Ramadan campaign generates donations for TB patients and their families in Afghanistan

Stop TB Partnership Afghanistan announced its Ramadan campaign to generate donations for TB patients and their families here in Kabul on July 10. A month long campaign by the Board, partners and the secretariat will target business community, individual and organizational philanthropists to seek funds in the Muslim holy month of Ramadan. Ramazan will start on August 1 and has a tradition of charity and generous donations to the needy and poor. According to an estimate, globally 20-30 billion dollar zakat (the mandatory financial contribution by Muslims towards welfare of needy and poor) is collected and disbursed. Afghanistan also has a history of charity in Ramadan capitalizing on which Stop TB Partnership Afghanistan collected cash and kind donations in 2009 and 2010.

The Board and partners of Stop TB Partnership decided to launch the campaign ahead of the month of Ramadan to make the campaign more structured and targeted in collaboration with Eastern Mediterranean Partnership to Stop TB. The meeting attended by Board members, Chair Dr Sima Samar, representatives of media, civil society and bilateral partners including CIDA and Italian Cooperation; agreed to approach Afghanistan Chamber of Commerce, major media outlets and relevant Government ministries to promote the message of financial support to TB patients and their families in Ramadan. Secretariat, Chair, Board members and some partners announced contributing their one day salary to the campaign. The campaign will be replicated through sub national partnerships in Herat, Kandhar, Mazar e Sharif and Nanghar provinces.

Stop TB Partnership Afghanistan was established in 2009. Partnership is a legal, registered coalition of public and private health sectors, civil society, affected communities, development partners, religious leaders, media and business sector. Since its establishment, the Partnership has successfully mobilized and sustained political and development support to TB control and care in Afghanistan. Board of the Partnership comprises eminent individuals and organizations contributing to TB control in the country while the Board is led by Dr Simar Samar, an internationally acclaimed Afghan human rights activist. The Partnership in recent years has expanded to provincial levels. Partnership’s campaign to promote patient activism has resulted into creation of patients associations in several provinces of the country which have been very active in bringing suspects to the TB centers. Another successful campaign of Partnership involved women committees at grass root level to raise awareness among women and encourage suspects to visit TB centers.