



RAISING TB AWARENESS THROUGH SCHOOL-BASED ACTIVITIES

Background

The Republic of Georgia has an estimated TB incidence rate of 116 per 100,000 population. Georgia is classified by WHO as a high burden multidrug-resistant TB (MDR TB) country, with 11% of new and 38% of retreatment cases diagnosed as MDR TB. With case detection at only 68%, nearly one out of every three cases of TB in Georgia is currently being missed by the health system – fueling the continuing spread of TB and MDR TB throughout the country. In 2012, the USAID Georgia TB Prevention Project (TPP) conducted a Knowledge, Attitudes, and Practice (KAP) survey to gain information about how health providers, high-risk groups, and the general public view TB and TB risk in Georgia. The survey found significant gaps among both high- and low-risk groups regarding how TB is spread and treated, the availability of free diagnosis and treatment services, and where to go to receive these services. Through its advocacy, communication, and social mobilization (ACSM) component, TPP is supporting informational campaigns and other school-based targeted interventions to increase awareness of and demand for TB services among teachers and youth in Georgia.

TPP School-Based Activities

Through its small grants program, TPP is supporting local partner NGO the Georgia Health Promotion and Education Foundation (GHPEF) to implement a community level information and youth awareness raising campaign. The team has designed and distributed leaflets, table calendars, t-shirts, and CDs. The CDs have been distributed among teachers, and contain simple presentations and public service announcements on TB designed by the TPP project.

Why Target Schools?

It is not enough to treat TB as a medical problem—it must be viewed as a social and public health problem that affects us all.

As leaders in their schools and communities, teachers and students have great potential and are uniquely positioned to disseminate accurate TB information to their peers and families, dispel stigma and myths surrounding TB, and advocate for widespread TB control efforts in their communities.

As part of broader school health initiatives, providing youth with TB information and screening services will help them make better, more informed decisions about their health and lead healthier lives.



A still from a PSA developed by the USAID TPP Project. To date, the project has developed six PSAs designed to promote knowledge of key TB symptoms, the importance of early detection, and access to TB diagnosis and treatment.

November 2014

GHPEF, in partnership with the Ministry of Education and the Teachers' Professional Development Center, organized training workshops for 129 teachers to improve their understanding of TB issues, provide them with correct information and dispel prevailing myths, and discuss possible future activities that can be conducted at their respective schools to mobilize against TB. Following the training workshops, informational seminars have been organized at 120 schools in four regions of Georgia and are ongoing.

World TB Day

To celebrate World TB Day 2014, the TPP team worked with student advocates and other stakeholders to distribute informational materials in public places such as grocery stores and movie theaters. At the national level, the TPP team arranged an art workshop for children afflicted with TB and displayed finished pieces of art developed by the students and their teachers at a high-level TB meeting of U.S. and Georgian government representatives.



Children with TB display their art work for World TB Day. The TPP team is working actively with MOHLSA to combat pediatric TB in Georgia. In 2014, TPP facilitated the development of the first national pediatric TB guidelines and trained 26 TB specialists in their use.



Georgian students hand out TB informational materials to celebrate World TB Day 2014.



The **Georgia TB Prevention Project (TPP)** is a four-year cooperative agreement (2011 – 2015) funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and implemented by University Research Co., LLC (URC). TPP works with the Ministry of Labor, Health, and Social Affairs (MoLHSA) in Georgia to improve clinical services and strengthen the country's capacity to address some of the current critical challenges in the treatment of TB and MDR TB, including: 1) improving early detection of TB suspected cases in general health facilities; 2) strengthening the quality of full implementation of directly observed treatment short-course (DOTS) and DOTS plus nationwide; and 3) providing limited assistance to recently established private treatment sites nationwide in updating their physical infrastructure to meet TB best practices standards and to improve infection control.