

Situation report, March 24, 2024

2024 WORLD TB DAY IN WAR-TORN UKRAINE: A STORY OF RESILIENCE

March 24th marks World Tuberculosis Day, and for the third year in a row, Ukraine marks it under the shadow of Russia's brutal war. Despite the devastation – destroyed medical facilities, housing infrastructure, mass population displacement of both civilians and healthcare workers, blackouts, and countless hours spent in bomb shelters – Alliance for Public Health with all its partners continues to provide a **strong response to tuberculosis, actively confronting all challenges.**

Since the beginning of the war number of missed TB cases grew up. According to WHO nearly every 2nd TB case is missed in Ukraine. Alliance for Public Health focuses its efforts on innovative case finding at the most at-risk groups, providing medical and psychosocial support for both TB and MDR-TB patients, addressing humanitarian and other health needs, strengthening community response, and improving standards and policies.



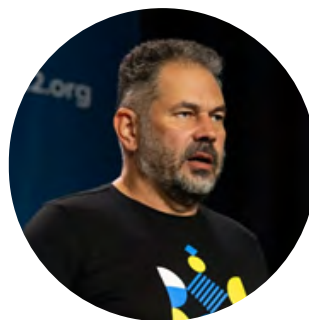
**Over 20%
territory
occupied
by Russia**



**14 mln
Ukrainians
left their
homes**



**Over 1,500
med. insti-
tutions were
damaged
or destroyed**



YES!

WE CAN END TB

Andriy Klepikov,
Executive Director,
Alliance for Public Health

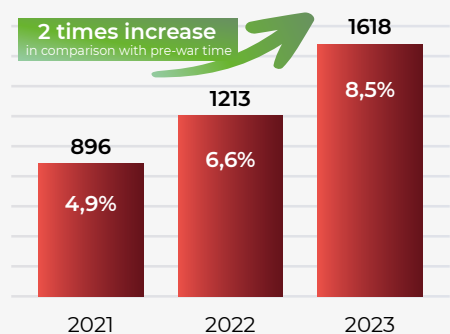
«Since the war started, we've been operating at the peak of our abilities. Thanks to the joint efforts of the state, civil organizations, and communities, for the second consecutive year, we've managed to keep tuberculosis under control, albeit growing missed TB cases during the war. In 2024 APH pledges to further expand TB efforts. Yes! We can end TB! Together, we will win this war!»

KEY RESULTS

1. EFFECTIVE TB CASE FINDING AND LINKING TO CARE

1688 among the most vulnerable diagnosed with active TB in 2023 identified within APH programs, which is **475 cases (39%) more than in 2022**. 100% linked to care and started treatment. **Innovations allowed APH nearly double identification of the TB new cases in comparison with pre-war period.** Scaling up innovations such as optimized case finding, scaling up the area of work to new regions of the country, working with new most at risk groups and partners, particularly, increasing screening of high-risk segment of internally displaced people, expanding work to remote areas.

TB cases diagnosed within APH projects, abs. num and proportion of all TB cases diagnosed in Ukraine



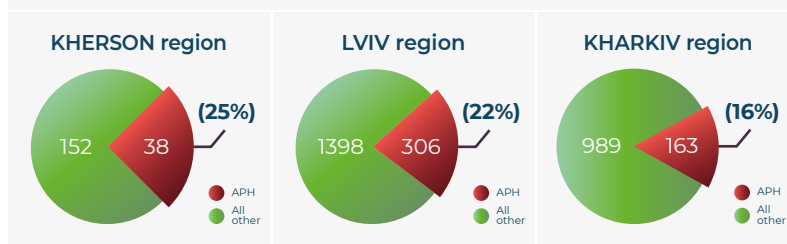
4. PRIORITIZING MENTAL HEALTH: SCREENING AND ADDRESSING DEPRESSION

Over the past two years, between 81% and 100% of MDR-TB patients starting treatment were screened for depressive symptoms, and **we found that 37-52% of MDR-TB patients suffer from depression.** APH developed a methodology and started a pilot project in Odesa, Kherson and Kyiv regions addressing mental health problems in MDR-TB patients. All patients diagnosed with depression were provided treatment and out of those completed it by today, **100% had positive results!** Based on the APH successful pilot and growing demand, starting from 2024 mental health services have been included in the psycho-social support (PSS) package to be provided to both TB and MDR-TB patients in all regions of Ukraine.

2. APH PLAYS SIGNIFICANT ROLE IN TB DETECTION IN UKRAINE'S VULNERABLE REGIONS

APH prioritized its work on the controlled territories of partially occupied regions such as Kherson and Kharkiv in the East and South, as well as in the West in the regions receiving the highest numbers of internally displaced people, such as Lviv. APH demonstrated its so significant role in finding missed TB cases. In the following focused regions in 2023 every 4th or 5th person with TB, was found and diagnosed within APH projects:

Proportion of TB patients diagnosed within APH projects 2023



3. APH FIRST IN UKRAINE IMPLEMENTED MOBILE TB DIAGNOSTICS AND MOBILE INTEGRATED SERVICES

APH first started to provide mobile TB diagnostics on the-occupied territories, closely to the frontline using portable X-Rays and GeneExperts. As of March 20, 2024 mobile teams have made 38 trips to rural communities of Zaporizhzhia, Donetsk and Dnipro regions, 690 people were screened for TB, when TB cases were diagnosed, all of them were enrolled in treatment. Another specially equipped mobile TB clinic was used among the military for TB diagnostics and linkage to care, with **over 100 TB cases identified and all enrolled into treatment.**

5. TREATING HEPATITIS C AND TB CO-INFECTION

Since the beginning of the war **235 people with TB/HCV co-infection received Hepatitis C treatment** within APH community-based HCV treatment program in 8 regions of Ukraine – Lviv, Chernihiv, Kherson, Zaporizhzhya, Odesa, Dnipropetrovsk, Kyrovohrad regions and the city of Kyiv. Out of 198 patients completed full treatment course, **90% of were cured from Hepatitis C.**

Of course, the treatment is free. 100% of diagnostic reagents and 60% of HCV-infection treatment courses were procured by APH with Global Fund's support. APH achieved further price reduction in comparison with pre-war period: APH procured **12-weeks HCV DAA treatment courses** (Sofosbuvir/Daclatasvir and Sofosbuvir/Velpatasvir from generics manufacturers) for **USD 69** and **USD 174** respectively.

CONSEQUENCES OF THE WAR FOR THE TB SYSTEM IN UKRAINE



The tuberculosis dispensary in Mariupol, destroyed in the spring of 2022. The photo was taken one year after the event.



TB clinics in 13 regions were destroyed or damaged – in Kharkiv, Chernihiv, Sumy, Luhansk, Kyiv, Donetsk, Zaporizhzhia, Mykolaiv, Dnipropetrovsk, Zhytomyr, Cherkasy, Kherson regions and in the Kyiv-city.



194 civilian medics killed in their workplaces



Documented torturing and killing of TB patients. Unfortunately, we have 7 confirmed victims among our clients. Out of them 2 were killed in Bucha.



We lost connections with 232 patients, most of them are from Mariupol. Knowing that thousands civilians were killed by russian army during occupation of Mariupol, we assume that tens TB patients lost their lives were buried in mass graves there.

Photo: Evgeniy Maloletka

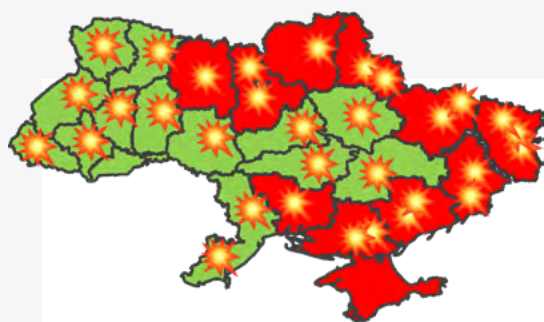


The tuberculosis dispensary in Chernihiv, destroyed in May 2022, is beyond repair.

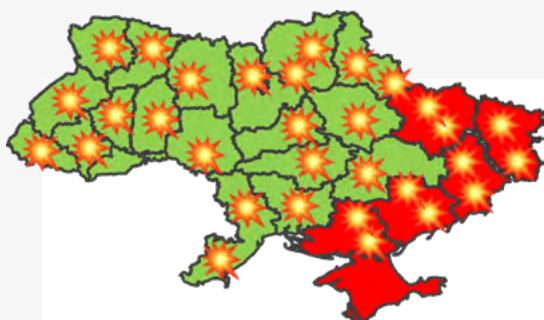
HISTORY OF THE WAR



Spring 2014 - military conflict start. Crimea and parts of two eastern regions were occupied by Russia.



22/02/2022 – full-scale invasion of Russian army. As of March 2022, full or partial occupation of 9 regions. Regular missile attacks of the almost all territory of Ukraine.



24/03/2024 – full or partial occupation of 6 regions. Regular missile / drone attacks all over Ukraine last for 2 years and 1 month.

HOPE AMIDST HARDSHIP: COLLABORATION LEADS TO SUCCESS

The war presented an unprecedented crisis, but through coordinated efforts between the Ukrainian government, civil society organizations, international partners, and the generous financial support of the Global Fund and other donors, the strong response to tuberculosis is provided and all major challenges are effectively addressed.

DEFYING THE ODDS: UKRAINE FIGHTS TUBERCULOSIS AMIDST WAR NOT JUST HOLDING STEADY, WE'RE EXPANDING

Despite the war's challenges, our TB control services have not only maintained full capacity but actively expanded their reach. Here's what we've achieved:

LOOKING FORWARD: ACTIVE TB CASE FINDING

The war and social-economic crisis have caused to significant increase in missing TB cases. To mitigate this challenge, the Alliance for Public Health is actively conducting TB case finding among high-risk populations like homeless individuals, ex-prisoners, the Roma community, internally displaced people, and residents of impoverished rural and urban areas. This vital initiative also extends to contact persons of confirmed TB cases and military personnel.

KEY RESULTS:

- **Screened for TB Symptoms:** Over 186,524 vulnerable groups' representatives were screened for TB symptoms.
- **TB and LTBI diagnostics services provision:** 82,259 individuals received diagnostic services for TB and latent tuberculosis infection (LTBI).
- **Identified and Treated TB Cases:** 2,901 new TB cases were identified and treatment was initiated. **1688** among the most vulnerable diagnosed with active TB in 2023 identified within APH programs, which is **475 cases (39%) more than in 2022**.
- 100% of diagnosed TB cases were linked to care and started treatment
- Our mobile clinics (MTP) operate in the de-occupied territories Kharkiv, Kherson, Zaporizhzhia, and Donetsk regions - diagnose TB among civilians
- **Measurable Impact:** applying Innovative approaches in our work we assess their effectiveness and the impact on TB program. An operational study involving 7,976 contacts from 1,028 patients identified **507 new TB cases** during the initial examination. This demonstrates the project's effectiveness in detecting TB among contact person.

According to it Optimized TB case finding (OCF-TB) model is:

- **5.8x More Effective:** This approach is nearly 6 times more effective than the standard method of searching for TB cases within healthcare facilities.
- **106x More Effective:** It's also over 100 times more effective than simply waiting for people to exhibit symptoms and come forward for testing.

TB CASE FINDING IN THE MILITARY

EARLY DETECTION FOR MILITARY PERSONNEL: A CRITICAL ALLIANCE FOR PUBLIC HEALTH INITIATIVE

In 2022, the Alliance for Public Health (APH) recognized a potential gap in TB detection during the mass mobilization of Ukrainian forces. Due to the overwhelming influx of recruits, military enlistment offices may not have had the capacity for thorough examinations for active pulmonary TB. This posed a risk for the spread of the disease among service members.

To increase capacity the MoD in TB cases diagnostics APH passed to the Central military hospital the mobile screening unit equipped with the X-ray and sputum collection room. During 11 months 2023, with this mobile ambulance 91 TB cases were diagnosed among militaries and all of them were enrolled in treatment. Early identification leads to timely treatment, ultimately saving lives and stopping further infection spread among militaries.

inside the APH special TB mobile van used by Ministry of Defense – fixing patient's position for chest X-ray



TAKING ACTION: MOBILE TB SCREENING UNIT

The war destroyed medical and transport infrastructure: in many communities there are no hospitals, health workers, pharmacies, roads. Many people who are staying in frontline and de-occupied areas are left without proper access to doctors, diagnostics and medicines and even very basic health care. Many are also internally displaced from the neighboring areas that became a battle ground, so they lost their houses, farm property, income and possessions. Fully autonomous and equipped mobile clinics have become the only mechanism for providing health services to people in frontline and border zones and in many de-occupied and rural areas.

Since September 2023, Alliance has added TB screening and diagnostics in the routing mobile healthcare services provided to the people in the most remote areas that still undergo hostilities as well as in de-occupied areas. As of March 20, 2024 mobile teams have made 38 trips to rural communities of Zaporizha, Donetsk and Dnipro regions. There were screened for TB 690 persons, 286 people were screened with Ultra-portable X-ray and 177 were tested for TB using GeneXpert. 3 TB cases were diagnosed, all of them were enrolled in treatment.



FOLLOWING PATIENTS, NOT BORDERS: DELIVERING TB CARE ACROSS UKRAINE

The Alliance is committed to supporting patients with tuberculosis (TB) and multidrug-resistant TB (MDR-TB) throughout their entire journey. We implement patient-centered medical, social, and psychological support in eight regions of Ukraine: Volyn, Zakarpattia, Kyiv-oblast, Lviv, Odesa, Donetsk (controlled territory), Mykolaiv, Kherson.

This approach ensures **maximum coverage** for patients who have:

- **Fled their homes:** We actively support internally displaced persons (IDPs) who have relocated to safer regions, focusing on areas with high IDP populations like Lviv (15.2%), Zakarpattia (10.3%).
- **Remained in war zones:** We haven't stopped serving patients in areas with ongoing shelling, such as Donetsk (highest outflow at 18.2%) and Mykolaiv (5.5%).



SUPPORTING OUR GOVERNMENTAL PARTNER DURING WAR:

Our initial target for 2023 was to reach 14% of MDR-TB patients with PSS, while all others should have been covered with the domestic funding. However, financial crisis did not allow to allocate enough funding for this purpose to meet the transition plan. In such a situation Alliance lent a shoulder and allocated additional funding for PSS. We achieved a remarkable **26.8% coverage**.

2023 NUMBERS SHOW IMPACT:

In 2023 and 2024, we provided psychosocial support (PSS) to:

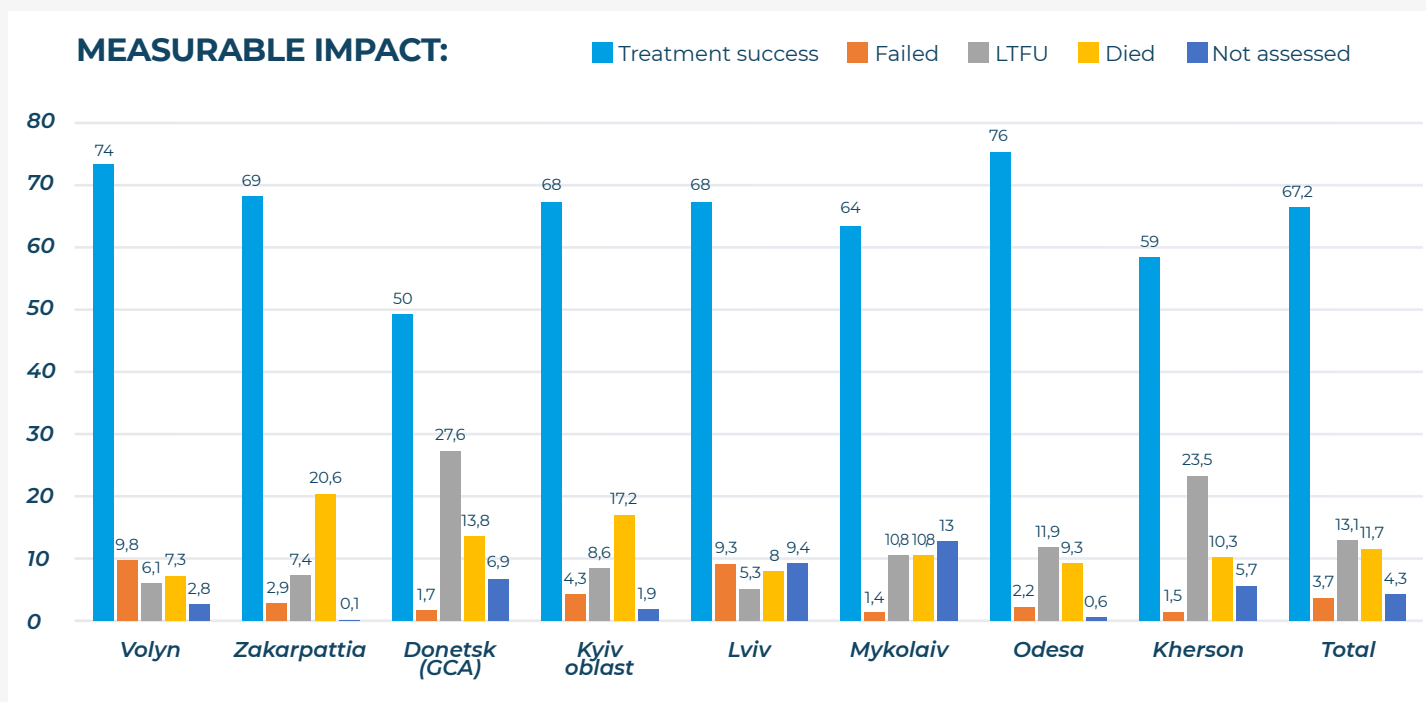
- **10,785 patients** with drug-sensitive TB
- **5,327 patients** with multidrug-resistant TB (MDR-TB)

BEYOND TB TREATMENT: THE ALLIANCE PROVIDES A LIFELINE DURING WAR

The war in Ukraine has had a devastating impact on everyone, and TB patients are particularly vulnerable. The Alliance for Public Health recognized this and went above and beyond traditional TB services to offer vital humanitarian aid:

- **Meeting Basic Needs:** We provided food and hygiene kits to clients facing shortages, ensuring their well-being during this challenging time.
- **Supporting Displacement:** For internally displaced persons (IDPs), we assisted in finding work and housing in their new communities, helping them rebuild their lives.
- **Staying Warm During Winter:** In the harsh winter months, we distributed warm clothing and ensured access to hot meals, offering additional comfort and support.

The greatest challenge is to pick up all patients and enroll them in treatment and MPSS in the regions where they arrive. Tight communication was established between NGOs and TB clinics in “dangerous” regions and in “safe” regions.



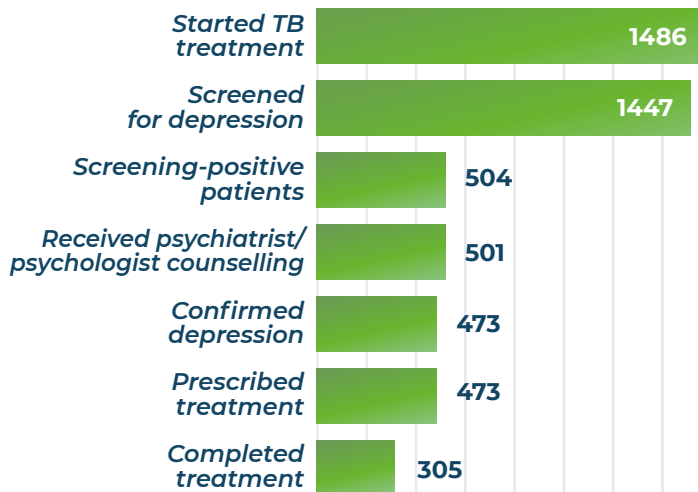
Another challenge is to find out patients in de-occupied regions (Kyiv region, Kherson region) and enroll them in treatment and MPSS. For these purpose, we get in touch with local HCFs, military-civilian administrations, local centers for social services.

The connection was lost with 339 patients in occupied territories (Kyiv-region, Kherson, Donetsk, Mykolaiv). Unprecedented efforts were made to trace patients with whom contact has been lost. The connection was restored with 107 patients. Other 232 patients are lost to follow up, most of them are from Mariupol. There are strong evidences about 7 patients killed.

PRIORITIZING MENTAL HEALTH:

Pilot projects aimed at addressing mental health problems in MDR-TB patients were implemented in three regions of Ukraine: Odesa, Kherson and Kyiv-oblast.

DEPRESSION DIAGNOSTICS, 2021-2023



- **Screening for Depression:** Over the past two years, between **81% and 100%** of MDR-TB patients starting treatment were screened for depressive symptoms.
- **Addressing Depression: 100% of patients** who screened positive for depression received psychiatric consultation.
- **We found: from 37 to 52% of MDR-TB patients** suffer from the depression
- **Treatment Rates:** all 100% of patients completed a full course of depression treatment had positive results.
- **Starting from 2024** mental health services have been included in the PSS package to be provided to both TB and MDR-TB patients in all regions of Ukraine.

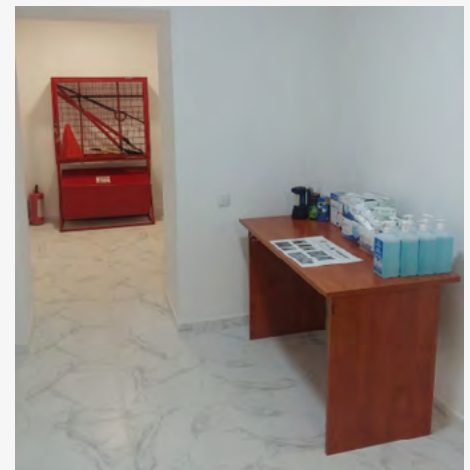
OPIOID SUBSTITUTION THERAPY (OST)

There are currently 513 clients with TB on the state OST program. The Alliance, in collaboration with non-governmental organizations, provides comprehensive social support to OST patients receiving TB treatment at TB clinics and the centers of socially significant diseases in Zaporizhzhya, Lviv, Poltava, Odesa and Mykolaiv.

TB-HELP HUB: A COLLABORATIVE EFFORT FOR TB PATIENTS

The Alliance actively participated in a joint initiative with the Public Health Center of Ukraine and the «Stop TB Partnership. Ukraine». This initiative, the TB-Help Hub, serves as a critical platform to address urgent war-related needs in the TB sector. Thanks to the platform:

- Online platform for collecting and meeting needs in the TB sector (tb Help Hub) - **\$296 664**
- **TB Patient Needs Met:** Funds were raised and used to cover essential needs for TB patients in specific medical facilities.
- **Medication Secured:** Essential medications weighing 220 kg were purchased to ensure uninterrupted TB treatment.
- **Safe Haven Improved:** A bomb shelter at the Odessa Center for Socially Significant Diseases was renovated to provide a more secure environment for patients and staff.



ADAPTING AND EXPANDING IN CHALLENGING TIMES

The war presented an unprecedented challenge, but the Alliance's dedicated team responded with exceptional coordination and professionalism. We not only maintained TB services but also expanded our efforts to offer crucial support to vulnerable populations during this time of crisis.



helpnow.apb.org.ua

HELPNow helps coordinating efforts for treatment abroad. The activity is implemented in close cooperation with the Public Health Center, The Global Fund, Aidsfonds, EATG and over a hundred of other partner organizations around the world (arranging appointments with doctors, getting prescriptions for medicines based on Ukrainian health records, and translation). **Within the HELPNow service hundreds of TB related requests have been addressed.**

ENSURING THE ACTIVE PARTICIPATION OF CSOS AND THE TB COMMUNITY IN ACTIVITIES RELATED TO TB UNHLM 2023

- Finalization of the draft Declaration: APH organized series of CSOs representatives' meetings for this purpose. In total, 55 proposals from Ukrainian CSOs to the draft Declaration were made. Out of them, 23 were accepted and included in the Declaration
- APH representatives actively participated in UN HLM



- Post UNHLM NATIONAL FORUM «The role of CSOs and the TB community in the implementation of the decisions of the political declarations of the 2023 UN High-level Meetings (UNHLM) in the context of the implementation of state policy measures to combat tuberculosis»

WAR DEMONSTRATED: PATIENT-CENTEREDNESS IS CRUCIAL FOR CO-INFECTED PATIENTS AND PEOPLE WITH DEPENDENCIES

HISTORIES OF PATIENTS' SUCCESS:

After the flooding of Kherson due to the explosion of the Kahovka Hydroelectric Power Station, our organization contributed to ensuring that the family living in the suburbs received partner humanitarian aid, as well as food and hygiene kits, as part of the project.

Since October 2023, Sergey and his wife have been undergoing outpatient treatment. The couple has repeatedly received assistance in various areas, including essential items for life (external battery, flashlight, etc.), consultations with a lawyer that helped Maria effectively resolve issues regarding sick leave payment and dismissal due to health condition and prolonged treatment, as well as funding for an emergency expensive chest organ examination for further diagnosis and treatment effectiveness monitoring.

Currently, the examination has confirmed positive results in the family's treatment, and their support will continue until full recovery from the illness in 2024.



Convincing Ivan to start tuberculosis treatment wasn't easy at first.

Ivan recalls that when he first found out his HIV status, he took it calmly because he understood that he engaged in risky behavior and had been using injectable drugs for many years. "I had already given up on my life. A lonely man, parents deceased, no children. No one needed me. I simply had no reason to take responsibility for my life," Ivan explains.

"But when I was diagnosed with tuberculosis, I completely lost hope and said goodbye to life. A social worker helped me, visiting me several times. She told stories of people who had recovered from worse conditions. That's when I met a man - a forced migrant. He is older than me, and I saw him as a father figure. The social worker and my new acquaintance convinced me to start treatment."

Now Ivan has completed his TB treatment course, he has been prescribed ART, and he knows for sure that there are organizations and people who don't leave individuals alone with their problems.

The NGO "Family Support Center," implementing projects in Dnipropetrovsk region in partnership with the Alliance for Public Health, has been working with key groups for years, helping not only detect diseases but also start treatment. A crucial role in this work is played by case managers who provide all necessary services to people affected by HIV/TB issues and who often find themselves alone with their problems.

INTERNATIONAL MEDIA COVERAGE OF UKRAINE HIV AND TB RESPONSE DURING 2023

 <p>«Der Krieg ist der beste Freund der Tuberkulose»</p>	 <p>«Oekraïne is niet alleen een front in militaire zin, maar ook in epidemiologische zin»</p>	 <p>Ukraine's health care on the brink after hundreds of attacks</p>
 <p>Two years of war in Ukraine: What is the state of the fight against TB?</p>	 <p>Providing healthcare two years on from the Ukraine invasion</p> <p>Key takeaways from the 2023 UN High-Level Meetings</p>	 <p>Krieg und Armut sind die Eltern der Tuberkulose</p>

TOGETHER WE ARE STRONG!

Alliance for Public Health expresses admiration and appreciation of the incredible work of all our partners, Network 100% Life, TB People Ukraine, Stop TB Partnership Ukraine, TB Europe Coalition, Public Health Center, Ministry of Health of Ukraine, all implementing partners, community and civil society networks, NGO staff and social workers, doctors and nurses we are working shoulder by shoulder together and achieving important results together! Big appreciation to governmental institutions, UN agencies and other international organizations.

We express sincere gratitude to the donors providing critical funding for TB response:

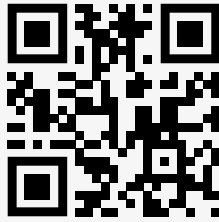


We are greatly thankful to all APH donors - to The Global Fund, US Government and PEPFAR, CDC, USAID, US NIDA, Yale University, FRONTLINE AIDS, Christian Aid, International AIDS Society (IAS), Stop TB Partnership/UNOPS, WHO, UNAIDS, FIND, EATG, Aidsfonds, IRF, The Foundation to Promote Open Society, Elton John AIDS Foundation (EJAF), Irish Emergency Alliance, Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH, Disasters Emergency Committee, Payoneer, Initiative France, UNITAID, Gilead, Act Church of Sweden (Svenska kyrkan) to all other donors and individuals provided private donations! Your support saves lives!

GREAT THANKS to Ukrainian Army defending not only Ukraine but also all fundamental principles of peace, freedom, sovereignty and dignity!



**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)

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