



UZBEKISTAN TUBERCULOSIS ROADMAP OVERVIEW, FISCAL YEAR 2021

This is an overview of the USAID/Uzbekistan FY 2021 Tuberculosis (TB) Roadmap, implemented with FY 2020 budget. It was developed in consultation with the National TB Program (NTP) and with the participation of national and international partners involved in TB prevention and care in the country.

While both the TB incidence and mortality have decreased in Uzbekistan, persisting challenges exist in closing the gap between the estimated TB incidence and cases diagnosed and notified. Additionally, among the high multidrug-resistant TB (MDR-TB) burden countries, Uzbekistan is ranked 16th.¹ In 2019, 16,272 TB cases were notified to the NTP, 74 percent of whom were tested with rapid diagnostics at time of diagnosis.² MDR-TB poses a significant public health threat; it is estimated that 12 percent of new TB cases and 22 percent of previously treated TB cases have MDR-TB.³ In recent years, the treatment success rate (TSR) has remained quite high at above 90 percent; and in 2019, all diagnosed drug-resistant TB (DR-TB) patients were enrolled on treatment.⁴

Uzbekistan is committed to eliminating TB by 2050. Uzbekistan's National TB Strategy 2021-2026 is currently in development. The goal of the strategy is to reduce the TB incidence rate by 50 percent and the number of TB deaths by 75 percent by 2025 (as compared to 2015). Furthermore, the NTP aims to achieve the United Nations General Assembly High-Level Meeting on TB (UNGA) TB diagnosis and treatment targets by focusing on DR-TB patients, childhood TB, and treatment of TB infection (TBI). More specifically, the strategy will focus on: expanding access to diagnostics; ensuring access to quality, patient-centered TB services especially for high-risk groups; scaling-up prevention programming; and strengthening the management of the TB response.

To further support TB control efforts, as part of the Government of Uzbekistan's comprehensive health reforms, the National Strategy Concept of Healthcare Improvement for 2019-2025 specifically outlines TB incidence reduction goals. In addition, two presidential decrees prioritize TB service provision—the *Improvement of TB and Pulmonology Services* and *Accelerating Pharmaceutical Industry Development*. Additionally, the Ministry of Health (MOH) and Ministry of Finance (MOF) are working together to address health financing reforms in order to offer social health insurance and a state-guaranteed package of healthcare services starting January 2021.

¹ World Health Organization. Global Tuberculosis Report, 2020.

² Ibid.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Ibid.

The proposed FY20 USAID TB budget for Uzbekistan is \$6 million. With this level of funding, USAID will support the following technical areas:

REACH

TB diagnosis

USAID will support the NTP in strengthening the TB diagnostic network, laboratory management, and implementing a laboratory logistics management information system (LMIS) to allow for the effective scale-up of TB and DR-TB case detection and drug-susceptibility testing (DST). More specifically, USAID will provide technical assistance (TA) to the NTP to strengthen the use of data for decision making, strengthen laboratory quality management systems, conduct regular laboratory audits, identify and help address gaps in the Xpert[®] MTB/RIF (GeneXpert) network, optimize the specimen transport systems, maximize and build the capacity of current health staff and more. USAID will also assess laboratory infrastructure to address infection prevention and control and help introduce child-friendly diagnostics.

Engaging all care providers

USAID will support an increase in quality of care and improve reporting in all facilities. More specifically, USAID will build the TB detection, diagnosis, treatment, and care capacity of primary healthcare centers, including building supportive supervision structures to ensure quality of care as well as advocacy to support outpatient care for MDR-TB patients. Additionally, USAID will employ a multidisciplinary team approach to further ensure the provision of quality TB service delivery, including treatment support and adherence counseling.

Community TB care delivery

USAID is revitalizing TB prevention and case-finding efforts outside of health facilities for high-risk groups. USAID will engage the community (including faith-based partners, the private sector, neighborhood associations, etc.) and employ social and behavior change communication to encourage high-risk individuals to get tested for TB. Additionally, USAID, through local organizations, will ensure that diagnosed patients are rapidly linked to comprehensive TB services. USAID will also help the NTP to engage with TB survivors to support communities to address persisting stigma and discrimination associated with TB.

CURE

Drug-susceptible TB (DS-TB) treatment

Persisting challenges exist in transitioning from heavily facility-based health systems of TB care and service delivery to a more patient-centered, outpatient focused, clinical

model. USAID has made substantial investments, including providing essential TA, to help the NTP make this transition. USAID will continue to provide support to strengthen procurement and supply chain management with a specific focus on quality assurance of TB medicines. For example, USAID has worked with in-country partners to ensure access to and use of a supply of high-quality DS-TB regimens and all-oral, shorter treatment regimens for DR-TB. Moving forward, USAID will continue to help the NTP ensure the use of high-quality TB medicines and advocate for the development and implementation of guidelines that include more patient-centric care models, including the management of adverse drug events. Additionally, USAID will employ a multidisciplinary team approach to help increase treatment adherence and completion as well as case detection, referral, and management. Through local partners, USAID will specifically work to strengthen pediatric TB services by including psychosocial support services for children and their families.

Multidrug-resistant TB (MDR-TB) treatment

To further improve and sustain the DR-TB treatment successes, USAID will work to ensure the availability of high-quality, all-oral shorter treatment regimens for DR-TB as well as help improve the national guidelines for managing adverse drug events. More specifically, USAID will provide training and foster mentorship to improve the quality of clinical management of DR-TB patients. USAID will also support the NTP in the introduction of new diagnostic algorithms that include line probe assays (LPA) and active TB drug-safety monitoring (aDSM) and management guidelines.

PREVENT

Prevention

USAID prevention efforts will focus on intensifying contact investigation interventions by implementing new technologies and effectively training staff to trace possible transmission among contacts. USAID will also provide TA to help the NTP in updating TB prevention guidelines and to help in the introduction of infection prevention and control measures at oblast-level hospitals. With a focus on reaching high-risk groups, USAID will also help the NTP to strengthen the collection, analysis, and use of prevention data.

SELF-RELIANCE

Commitment and sustainability

The Government of Uzbekistan remains committed to achieving the UNGA targets and eliminating TB. With the release of a presidential decree on TB services in 2019, the government demonstrated the commitment to roll-out new approaches to TB prevention, diagnosis, and treatment, including a comprehensive package of services for high-risk and vulnerable groups. The decree also committed to a substantial increase in domestic

resources to fight TB. Even so, persisting challenges remain in ensuring the speedy implementation of health system reforms, especially for TB services, and in transitioning to expanded outpatient MDR-TB treatment and care. With TA and support from USAID, the NTP has been leading the charge in promptly updating its policies and introducing innovative diagnostic technologies.

Capacity and functioning systems

USAID continues to support the NTP and accelerate its response to the TB epidemic through innovation and health system strengthening. To this end, as the country transitions to domestic procurement, USAID will help ensure that drug procurement and supply chain systems are sustainably managed. USAID will also support the NTP in strengthening health management information systems (HMIS) and monitoring and evaluation (M&E).