Global Support for TB/HIV Advocacy: TAGs Experience

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TAG: Who are we?

- Treatment Action Group is an independent AIDS research and policy think tank fighting for better treatment, a vaccine, and a care for AIDS. TAG works to ensure that all people with HIV receive lifesaving treatment, care, and information.

- TAGs TB/HIV Project strengthens community-driven advocacy for better TB/HIV research, programs, and policy in order to secure more effective services worldwide.

- Four objectives: Global, Africa based advocacy, Research, and Federal Affairs
What does that mean?

• Global Advocacy: Work with specific activist, policy, and funding bodies like the STBP, IAS, ITPC, OSI

• Africa focused advocacy: Work in partnership with ICW-East Africa

• Research: Work with PDPs and research networks

• Federal Affairs: Educate US leaders to increase support for TB triple funding for TB
Theory of Change

Based on: Knowledge = Power, Silence = Death

Current Theory:
Trained Activists + Policy & Researchers = Increased Resources & Improved Services
Strategies/ Philosophy

- Advocacy grounded in data
- Orientation of Partnership
- Principled Engagement
- Facilitators not Gate Keepers
Highlights: What has been accomplished?

• Activist involvement in TB/HIV advocacy has increased
• WHO’s TB Control Strategy has been expanded to include TB/HIV, Empowerment of Community, and Research
• TB PDPs/ Researchers are developing models of community engagement
• Impact on UNGASS, UnitAid, TB/HIV, and MDR TB
Highlights Contd.

“PLWH are refusing to be merely passive recipients of (TB) interventions and are instead acting as the engines for the actions and strategies involved therein.

By so doing they interrupting the spread of TB and mitigate its impact. Otherwise by being passive we would be turning our backs on the possibility of winning the war against HIV/AIDS.”

-Gaoussou Coulibaly, Bouaké Eveil, Cote d'Ivoire

Main message: HIV Activists are integrating TB into their advocacy.
Highlights: What are we learning?

- Supporting activism is an ongoing effort that requires a strategy to share information and support.
- Need to have strong partners that are resourced on national level that have an independent voice. Linked with the how civil societies are valued on global and national level
- Global activism needs to grounded and made relevant through national work
- Community literacy for researchers and policy makers is just as important as research and policy literacy for community activists
- TB care needs to address social issues just as importantly as it needs to address biomedical issues.
Striking a Balance/ Some Unresolved Challenges

- Limited national level support and resources
- The role of TB/HIV activists in speaking for all TB activists
- Strategies for communication and addressing linguistic diversity
- Resource mobilization and political will for TB needs an urgent boost whereas activism and community building can be a slower process
- Balancing the utility and burden of documentation and evaluation strategies
- Supporting global level activist through grounded community based leadership and representation and accountability