenges and opportunities in Tajikistan;
- Increasing advocacy understanding and skills;
- Emphasizing the role and value of TB patients in advocacy; and
- Supporting the development of Stop TB Tajikistan – structure, strategy and action.

Action points from the workshop included the implementation of the formed Action Committee consisting of former TB patients. The Action Committee is to become a self-governed, organized group of activists who would serve as a “bridge” to fill the gap between health systems and TB patients and communities and support the National TB Programme (NTP) on providing:

- Psychological support to MDR patients;
- Monitor the treatment process and ensure adherence;
- Assist in case detection by guiding people with TB symptoms to visit doctors;
- Help to return the lost cases;
- Raise awareness about TB and its prevention;
- Reduce stigma and discrimination in and around TB.
Members of the Action Committee will work towards proving that they are indispensable actor in TB care and control in Tajikistan. They will further receive support and training to improve their advocacy skills and be involved in discussions at all levels, and represent TB patients and communities in the CCM. As it would be necessary to bring the plan into action, through regional NTP Coordinators members of the Action Committee will establish a close cooperation with physicians, DOTS centers and also with Head of Communities throughout the country.

Members of the Action Committee were identified amongst active people formerly with TB in major cities of the country (including Dushanbe, Qurghonteppa, Kulob, Khujand, Khorugh and also Rasht valley) with a plan to include more activists from all the districts.

Notes to Editors:

The TB Europe Coalition (TBEC) is a platform of NGOs and civil society advocates concerned about TB and drug-resistant TB in Eastern Europe and Central Asia. TBEC’s main area of expertise is TB advocacy and the role of civil society actors in TB care and control in the European region. It seeks to create a stronger network of advocates for the region, which is often neglected in international discussions.

The Coalition “STOP TB Partnership, Tajikistan” was established on 30 July, 2014 by 76 people with tuberculosis (TB), people formerly with TB, their relatives and representatives of the organizations interested in the fight against TB and Media from all areas of Tajikistan. The aim of the Coalition is to cut the TB prevalence rate, burden of TB and TB and HIV co-infection, and halt the growth of MDR/XDR-TB in the country. The Secretary of the Coalition functions in the basis of Republican Public Organization “Young generation of Tajikistan”.

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