



Message from the Chair of the TB/HIV Working Group

1. **New guidelines for Intensified Case Finding and Isoniazid Preventive Therapy Developed**

In January 2010, WHO organized a meeting to prepare guidelines on preventive therapy and intensified case finding for TB in adults and children living with HIV. These much anticipated guidelines will be released in the third quarter of 2010. The guidelines reconceptualise the 1998 WHO/UNAIDS Policy statement on TB preventive therapy and TB case finding in people living with HIV, as integral parts of HIV treatment, care and support services. The new guidelines outline how to diagnose latent TB infection in people living with HIV, and how to integrate intensified TB case finding and isoniazid preventive therapy into HIV programs. For more information about the outcomes of this meeting see: http://www.who.int/hiv/topics/tb/preventive_therapy/en/index.html

2. **Successful TB/HIV meeting prior to CROI (Conference on Retroviruses and Opportunistic Infections)**

The Stop TB Department of the World Health Organization and the Consortium to Respond Effectively to the AIDS/TB Epidemic (CREATE) have been organizing an HIV/TB research frontiers meeting on behalf of the TB/HIV Working Group of the Stop TB Partnership affiliated with the Conference on Retroviruses and Opportunistic Infections since 2007. These meetings have successfully raised the profile of HIV/TB among HIV researchers by sharing data from ongoing studies, identifying research gaps and stimulating further HIV/TB research. The fourth meeting in the series was conducted in San Francisco, USA on February 16, 2010. It was co-chaired by Dr Kenneth Castro, Assistant Surgeon General and Director of Division of Tuberculosis Elimination Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and Dr Alison Grant, Head of the Clinical Research Unit in London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine. I opened the meeting in my capacity as the chair of the TB/HIV Working Group and discussed the popularity of the meetings among HIV researchers who find that they stimulate scientific debates and discussions around HIV/TB. The meeting was attended by more than 65 HIV researchers and public health policy makers.

The main objective of the meeting was to promote high level scientific interchange of ideas and debates around isoniazid preventive therapy (IPT) and its role in improving survival among people living with HIV so as to generate questions for future research. New data on the impact of IPT on mortality of people living with HIV was shared from Botswana, India and South Africa. Read more about the meeting and see the presentations at: <http://www.stoptb.org/wg/tb%5Fhiv/meetingsevents.asp>

3. **INAT - Introducing New Approaches and Tools**

Introducing New Approaches and Tools (INAT) is a new sub-group of the DOTS Expansion Working Group of the Stop TB Partnership. The goal of INAT is to ensure that TB endemic countries receive relevant and timely information and technical assistance to enable the rapid evaluation and introduction of new tools, policies and approaches for TB prevention and control. The sub-group met for the first time in Stockholm, Sweden on February 23-24, 2010 along with partners from all the Working Groups of the Stop TB Partnership, and key stakeholders. Participants developed the work plan of the new sub-group and identified key objectives such as the need to create awareness around new tools, new policies and new approaches; to promote their implementation; to set priorities for operational and implementation research; to advocate for and to monitor the uptake and expansion of the new tools. TB/HIV was represented by the Secretariat who presented on our strategies and needs for new tools.

4. **Utilizing TB services a conduit for provision of ART: the example of Mali**
Provision of ART through TB services is a key component of the Policy on TB/HIV Collaborative Activities and can help achieve Universal Access goals as well as reduce TB death and illness in people living with HIV. 30 people from national TB and HIV programs, NGOs, the private sector, civil society, the National Federation of Community Health Centers and UNAIDS came together in December 8-9, 2009 in Mali, to develop a model for the decentralized provision of ART to HIV-infected TB patients. This decentralization of ART services is now also included in Mali's strategic plan for HIV in 2010.

The model developed includes operational directives, monitoring and evaluation tools and planning to provide HIV services, including ART to HIV-infected TB patients in community health centers and to strengthen TB/HIV collaborative activities, in particular the Three Is in referral health centers. Implementation of the model should start in the first quarter of 2010.

5. **A workshop to build the capacity of drug user networks to work on TB/HIV collaborative activities** Will be held in Liverpool, UK prior to the International Harm Reduction Conference. It is the second in a joint effort between UNAIDS, HIT, INPUD and WHO. The workshops are designed to build the capacity of drug user networks who work on HIV issues to be able to include TB. This is in line with the 2010 strategy of the TB/HIV Working Group to focus on Eastern Europe and Central Asia and in particular, drug use and co-infection.

When: April 22-23, 2010

Where: Liverpool, UK

6. **The 16th TB/HIV Core Group** meeting will be held from May 26-28, 2010 in Almaty, Kazakhstan. The meeting is kindly being hosted by KNCV Kazakhstan and will focus on regional implementation of TB/HIV collaborative activities with a special emphasis on issues such as drug resistant TB and HIV and drug use and TB/HIV. Eastern Europe and Central Asia.

When: May 26-28, 2010

Where: Almaty, Kazakhstan

7. **A Europe and Central Asian focused TB/HIV Working Group meeting** will be held in conjunction with the International AIDS Conference 2010 in Vienna, Austria. The meeting will bring together all national AIDS and TB program managers, representatives from Departments of Justice, harm reduction, prisons, donors, NGOS and civil society from countries in the region. The main aim of the meeting is to create an opportunity for the sharing of experiences and best practices for greater political advocacy, resource mobilization and accelerated implementation of collaborative TB/HIV activities within the context of the European region. The meeting will also help countries to ensure the coherent inclusion of key activities including relevant policy and program changes into national strategic and operational plans.

When: July 16-17, 2010

Where: Vienna, Austria

Dr Diane Havlir
Chair

Dr Haileyesus Getahun
Secretary