

## Stop TB Afghanistan

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### Value added of the partnering initiative

- **Why was the partnering initiative established? What was the major problem that you wanted to address by establishing a partnering initiative?**

Stop TB Afghanistan was established to eliminate TB as a public health problem. Its vision is a TB free Afghanistan by ensuring that every TB patients has access to effective diagnosis, treatment and cure, also halting the transmission of TB across the country and reducing the inequitable social and economic toll of TB.

- **How has the partnering initiative responded to that problem? In what way has the situation changed? What has been the value added for different partners and for TB patients?**

Through the partnering process Afghanistan stop TB partnership could mobilized 1.2 million youth to march on WTBD 2009, and commemorated WTBD2010 by participation of vice president of government of Afghanistan. By using partnering approach Afghanistan stop TB partnership established Afghanistan TB patients association including 20 TB cured patients men and women as *a social, non political, independent and non profiting organization which implements its activities according to valid laws of the country, mandate of this organization is to deliver the human right especially for patients, disables, women and children according to international convention*. This association members work in community and refer suspected TB cases from community to health facilities which is increasing TB case detection and they have quarterly meeting to report their activities and prepare their next quarter meeting.

- **Do you think the partnering initiative has worked so far?**
  - **If it has worked well, why? How have you set it up? What process have you used? What were the main steps?**

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- **If it has not worked that well, why? What do you think has hindered your efforts? Would you try it again, and why? How would you revitalize it?**

The partnering initiative is a good opportunity to reiterate commitment towards supporting TB patients and playing a major role in prevention and treatment of TB since fighting TB is not related to medical professionals only, but it needs a multi sectoral approach. The process which was used for partnership: the first step was building a vision according the needs, challenges, resources, opportunities; then the second stage was identification and dialogue among the partners to have their commitment; then an individual work plan prepared and compiled as annual work plan of Stop TB partnership; then the implementation phase all activities implemented in close coordination with all partners.

- **Who among the following stakeholders – national TB programme, civil society (faith based organizations, non-governmental organizations, community based organizations) and the private/business sector – is involved? In what way?**

The implementation of activities of National TB Program is supported by technical and financial contribution of our partners namely: GFATM, WHO, JICA, CIDA, Italian Cooperation, and USAID, as well as the central unit team of NTP, the field staff, and the BPHS implementers. The National TB Control Programme has also established a vast network of national and international partners to coordinated and continuously support its interventions. It is staffed by qualified and motivated health professionals who lead and carry out TB prevention, detection, diagnosis and treatment of TB patients in order to reduce the impact of TB as a public health problem in the country. Also there are some representatives from ministry of Women Affairs, Education, higher education, Islamic affairs, culture and information, academia, media.

- **What does each partner perceive as an advantage of being in the partnering initiative?**

Each partner wants to fight TB by using the partnership approach. For example, TB patients association has 20 members including 8 women. They give awareness for communities and refer TB suspect cases from community to health facility.

- **What sustains their commitment? If partners are not engaged, what are you planning to do to attract and maintain their interest?**

All partners and individuals through the partnering process have committed to fight TB and have a TB free country. Some partners like CIDA is interested to know why TB cases are more among women in Afghanistan and they would like to engage women in controlling TB cases. This is why there is a plan for conducting orientations workshops, TB campaigns by women for women, as well as TB and gender research to know the causes of why TB is more in women then men in Afghanistan.

**Building the partnering initiative**

- **What have been some of your challenges in bringing the various stakeholders together in a partnering initiative?**

The following are main challenging in TB control program and partnering process:

- Security
- Accessibility
- Human resource development

However, partnership was of help because through partnership we involve other NGOs and BPHS partners to support TB program through additional human resources. We also involve community and empower them to go to health facilities and support program by referring TB suspect cases.

- **Have partners done a mapping/inventory of the resources (financial, technical, human, in-kind) that each can contribute to the implementation of the national TB plan and in which area of the country? If yes, could you share your plan showing various roles and responsibilities and highlighting possible remaining gaps?**

All partners and stake holders of TB program implement their activities according to the national TB strategic plan in all over the country, in close collaboration with NTP. Most activities of TB program are covered by Global Fund. There is no duplication in activities and all gaps of programs are covered by different partners.

- **Have the partners jointly mobilized resources to implement a shared national TB plan? What type of resources have they mobilized (financial, technical, human, in-kind)? How did this process work?**

A good example for joint resource mobilization is Ramadan Charity campaigns for TB patients and their families. Responding to a call from the Eastern Mediterranean Partnership to Stop TB and the WHO Regional Office for the Eastern Mediterranean, the Stop TB Partnership in Afghanistan conducted a fund-raising campaign for TB patients and their families in Ramadan, a Muslim holy month preferred for charity among the poor and deserving. The campaign, which was launched on August 21, 2009, received an overwhelming response from all sections of the society, with cash and kind support pouring in throughout the month. After endorsement by the Coordinating Board of the Partnership, the WHO-based Secretariat, in collaboration with NTP, WHO office in Kabul and partner NGOs, designed a series of activities to mobilize local charity and donations. The Coordinating Board started with its own contribution to the collection and then circulated the message among other circles. The National Stop TB Partnership and the Sub-National Partnership of Herat collected US \$11,000 in cash and commodities worth US \$1,000. Following the example of the national partnership, the sub-national partnership of Mazar-e-Sharif also organized similar events. Participating in the noble cause, a private television channel offered free advertisements up to US \$5,000.

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Also the Global Fund is a member of partnership and most of activities of ACSM and TB program are covered by Global Fund.

▪ **Which national TB plan activities are the partners contributing to?**

Partners contribute to the following aspects of the national TB plan:

- Pursue high quality Dots expansion and enhancement
- TB/HIV and MDR other challenges
- Health system strengthening
- Engagement of all health care providers
- Empowerment of people with TB and communities
- Enable and promote research.

There are some problem in TB that need to be researched, like TB in gender. In 2011 a research will be conducted to know the causes of high incidence of TB in female then men.

▪ **How have partners organized their work? Do they regularly meet? What structure has been chosen (if this has been formalized)?**

There is TB task force and Global Fund coordination meeting weekly and some working groups like ACSM, TB/HIV,URBUN Dots bi weekly according to the need. The stop TB partnership meeting is quarterly and in some occasion according to the need. There is no relationship between CCM and partnership but most members of CCM are members of Partnership.

<b>Thinking through and taking stock</b>
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▪ **Which stakeholders of society do you see as essential or ideal members to a partnering initiative, if you want to effectively address TB in your country context (please answer this independently of whether these stakeholders are currently partners of your initiative)?**

There are some essential stakeholders like CIDA, USAID, Italian Cooperation, Global Fund, related ministries, and some partners like TB CAP, BARC,WHO. We would like to invite some BPHS NGOs. In addition, we are aiming at inviting ministries like ministry of finance and the business sector.

▪ **What do you think the major outcomes of the partnering initiative are? In what way the partnering initiative has benefited the work of the partners? What do you think could be strengthened/improved?**

Partnership is a good approach for fighting TB by involving all partners, ministries, civil societies, NGOs and other stakeholders. It is a good approach for different sectors to perform their role in fighting TB.

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For improving and strengthening the partnership, an operational plan is necessary to involve all partners and stakeholder, in order to give them a role in fighting TB. Following are some examples of achievements of partnership:

- Establishment of National Stop TB partnership board.
- Official launching of stop TB partnership.
- Commemoration of WTBD 2009 in Afghanistan is an event carried out in close collaboration with the Ministry of Education, Ministry of Culture and Information, Ministry of Public Health, and conducting of one million marches all over the country to show the solidarity of youth with TB patients and their families.
- Conducting ACSM training workshop for 50 participants from different constitutions like NTP technical staff, journalists, policy makers, program mangers, etc by technical supporting of JHU and WHO.
- Participation of stop TB partnership board members in third forum of stop TB in Brazil.
- Participation of stop TB partnership board members in 4th Meeting of the Coordinating Board Eastern Mediterranean Partnership to Stop TB Cairo, Egypt.
- Establishment of ACSM working group in NTP and preparing of work plan.
- Establishment of first sub national stop TB partnership in Hirat and official launching of sub national stop TB partnership.
- Establishment of Afghanistan TB patients Association.
- Conducting of donation campaign for TB patients in Ramadan.
- Achieving License of legalization for Stop TB partnership from MoJ of GoA

In Afghanistan Stop TB Partnership there is one representative from each partner, and the activities implemented according to their work plan. Using this approach prevents from duplication and establish a good coordination mechanism.

▪ **How do you think the Stop TB Partnership could support your partnering initiative?**

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▪ **Anything else you would like to highlight?!**

The Stop TB Partnership Afghanistan is collecting Zakat and donations for Tuberculosis (TB) affected patients and families in the Muslim holy month of Ramadan. The Stop TB Partnership is running a funds collection campaign for TB patients and their families in Ramadan. Ramadan is the holy month considered a preferred choice for charity among poor and deserving by Muslims throughout the world. The campaign has received an over whelming response from all sections of society and a lot of cash and kind support is being generated in the campaign.

After endorsement by the Coordinating Board of the Partnership, the WHO based Secretariat in collaboration with TB Control Program, WHO Office in Kabul and partner NGOs designed a campaign of different activities in order to mobilize local charity and donations throughout the two last weeks of Ramadan. The Coordinating Board started with its own contribution to the collection and then disseminating the message among their circles.

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In this regard, Sub national partnerships in Heart , Mazar-e-Sharif also organized similar event and are collecting funds and commodities and food for TB patients and families. The partnerships in Afghanistan will continue the fundraising; the support collected will be continuously distributed to TB patients and their families in Afghanistan.

*Please attach any significant picture/video you might have about recent activities of the partnering initiative in your country.*



Afghanistan TB patient's association meeting