ALLIANCE FOR PUBLIC HEALTH:
response to challenges caused by the Russian aggression against Ukraine
(situational report no. 5 of 26.03.2022, special issue: Tuberculosis)

SUMMARY

This report continues a series of reports from Alliance for Public Health regarding the response to the Russian aggression. In particular, we are covering **tuberculosis response** activities, which is one of the key lines of activity of APH. We do not cease our operations, but we are transforming our activities to help war-affected people (first of all, vulnerable populations) and ensure, as much as possible, safety of the personnel of APH and partner NGOs. During the war, people with TB have become even more vulnerable because of the risk of interruption of treatment or late diagnosis, so our fundamental position is to preserve service provision where possible and, as much as possible, prevent an outbreak of TB epidemic that is characteristic to military conflicts.

The month of the war showed that in Ukraine there is a risk of interruption of TB treatment for more than 10,000 patients, especially those in areas directly affected by Russian aggression, contact with whom was lost for various reasons. APH, together with Public Health Center, the 100% Life Network, the Red Cross, TB People Ukraine, all partners, makes every effort to continue all programs, keeping in touch and providing assistance to patients!



ACTIVITIES BEFORE THE WAR

Since 2021, APH pursued the following activities under the current grant of the Global Fund:

- Community-based **TB case finding among homeless people and former inmates** (in 2021, 12,288 persons were reached, 206 of them were found to be TB+)
- **TB case finding among Roma population** and social support of patients and their families via Roma intermediaries (in 2021, 9746 persons were reached, 107 of them found to be TB+).
- **TB case finding among people in difficult life conditions** who receive social services from social care facilities (in 2021, 34,426 persons were reached, 194 of them found to be TB+).
- Community-based **TB case finding among PWID/PWUD** (in 2021, 3463 persons were reached, 180 of them were found to be TB+).
- **Optimization of TB case finding among contact persons** and their medical and social support throughout the period of observation (in 2021, 2880 contact persons were reached, 208 of them found to be TB+).
- **Providing medical and social support to patients with TB/DR-TB.** Building patients' adherence to TB treatment (in 2021, the support was provided to 5012 patients with drug-susceptible TB and 3114 patients with DR-TB).
- **Improving the quality of life and effectiveness of treatment of patients with DR-TB, HIV/DR-TB through mental health care** (in 2021, 198 patients were screened for depressive conditions, and depression was confirmed in 94 patients; 50 patients received comprehensive therapy, 34 received non-drug treatment).

ACTIVITIES AFTER THE START OF THE WAR



TB testing, CO 'Light of Hope' (Poltava)

From February 24 to March 23 this year, **2965** persons were screened for TB. **745** persons were diagnosed, 21 clients were found to be TB+, and **20** clients (including from those found in the previous period) started treatment. For example, in the same period of 2021, 88 TB cases were found, which means the diagnostic activities have slowed down). There are problems/limitations for activities on outreach routes in the regions of heavy fighting; also, because of problems in the work of Internet resources, updating the data base is slowed down, but, in many regions, early case finding projects go on, and in some, such activities are now being renewed.

TB case finding among homeless people and former inmates

- The activities continue in the following oblasts: Vinnytsia, Volyn, Dnipropetrovsk, Zaporizhzhia, Ivano-Frankivsk, Kyiv, Lviv, Mykolaiv, Odesa, Poltava, Rivne, Ternopil, Kherson, and Chernivtsi.

Outreach work has stopped in Kharkiv oblast.

TB case finding among Roma population

- The activities are carried on in Zakarpattia, Kyiv and Odesa oblasts. ***The services have been suspended in the parts of Kyiv oblast where fighting goes on.***

TB case finding among people in difficult life situations

- The activities were targeted at government-controlled (before the war) territories of Donetsk and Luhansk oblast, and at Kharkiv oblast.
- ***After the war began:***
  - Service provision **continues at the sites in the north of Donetsk oblast.** The operations are complicated by inflow of many IDPs in relatively safe towns such as Kramatorsk, Slovyansk, Bakhmut, Dobropillia, etc. To provide maximum support to the people, project funds have been re-distributed and humanitarian commodities were procured, so now humanitarian aid is provided throughout the region.
  - **Activities in Mariupol have stopped** — contacts with four social workers are lost.
  - The work in **Luhansk** region sites is complicated. The town of Svatovo is now occupied; Kreminna, Rubizhne, Sievierodonetsk and Lysychansk have been heavily damaged, their infrastructure is in ruins; social workers are still there, but, because of constant shelling, they only provide humanitarian aid, and they are running out of it. Currently, it is impossible to deliver any commodities to those towns.
  - In **Kharkiv**, the situation is very difficult, but the work is carried on wherever possible. In Kharkiv, humanitarian commodities procured under the project are being distributed. Referring clients to healthcare facilities is difficult. According to the data as of 22 March 2022, **oblast TB dispensary has started receiving clients who had been referred there for medical examination.**
- According to plans, in March and April, activities had to began in the city of Kyiv and in Lviv and Kherson oblasts.
  - Activities have started in **Lviv oblast**, where there are very many refugees now. It is expected that reaching IDPs will greatly increase, so the project team is going to revise the target indicator. We have procured mattresses for IDP centers.
  - In **Kherson oblast**, the activities presently **cannot be started**. It is expected that the work there will be renewed after liberation from the Russian invaders. Delivery of humanitarian aid has been planned, but it cannot be done yet.
  - In **Kyiv city,** humanitarian aid is being delivered in a targeted manner; currently, referring clients to healthcare facilities is a problem because of movement restrictions, curfew and other war-related circumstances. Centers of social services are providing humanitarian aid and counseling to IDPs temporarily staying in Kyiv and further moving to other evacuation areas. Presently, public transportation is limited, and movement of residents between the banks of the Dnieper is restricted, which makes providing support and accessing health services difficult. Beginning of the project activities will start after the end of fighting (approximately, April or May).

History of activities: humanitarian aid (INGO 'Social Initiatives for Occupational Safety and Health')

Working directly with people in difficult life situations from the very beginning of the war, this organization has asked the Alliance for Public health to repurpose available funds and use them to procure humanitarian commodities. Thanks to a quick response, funds of the grant — in addition to financing actual project activities — were used to meet basic needs of the clients, first of all, of families with children in difficult life situations. In particular, humanitarian goods have been delivered to clients in Kyiv, Dobropillia, Bakhmut, Slovyansk, Kreminna, Rubizhna, Sievierodonetsk, etc. As of today, contacts with partners (social service centers in the cities of Kyiv and Kharkiv, and in Kherson, Luhansk and Donetsk oblasts) are maintained through social workers; information on the needs of clients is being collected, and the work on meeting humanitarian needs of the most affected people continues.



TB case finding among PWID/PWUD

- The services under this project are integrated in the HIV prevention package; the activities cover Vinnytsia, Volyn, Dnipropetrovvsk, Ivano-Frankivsk, Kyiv, Lviv, Odesa, Poltava, Rivne, Chernivtsi oblasts. Operations are difficult in **Donetsk, Zaporizhzhia, (Melitopol cannot provide the full scope of services), Kharkiv and Kherson oblasts.** During the war, all HCFs accept clients coming for diagnosis, there have been no rejections.

History of activities: Rivne and Volyn oblasts



Working under this component in Rivne oblast gathers pace. So far, the situation in the region is relatively calm, people are recovering and returning to active work. The work is affected by problems with transportation, as some of the personnel live in the city, while the rest live outside, and it is difficult to commute. In Volyn oblast, considering the stabilization of the situation in the region, service providers have renewed and continue enrolling new clients. Thanks to the efforts of the consultants, TB was diagnosed in three PWID. These persons were helped to get to healthcare facilities to get examined and begin treatment.

Potential problems: Effectiveness of the project may be affected by the growing prices of foods, because the initial value of food certificates has decreased by now. Besides, certain deficit of food is arising in the region.

Optimization of TB case finding among contact persons

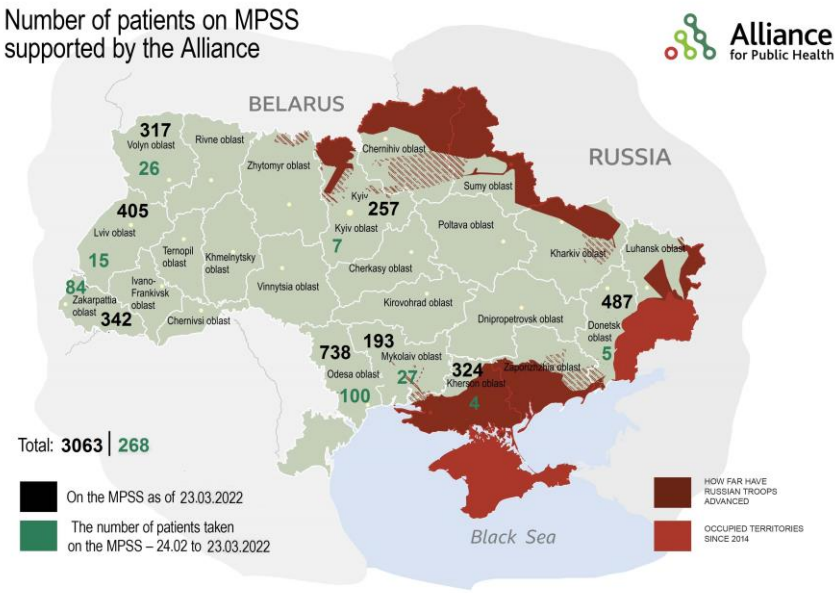
Clients who have had close or indirect contacts with people with TB are being referred to screening for TB.

- The activities continue in three regions of Ukraine: Dnipropetrovsk, Rivne and Odesa oblasts. **The activities in Kharkiv region have been stopped.**

Providing medical and social support to patients with TB/DR-TB.

As of 23 March 2022, **1583** patients with TB and **1490** patients with DR-TB (**3063** persons in total) are receiving the support. The data are not accurate, as contact with many of the clients is lost. This is especially relevant for regions of heavy fighting.

- Because of the fighting, there is no contact with Mariupol. There is no information about the clients.
- The data on Mykolaiv oblast are inaccurate, as, at the beginning, 80 clients left, and then some of them returned, yet some are still staying elsewhere.



Routine enrollment of new clients takes place in all the eight oblasts of the project.

In all the project regions of the country, it is difficult to procure food packages and food certificates because of the deficit of foods in the oblasts. Despite that, procurement of the food has partially started in some of the regions, even if the value of the food package is below what had been planned. All clients have been informed that, as soon as suppliers return to normal work, the patients will receive all the due food packages or certificates.

In the project regions of the country that are now war hotspots, there are problems with contacts with members of project organizations; there is also a difficult task of evacuating the personnel. Not all the clients can be contacted; there are problems with getting TB medications from the TB service and their delivery — especially to different rayons of oblasts. The problem of the lack of medications for treatment of co-morbidities persists.

Information from different oblasts

Volyn oblast: Volyn Oblast Chapter of the Ukrainian Red Cross (URC) works as usual, but operations are affected by the inflow of large numbers of IDPs — some of them pass the oblast in transit and go abroad, some of them stay. Among the IDPs, five clients of the project from other regions were identified; four of them went abroad. Also, eight clients of the project left the oblast, yet they had received a monthly supply of TB medications.

Donetsk oblast:
Food and hygienic goods are delivered to clients on ad hoc basis, wherever possible. Contact with the Mariupol department of Donetsk OO URC has been lost since 1 March 2022. Until now, no-one from the Mariupol department has got in touch or has been found in the list of released people; at the same time, one of the staff is insulin-dependent. The enemy is shelling Kramatorsk already. No members of the organization have suffered in the city yet, but project activities are very limited.

Zakarpattia oblast: Two AFU troopers started receiving support.

Kyiv oblast: the oblast is the area of heavy fighting, that is why implementation of the project is very limited. The main problem is still organization and provision of DOT, as most TB offices

stopped working because of the fighting. Contacts with the patients are not stable; some patients have been lost to observation. DOT office of Kyiv Oblast Pulmonoly Center has renewed its operations: it provides video-DOT to many patients.

Lviv oblast: the implementing organization there struggles because there are lots of IDPs in the region. Since the beginning of the war, the organization established connections with other NGOs of the country and started supporting 14 refugees. They were provided maximum possible help.

Mykolaiv oblast: most patients living in the city of Mykolaiv and Mykolaiv oblast are out of reach now. The access to the TB dispensary located near a strategic bridge that is raised most of the time is thus complicated. Thus, it is impossible to collect TB drugs from the TB service and deliver them to clients.

Odesa oblast: NGO personnel leave the region, so new employees need to be recruited and trained from scratch. HCFs cannot fully meet the needs of providing clients with expensive examination, and private clinics only accept cash, so clients pay, and the NGO then compensates the costs based on receipts.

Kherson oblast: Like before, Kherson and most rayons of the oblast are occupied, and there are such problems as impossibility of procurement and delivery of TB drugs, foods and hygienic goods to rayons of the oblast; very often, there is no phone connection between the rayons; occupants strip civilians of telephones, so taking phones in the journey to keep in touch is risky for NGO personnel. The situation has gotten worse because Red Cross members are limited in ways to reach their office and the clients — there are only two trolleybuses in Kherson, and they operate only from 7 am to 4:30 pm. The trolleybuses are extremely overloaded. The staff can provide only limited help and only to those clients of the project who live in the city of Kherson.

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STORIES FROM DIFFERENT REGIONS

Kherson

The staff of **Kherson Oblast Chapter of the Ukrainian Red Cross** continues their work despite the war and temporary occupation by the Russian military. Case managers daily keep in touch with the clients and DOT supervisers, medical consultant of the project. In the last month, four new clients have been enrolled. Clients living in Kherson receive material incentives (food and hygienic packages); some packages have also been delivered to Oleshky, Hopra, Chaplynka — the territories that could be reached through Russian checkpoints by a KhOO URC vehicle. In particular, TB medications have been delivered to Chaplynka Central Rayon Hospital.

Psychologists and the legal advisor consult clients by phone. Also, information about evacuated clients of the project is being collected and sent to other oblasts (10 persons called).





Odesa



Charitable foundation 'Way Home' makes all efforts to continue full-scale operations in Odesa, in particular, by providing centralized means of commuting for its personnel (using its mobile ambulatory); they use flexible working schedule considering interests of all clients and employees of the project.

Case managers keep watch in the office several times a week. There are problems with the work of case finders from the town of Yuznhe, as intercity transport does not work, and the personnel cannot provide the services; therefore, they are being temporarily replaced.

There has been a positive change with regard to dispensing prevention medications: doctors prescribe three-month schemes, clients are very willing to accept the short scheme, and it will simplify the work of case managers performing treatment observation.

Beside the main activities, project personnel does some volunteering work. A good example here is the story of case manager Oleksandr Veriutin, who in 2014 had to leave Luhansk, and now is forced to re-live war. Oleksandr takes active part in the line work; he substitutes other case managers and engages in volunteering activities organized by the foundation: he helps with delivering food and other humanitarian goods, cooking meals and cleaning premises.

There are not many IDPs in the region, as most only pass through the city on their road to the border, so specific activities for IDPs — except organizing temporarily nights lodgings for evacuees.

Novomoskovsk (Dnipropetrovsk oblast)



Novomoskovsk Rayon NGO 'Center for Support of Families' continues its work! Even though there is no active fighting in the rayon, the work of the organization is strongly affected by presence of very many IDPs from Kharkiv and Donetsk oblasts. Territorial centers serving the population and social services for children provide them with information about services provided by our organization; we always keep in touch with them and, whenever required, provide targeted services. E.g., 12 IDPs came to us in March to get free tests for TB and HIV. Under the component 'Active community-based TB case finding among PWID/PWUD', 20 clients have been tested, and one of them proved TB+. The work goes on!

Lviv: CO 'CS Merezha'



IDP center in Lviv

'In this very difficult time we do our best to help and support our clients by providing necessary services to preserve and improve their health. The main activities include organization and performing project activities under all focal areas, uninterrupted and sustainable services for our patients, humanitarian aid for IDPs, sheltering, consulting and escorting to specialized resources in the local community. This month, the organization has opened IDP shelter that can receive 50 persons; we are planning to expand these activities. Clients are supported regardless of where they came to Lviv from'.

Oleh Lohyn, project manager at CO 'CS Merezha', Lviv

Personal story (Toretsk town)



'Today is the 27th day of the war… And no-one knows what will happen today. But I am waiting to see a person who is very important for me, DOT-provider Larysa Fedorivna. Despite the danger, she keeps visiting me every day, because of my panic attacks. I fear for my life very much, I want to defeat the disease, and I need support.' - says Olesia from the town of Toretsk in Donetsk oblast.

This lady with a drug-resistant tuberculosis has been receiving support from the Red Cross as a part of multiyear project of APH for medical and psychosocial support of people with tuberculosis. Because of the threat of treatment interruption, TB medications were delivered to woman's home (for home-based DOT); two consultations with a psychologist have been conducted to assess her mental and emotional condition. Before the war, Olesia used to receive food and hygienic packages as a part of the project, and after the war began, she receives humanitarian aid provided in the oblast. Thanks to support and consultations from the Red Cross staff, the woman has been able to overcome alcohol dependence and become adherent to the treatment. Now, she is really motivated to take the medications to beat the disease as soon as possible and live a happy life after the war.

'Thanks to the Red Cross people I understood that life can be really interesting and full. The war has changed the world, it has changed our lives. Our old dreams have been ruined. But we have a great will for life, and I am sure we will overcome this horror', — says Olesia.

APH WORLD TB DAY STATEMENT



On 24 February 2022, unprecedented military aggression against the civilian population of our country began. Every day, hundreds of women, children and elderly people are killed and injured in Ukrainian cities and villages hit by the enemy's air strikes and shelling. Millions of Ukrainians have to leave their homes and seek refuge in the West. Those who are not able to leave, spend weeks in basements and bomb shelters, not suitable for long stay, without proper air ventilation or sanitation; many of them have no electricity, connection, medicines or food…

In these dire conditions, people with tuberculosis (TB) have become even more vulnerable due to the threat of treatment interruption and late diagnosis.

In spite of the danger, our partner NGOs in the regions of Ukraine are doing the impossible! They selflessly continue providing medical and psychosocial support to people with TB: they are reviewing their needs, which have increased greatly during the war, delivering food and hygiene kits and providing people with medicines, which is especially important considering unstable transport connections.

Even in the regions facing a humanitarian crisis, patients with sensitive and drug-resistant TB still receive treatment and humanitarian aid. In occupied Kherson, 332 patients receive therapy and social support on a timely basis and afterwards together with NGO employees go to the rallies against Russian occupation. In Donetsk, Kyiv and Mykolaiv regions, which are under daily artillery shelling and missile attacks, partner organizations supported by APH provide support to over 900 patients. They do it in basements and bomb shelters. Many patients had to leave their homes and seek not only refuge but also treatment in other safer regions. For over two weeks, there is no connection with TB patients and social workers in Mariupol. We have no idea if they are still alive.

APH is providing humanitarian aid to inpatient hospital departments offering treatment to people with TB on the territories with active hostilities. As for the patients transitioned to outpatient care, they are under medical and psychosocial supervision. To support such patients, APH in cooperation with partners developed a mechanism of patient referral and information sharing among NGOs.

Since the first days of the war, together with our partner NGOs in the regions of Ukraine and in cooperation with the Public Health Center we do everything possible to save the lives and health of people affected by TB and their communities. APH has been involved in the procurement, arrangement and delivery of humanitarian aid. As well as all our partners in the country, we work round the clock seven days a week to help people during the war, but it may be not enough.

Historically, TB outbreaks have been seen in the times of military conflicts. They happened after World War I and World War II. The same will happen after Ukraine-Russia war! The longer it lasts, the bigger and the more dangerous the new TB outbreak will be.

That is why, recognizing the support of our international partners, who help us in word and in deed in these hard times for our country, we call the international community to make its efforts even stronger! You must increase the pressure of sanctions against the aggressor and scale up the humanitarian support to Ukraine. Let this year's slogan of the World TB Day be Invest to End ~~TB~~ War in Ukraine. Save Lives.

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To support our emergency efforts, please donate any amount of money to the following accounts:

Beneficiary: **International Charitable Foundation "Alliance for Public Health"**
EDRPOU Code: 26333816

UAH:
Name of the bank: JSC "CREDIT AGRICOLE BANK"
Current account: UA713006140000026009500198916, Payment purpose: Charity.

Details for foreign currency transfers
Beneficiary: ICF "Alliance for Public Health"
Address: 24 Bulvarno-Kudriavska St., 01601 Kyiv, Ukraine
Bank name: JSC "Credit Agricole Bank"
SWIFT code: AGRIUAUKXXX, Bank address: 42/4, Pushkinska St., Kyiv – 01004, Ukraine

USD (bank correspondent is compulsory):
Account number: UA073006140000026009500299105
Correspondent bank name: Credit Agricole SA (France)
SWIFT code: AGRIFRPP, Account Number: 20586620000
Correspondent bank address: 12, place des Etats-Unis 92127 Montrouge Cedex, France

EUR (bank correspondent is not compulsory):
Account number: UA063006140000026000500198937
Correspondent bank name: Credit Agricole S.A.
SWIFT code: AGRIFRPP, Acc. No.: 20586612000
Correspondent bank address: Paris, France

GBP (bank correspondent is prefferable):
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Correspondent bank name: Credit Agricole SA (France)
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Together we are strong!

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