Alliance for Public Health

WORLD TB DAY, March 24, 2025

FIGHTING TB UNDER FIRE:
Ukraine's Resilient and Innovative Response





YES! WE CAN END TB

Andriy Klepikov,
Executive Director
of the Alliance
for Public Health

«Our fight against tuberculosis demonstrated enormous resilience. Every patient diagnosed by APH started treatment. Over 3 years of war APH provided psycho-social support to 17117 TB patients. Despite the war, we managed to expand access to TB diagnostics due to innovative solutions. Active TB cases detection among IDPs grew by 151% in 2024 compared to 2023. Another focus has been TB diagnostics among people in territories close to the frontline. For the first time in Ukraine APH launched TB diagnostics outside hospitals, using mobile clinics with Portable X-Rays, GeneXperts and telemedicine»

«Our fight against tuberculosis demonstrated enormous resilience. Every patient diagnosed by APH started treatment. Over 3 years of war APH provided psycho-social support to 17117 TB patients. Despite the war, we managed to expand access to TB diagnostics due to innovative solutions. Active TB cases detection among IDPs grew by 151% in 2024 compared to 2023. Another focus has been TB diagnostics among people in territories close to the frontline. For the first time in Ukraine APH launched TB diagnostics outside hospitals, using mobile clinics with Portable X-Rays, GeneXperts and telemedicine»

Sustaining TB care amid 3 years of war

- **Uninterrupted Care & Support:** 17,117 TB patients, including 5,579 with drug-resistant TB, received medical and psychosocial support to strengthen adherence to treatment.
- **Expanding TB Detection:** 4,040 TB cases were diagnosed among key populations through APH programs, ensuring timely treatment and care.

Innovation and Adaptation in Crisis

- **Focus on Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs):** TB detection among IDPs intensified, resulting in a 2.5x increase in diagnosed cases in 2024 compared to 2023. Every diagnosed patient started treatment.
- **Scaling Up Mobile Clinics:** The demand for mobile services has increased dramatically, with over 40 mobile clinics operating in Ukraine, including frontline and de-occupied areas, providing TB/HIV/STI screening, diagnostics, and treatment. Since December 2022, 497 missions have reached 20,019 people in 321 hard-to-reach locations across 6 frontline regions.
- **Mental Health:** 34% of all MDR-TB patients required mental health support. Alliance developed a set of interventions including medical treatment for severe cases. 100% cases were successfully treated, and the APH model was scaled up to all regions of Ukraine.
- **Collaboration with Ministry of Defence:** Since 2022, APH has partnered with the Ministry of Defence of Ukraine to provide HIV, HCV, and HBV testing for military personnel. 25,440 people have been tested. 164 cases of tuberculosis were detected. Specialized X-ray-equipped vans offer TB diagnostic services to the military, ensuring that all active TB patients are referred for treatment.

20% of the territory occupied by russians

Hundreds of thousands killed and wounded at the war

15 million have left their homes – **7 mln** as war refugees and **8 mln** as internally displaced people

At least **$7 bln** damage to Ukraine's medical infrastructure has been caused by russia

1,938 medical facilities have been damaged, and 297 of them completely destroyed

Even in the most difficult times, Ukraine is proving that tuberculosis is curable.



Resilience Amid Crisis: Amid the war, Ukrainian healthcare workers and mobile clinics demonstrate extraordinary resilience in delivering life-saving TB care. The story of Dmytro and Yulia is just one example of this dedication — read more in the Global Fund's publication «DMYTRO AND YULIA FACE THE FRONTLINES OF WAR TO DELIVER LIFESAVING CARE IN UKRAINE».

www.aph.org.ua

Let’s take a closer look at the 2024 figures so as to better understand current trends, assess the dynamics of change over time, and identify the key challenges we are facing this year.

TB DETECTION AND PREVENTION: PROGRAMMATIC EFFECTIVENESS





As part of the project for active TB detection among vulnerable groups, roughly **52,000** people from vulnerable populations (homeless, ex-prisoners, IDPs, and Roma) were screened across **19 regions of Ukraine**, including **22,000** internally displaced persons (IDPs).

A total of **23,500** clients were diagnosed with TB in healthcare facilities, including **10,000** IDPs. **609 TB cases** were established, including **196** among IDPs. All (100 percent) of those identified as infected started treatment.

As part of the project for optimized TB case finding and medical-social support for contacts during the observation period, **4,052 contacts** were screened for TB and latent tuberculosis infection (LTBI). **246 TB cases** were detected (**60.7 per 1,000 contacts**), which is 2.3 times higher than the overall national rate. All (**100 percent**) of the newly identified patients embarked on treatment.

Over the year under review, **307 clients** completed a course of preventive treatment, which is **94 percent** of those who were prescribed it.

EARLY DIAGNOSIS OF TUBERCULOSIS AMONG MILITARY PERSONNEL

Following Russia's full-scale aggression, the Alliance for Public Health promptly responded to the challenge of detecting TB disease among mobilized military personnel. The mass mobilization campaign significantly increased the burden on military enlistment offices, which were unable to conduct a complete screening / examination of all recruits for active pulmonary tuberculosis, thus increasing the risk of spreading the disease.

To effectively address this issue, the Alliance made available to the Military Medical Clinical Center of the Central Region a **mobile outpatient clinic (MOC)** equipped with an X-ray machine and a sputum collection area along with the **GeneXpert®** system for molecular genetic diagnostics.

More than 8,600 military personnel examined

73 cases of TB detected

More than 249 cases of pneumonia recorded

All patients were linked to care in a timely manner. Early diagnosis not only saves lives, but also prevents the further spread of the infection among the military.

The Alliance's experience confirms that mobile medical services remain one of the most effective ways to fight TB, especially in active combat situations. Upon request from the Ukrainian Armed Forces Medical Command, our efforts will be continued to protect the health of servicemen and women and minimize the risk of infection.



MEDICAL AND PSYCHOSOCIAL SUPPORT FOR PATIENTS

The efforts for **Increasing the Adherence of Patients with Drug Susceptible and Resistant Tuberculosis to Treatment Through Medical and Psychosocial Support (MPSS)** are being implemented in eight regions, i.e., Volyn, Donetsk, Zakarpattia, Lviv, Mykolaiv, Odesa, Kherson, and Kyiv oblasts.

Patients reached in 2024:

Drug-susceptible tuberculosis (DS-TB): **3,157** persons

Drug-resistant tuberculosis (DR-TB): **2,396** persons

Total services provided: **173,060** persons
(average of **8** services per patient)



Key services within the project

- **Assessment** of patients' needs and development of individual support plans
- **Psycho-emotional support** and psychological counseling
- **Monitoring** the use of anti-TB drugs and adverse side effects
- **Provision** of hygiene kits and food certificates
- **Financial incentives** for high treatment adherence
- **Legal counseling** and social support





One of the most impactful activities in 2024 was the provision of psychosocial support to patients who remained at their place of residence in areas where hostilities are ongoing:

100% of patients had their psycho-emotional status assessed

40% received psychological counseling

5% were treated by a psychiatrist

The integrated approach ensured that patients received not only medical but also social and psychological assistance and support, thereby helping to improve adherence to positive treatment and health outcomes.





Mental health is a key factor in overcoming TB, as prolonged treatment, social isolation, and stigma can negatively affect patients' emotional responses or even become a barrier to recovery. Specialists working with this category of patients also experience significant psycho-emotional stress levels. Therefore, as part of the implementation efforts, the resource titled "Mental Health and Support. A Guide for Professionals Assisting People with Tuberculosis" was developed as part of the project.

Psychologists from the partner organizations that were involved in implementing the project contributed to the development of this resource. You can access it via the link or scan the QR code.



ENSURING REMOTE ACCESS TO TB TREATMENT SERVICES

17
regions of Ukraine

20
activists

1492
help requests

227
psychological counseling sessions



In 2024, support activities for people undergoing TB treatment saw significant changes and improvements, thus making it possible to ensure increased access and a wider range of remote services. In place of traditional support models, programmatic activities with reliance on community-based peer counselors were introduced.

By the end of 2024, **20 activists were working in 17 regions**. Through their facilitation, **1,492** help requests from people facing TB-related barriers were submitted via the *OneImpactUkraine* electronic tool.

When verifying the requests of people affected by TB, the system administrator identified the need for psychological counseling and proceeded to implement relevant activities starting from March 2024. From March through December, 227 psychological counseling sessions were conducted.

Significant support became accessible for these people following the launch of the complementary Mental Health module, which allows users of the OneImpactUkraine system to have their psychological status assessed through self-testing, stabilized with self-help techniques, and, if necessary, seek psychological help from psychologists.

In addition, in 2024, **234** human rights violation incidents involving people with TB were resolved, which is **99 percent** of all reported cases relating to rights violations.

DIGITAL SOLUTIONS AND INNOVATIONS

Telemedicine, online counseling, and digital support platforms such as #HelpNOW and Help24 have become key support mechanisms for displaced Ukrainians. These tools help ensure continuous access to HIV and TB treatment, mental health and harm reduction services.

Set up in the early days of the war, the **#HelpNOW** coordination service and the **HelpNOW Hub** have become a reliable support resource for all those in need. Their availability made it possible for almost **40,000** people to receive assistance, including access to evacuation, humanitarian aid, psychological and legal support.

In addition, the **Help24** telemedicine platform provided **77,555** consultations, giving patients access to qualified physicians even in the most difficult settings.

The virtual social worker, **TWIIN**, attracted a younger audience by offering round-the-clock counseling and referrals in connection with HIV and risky behaviors. Since October 2024, more than **5,500** people have had **30,000** sessions with TWIIN!

HELP NOW hub

≈40,000
people to receive assistance

HELP 24 TELEHEALTH

>77,555
consultations

digital TWIIN assistant

30,000
sessions, more than **5,500** people



Try TWIIN, an innovative AI-powered virtual consultant designed to drive social change and promote healthier lifestyle choices, at twiin.aph.org.ua



ADVOCACY EFFORTS

In 2024, together with its partners from CO “TB People Ukraine,” the Alliance conducted an operational research study, «Exploring the degree of stigma and discrimination in the workplace and during the hiring process against people being treated / cured of TB.» An analysis of regulatory restrictions and barriers affecting such people in the workplace and during the hiring process was also conducted as part of this study, including proposed solutions.

Based on the study’s findings, the Alliance and the Public Health Center developed an Action Plan to eliminate stigma and discrimination against people undergoing treatment/cured of tuberculosis in the workplace and during the employment process.

When presenting the findings of the study at the UNION 2024 international conference, international partners noted that the Alliance is a pioneer in promoting this focus area for protecting the rights of people affected by the TB epidemic.



Please follow the link to access the operations research materials or via scanning the QR code

EXHIBITION IN THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT: SUSTAINABILITY OF HEALTH PROJECTS IN TIMES OF WAR



Global TB work supported by the Global Fund was presented at a special exhibition held in the European Parliament on March 18-20, 2025, along with a Ukrainian photo project from the Alliance.

During the exhibition, the Alliance team shared stories and experiences of Ukraine’s resilience in implementing healthcare projects amid the ongoing war. The key initiatives presented at the exhibition included the artificial intelligence-based virtual social worker #TWIIN (https://lnkd.in/ex5RMDdc) and mobile outpatient clinics operating in hard-to-reach border areas of Ukraine with the support of the Global Fund.

2024 UNION WORLD CONFERENCE ON LUNG HEALTH



The Alliance team was actively involved in organizing and holding this conference. Representatives from the Alliance took an active part in the work of the Conference's organizing committee, offering interesting ideas for the productive work of the **Community Connect** zone. They also actively shared their experience in using effective tools in the fight against tuberculosis.

Zahedul Islam, Director of Treatment, Procurement and Supply Management at the Alliance for Public Health, spoke at the Conference opening ceremony, emphasizing the importance of working together to raise awareness and make a meaningful difference. On the first day of the Conference, a notable session titled **"From Awareness to Action: Community Approaches to Overcoming TB Stigma"** was held, moderated by Zahedul Islam, featuring a panel of speakers including Olha Tsvilii, Senior Project Manager at StopTBPartnership/Unops, who spoke about the challenges for people with TB during the job-seeking and hiring processes.











The keynote sessions were also devoted to access to TB treatment and financing. During the discussions, Zahedul Islam focused on systemic barriers to TB care and uneven distribution of funding. He emphasized the importance of community engagement to effectively overcome these challenges.

At the session dedicated to combating stigma and supporting mental health, **Evgenia Geliukh**, Senior Program Manager: TB/HIV at Alliance for Public Health, made a presentation **"Supporting the Mental Health of TB Patients in a Wartime Setting: Ukraine's Experience."** Her report sparked much interest in the audience, showcasing the experience of Ukrainian non-governmental organizations that are continuing to help people with TB amid an ongoing war.

In addition, **Evgenia Geliukh presented the findings of the pilot project "Addressing Mental Health Problems in People with Drug-Resistant Tuberculosis"** via a poster presentation. This study demonstrated the effectiveness of an integrated approach to providing patient support that combines medication-assisted treatment with psychological counseling.

Another major highlight was the presentation of the video **"Unbreakable against TB",** created by the Alliance in cooperation with the Partnership **"Stop TB. Ukraine."** This video became an emotional reminder of the resilience of the Ukrainian community, which continues to fight against tuberculosis amid an ongoing war.

Working hand in hand, the Alliance and **Frontline AIDS**, an international organization looking to overcome HIV/AIDS and support people living with HIV, have been spearheading the **Community Connect** track for the third year in a row, creating a unique space for exchanging ideas, presenting best practices and supporting community initiatives. This year our location was visited by approximately 1,000 people.

The conference re-confirmed that **interaction, experience sharing and community involvement are key tools in overcoming tuberculosis and preserving the health of people around the world!**

COLLABORATION WITH MEDIA PARTNERS

Effective communication with the general public through the media is a key tool in the fight against tuberculosis. The media have a significant impact on shaping public opinion, helping to overcome stigma, raise awareness of modern-day treatment and prevention options, and motivate people to get timely diagnosis.

As part of the Apostrophe Health media project, a collaborative partnership with the Alliance was instrumental in implementing a series of programs covering critical aspects of the TB epidemic. The combined use of television, YouTube and social media was helpful in achieving audience engagement on a massive scale.

In 2024, the media campaign, which included TV broadcasts, live YouTube streams, and Facebook content, reached **2,094,958** people.

The main topics included:

1. **Fear of stigma and discrimination** – Olha Tsvilii, general manager of the project for protecting employment rights, reducing stigma and improving access to social services for people with TB in Ukraine, which is being implemented with the support of Stop TB Partnership and funded by UNOPS. (Total people reached: 402,311)
2. **Gender aspect of TB** – Andriana Kostenko, Doctor of Political Sciences, Professor. Andriana Kostenko participated in the development of a gender-sensitive algorithm for motivational TB counseling, approved as part of the specialized standard of care for TB. (Total people reached: 426,366)
3. **Innovative approaches to overcoming the epidemic** – Yana Terleieva, Head of the TB Prevention and Control Department at the Public Health Center of the Ministry of Health of Ukraine. (Total people reached: 480,560)
4. **Stigma and discrimination in the workplace** – Oleksandra Yatsura, Chairman of the Board, NGO “Ukrainian Center for Social Forecasting (UCSF).” (Total people reached: 370,353)
5. **Accessibility of TB diagnostics** – Evgenia Geliukh, Senior Program Manager: TB/HIV at Alliance for Public Health. (Total people reached: 415,368)



RESEARCH PAPER PUBLICATIONS

The experience of Ukraine is presented in the *Guidance on Engagement of Communities and Civil Society to End Tuberculosis* (pp. 33-35). It shows how one of the Alliance's projects assists people with TB by providing comprehensive medical, psychological and social support, including collaboration with local NGOs and TB clinics in 8 regions of Ukraine..



read the publication

The first 2024 issue of The Journal of Infection in Developing Countries (JIDC) carried the article titled *"Optimized Case Finding of Tuberculosis Among Key Populations in Ukraine. A Follow-Up Study"* authored by Liliia Masiuk, Evgenia Geliukh, Islam Zahedul of the ICF "Alliance for Public Health" (Ukraine), and Hayk Davtyan of the Tuberculosis Research and Prevention Center (Armenia).



read the publication

INTERNATIONAL MEDIA COVERAGE OF THE FIGHT AGAINST TB IN UKRAINE

Panorama nyheter

Ukraina har unngått en tuberkulose-epidemi

read the article

THE LANCET

Mobile screening for Ukraine's wartime tuberculosis epidemic

read the article

Süddeutsche Zeitung

Der Krieg ist der beste Freund der Tuberkulose

read the article

NV LIFE

Мінігранти на потреби громад: як Альянс громадського здоров'я допомагає людям

read the article

TAGESSPIEGEL BACKGROUND

Gesundheit & E-Health Briefing Porträts

read the article

rnd RedaktionsNetzwerk Deutschland

Wie gezielte russische Angriffe das ukrainische Gesundheitswesen belasten

read the article

Alliance for Public Health

TO SUPPORT OUR EMERGENCY EFFORTS, PLEASE DONATE ANY AMOUNT OF MONEY HERE:

http://donate.aph.org.ua

CONTACTS:

Andriy KLEPIKOV, Executive Director
klepikov@aph.org.ua
Cell: +38 050 334 8899 (also Viber, WhatsApp, Telegram)

Eugenia GELIUKH, Senior program manager: TB/HIV
geliukh@aph.org.ua
Cell: +38 050 419 0591 (also Viber, WhatsApp, Telegram)

Inna GAVRYLOVA, PR & Communications manager
gavrylova@aph.org.ua
Cell: +49 162 8653885
Messengers: +38 096 753-81-60 (also Viber, WhatsApp, Telegram)

www.aph.org.ua FB: *AlliancePublicHealth* Instagram: */aph.org.ua* Twitter:*/allianceforph*