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## PRESS RELEASE

### **USAID AND THE NATIONAL CENTER FOR HEALTHY LIFESTYLES PROMOTION CONDUCT TRAINING FOR JOURNALISTS ON TUBERCULOSIS REPORTING**

**DUSHANBE, JULY 1, 2017** – The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) in partnership with the National Center for Healthy Lifestyles Promotion under the Ministry of Health and Social Protection of Population of the Republic of Tajikistan held a two-day training on tuberculosis (TB) for Tajikistan’s journalists working with print, Internet, TV, and radio media platforms.

Through the USAID TB Control Program, journalists had the opportunity to hone their reporting skills in covering TB for the first time in Tajikistan with facilitation from an international media expert. At the end of the training, the journalists learned how to accurately and compellingly report on TB to improve awareness, dispel myths and misconceptions, and reduce stigma against those affected by this disease. Upon completion of the training, journalists will travel on a media tour to various districts in Sughd and Khatlon to learn about TB issues first-hand through site visits to the USAID TB Control Program activities.

According to the World Health Organization, more than 10 million people throughout the world every year become sick with TB, and nearly two million people still die from it, even though TB is a very common infection and is, in fact, curable. A lack of awareness among the public about TB prevention and care is one of the major causes of TB prevalence.

Since 2015, USAID, through its TB Control Program, has trained 70 journalists in Tajikistan on TB reporting and supported an annual national contest for journalists for the best coverage of TB-related topics in the media. This year, USAID will recognize the competition winners at an annual awards ceremony in Dushanbe in September.

The USAID TB Control Program aims to support the Ministry of Health and Social Protection in reducing the burden of TB and the development of multi-drug resistant TB in Tajikistan. The program focuses on enhancing national policy; improving access to diagnosis and treatment for vulnerable groups; supporting a patient-centered system of care; and strengthening laboratories and other parts of the health system in Sughd, Khatlon and the Rasht Valley. The program, with an anticipated budget of \$13.2 million over five years, is another example of U.S. government assistance to improve the health of Tajikistan’s citizens. USAID grant assistance to Tajikistan averages \$30 million each year of which approximately 30 percent is directed to healthcare.

Throughout 2017, Tajikistan and the United States will celebrate 25 years of diplomatic relations.

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