



The Damien Foundation in Uzbekistan

Supporting the National Tuberculosis Control Programme

Since the '90es, matters have worsened considerably regarding tuberculosis in Uzbekistan. The death rate is among the highest recorded in the former Soviet Union. This is all the more alarming since more than half of persons who contracted the disease were not detected in time. Moreover, Multi-Drug Resistant tuberculosis is rapidly spreading.

The main issue is the lack of qualified personnel at all levels, the lack of medicines and equipment as well as the poor quality of laboratories with insufficient access for the population.

Since 2003, the Directly Observed Treatment Strategy has been adopted throughout Uzbekistan and given priority to. International sponsors and NGOs have increased their efforts to attain 100% DOTS coverage by 2006.

Since 2005, The Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Malaria and Tuberculosis has supported the national programme throughout the country.

Since 2003, the Damien Foundation has technically assisted the national programme in three provinces, Kashkadarya, Bukhara and Surkhandarya. The German Credit Institution for Reconstruction (KfW) for its part has supplied the programme with medicines against tuberculosis, microscopes and laboratory equipment in all 3 provinces.

Expanding and improving DOTS quality standards

The Damien Foundation has worked closely with the Ministry of Health in Uzbekistan, coordinating and technically supporting the use of DOTS in all 3 provinces. Most significantly, this has helped to increase the technical, medical and management of human resources potential at local level.

From 2004 to 2005, the Foundation trained 2,030 persons, experts on tuberculosis, general practitioners, paramedics and laboratory personnel. In order to ensure proper, regular supervision of programmes, we trained and encouraged managers heading the programmes to ensure tuberculosis control at provincial and district level. By 2005, we managed to spread the use of DOTS to all our districts.

In the near future, we ought to tighten quality controls on laboratory supplies, medicines and equipment. The same goes for our monitoring system on epidemiological data. We intend to set up a programme on medical health training in order to heighten the rate of patient detection and cures.

We have recorded a significant increase in Uzbekistan of patients infected with HIV/AIDS. We also plan to set up a programme to train personnel in the AIDS and tuberculosis department as well as workers in the Voluntary Counselling and Testing department.

Implementing DOTS Plus

Once the quality of DOTS is established, we will face a most important challenge – how to deal with Multi-Drug Resistant tuberculosis and how to spread the use of DOTS Plus to 3 provinces. Considering the high rate of prisoners suffering from pulmonary tuberculosis and MDR tuberculosis, another important challenge will be to introduce the programme on tuberculosis in jails.

Summary

Start of the project	2004
Local partner	Ministry of Health
Project type	Only tuberculosis
Population covered in 2006	5,667.090
Patients detected and treated in 2006	4,852 tuberculosis patients
Expenditure in 2006	€ 136,333