

**THE CONCEPT**  
**of Establishment and Development of the Central**  
**Asian Training and Information Center for PLWH**  
**Treatment, Care, and Support**

**(draft for discussion)**

Draft of this Document has been prepared by the Ministry of Health of  
Uzbekistan jointly with the Central Asia AIDS Control Project

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## **Rationale**

HIV remains to be a major health hazard in Europe and Central Asia. The estimated number of adults and children living with HIV reached 33,200,000 in 2007. The number of AIDS cases is growing every year. According to the UNAIDS data, 13,199 new AIDS cases were diagnosed in 2006. Although the HIV epidemic in Central Asia is still at the concentrated stage, the number of new cases is growing by each year. According to the official statistics, as of early 2008, total number of registered HIV cases across countries was as follows: Kazakhstan – 9,379 cases (54 per 100,000), Kyrgyzstan – 1,479 (28.4), Tajikistan – 1,049 (14.6), Uzbekistan – 13,184 (49.4).

In recent years many different approaches have been tested to contain the spread of HIV-infection worldwide. Immediate targeted and coordinated measures against the spread of epidemics among the general population will enable to prevent huge socioeconomic losses in future. Acting regionally, the government and organizations – development partners may prevent a serious crisis, which threatens destructive implications for public health, economic growth, labor resources, and living standards.

Ministries of health of the most countries in the world regard HIV prevention and treatment as a global issue. World Health Organization has developed protocols for treatment of HIV-infection, which were subsequently adapted and implemented in the practices of the Central Asian region.

Emerging HIV situation forced to view the problem differently. The governments and the public in Central Asian countries faced the issue of immediate coordinated and comprehensive steps.

Currently antiretroviral therapy (ART) is being successfully implemented in all countries albeit the coverage is inadequate. According to the data of the Republican AIDS centers, in Kazakhstan ART is provided to 462 of 592 eligible (77.5%), in the Kyrgyz Republic – to 88 out of 184 (47.8%), in Tajikistan to 49 out of 79(62%) and Uzbekistan -785 out of 914 (86%).

Main issues of implementation of ART in the Central Asian countries are as follows: inadequate capacity of labor resources, limited access to modern effective treatment schemes.

Establishment, development, and support to the Central Asian Training Center for PLWH Treatment, Care, and Support is an initiative to address these problems in the framework of implementation of the Central Asia AIDS Control Project funded by the World Bank and UK Department for International Development (DFID).

## **Goal and Objectives**

The goal of the activities of the Central Asian Training and Information Center for PLWH Treatment, Care, and Support (CATI PLWH or Center) is to build up human capacity in the countries of Central Asia in the area of treatment, care, and support to the people living with HIV by promoting continuous education and improving professional qualifications of the service providers and improving access to modern information based on the principles of evidence-based medicine (EBM).

### Main objectives of the Center are as follows:

1. Facilitating collaboration in continuous education and creation of a favorable environment for network-based collaboration of the professionals on treatment, care, and support for PLWH in Central Asia and neighboring countries;
2. Development of study materials and training for regional and national specialists involved in the system of: (a) healthcare-related training; (b) providing PLWH treatment, care, and support services;
3. Monitoring of the activities of trained specialists in order to strengthen received clinical skills and improve the quality of the services provided;
4. Promoting access of the specialists on providing treatment, care, and support to the people living with HIV in Central Asia and neighboring countries to the modern information on best local and foreign experiences based on the principles of evidence-based medicine;
5. Publication of textbooks and study materials to improve the skills of service providers in treatment and care for PLWH.

## **Working principles**

- Close collaboration with national and international partners (non-government, government, and international organizations) and openness for dialogue;
- Using scientific and evidence-based principles;
- Using best practices from international and regional experience of the organizations implementing programs for treatment, care, and support to the people living with HIV in the Central Asian region;
- Focus and conformity of the educational programs to the needs of target groups and local context;
- Accessibility of the educational process and other implemented activities for external and internal assessment;
- Transparency of the budget along with publication of annual reports;

## **Status and Management**

In order to maintain long-term operation and sustainable institutionalization, this Center will be established tapping into the resource base of Tashkent Institute for Post-Diploma Training of Doctors. The Center will be located at the special clinic of the Republican AIDS Center.

The Ministry of Health of Uzbekistan represented by the Tashkent Institute for Post-Diploma Training of Doctors and Republican AIDS Center will be the founder of the Center.

After consultations with the stakeholders to build-up the capacity of the Center, it is envisaged to set up a Supervisory Board consisting of a consortium of the organizations such as the Ministry of Health of Uzbekistan, Tashkent Institute for Post-Diploma Training of Doctors, republican AIDS centers of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan, Association of PLWH of Uzbekistan, World Health Organization as well as American International Health Association.

The Supervisory Board convenes at most twice a week and determines strategic areas of Center's activities.

At executive level, the **Center manager** will be responsible for operational management of the Center according to the Plan and areas of activities approved by the Supervisory Board and Ministry of Health of Uzbekistan.

In order to provide practical consultative assistance in the activities of the Center, the **Expert Council** will be set up as an independent international group consisting of highly qualified specialists for treatment, care, and support to the people living with HIV in the Central Asian region.

This group will conduct examination of the curricula, projects, initiatives, and plans of the Center. It is also expected that Expert Council will provide assistance in fostering and maintaining regional contacts among organizations providing treatment, care, and support to the people living with HIV. The Council may also include international experts highly qualified in this area.

Detailed description of the activities of the Supervisory Council and Expert Council will be provided in another document – Statute on Central Asian Training and Information Center for Treatment, Care, and Support to the People living with HIV.

## **Structure**

Center's structure will be outlined in the Statute on the Central Asian Training and Information Center for treatment, care, and support to the people living with HIV. This structure will be based on the principles of rational utilization of resources. The structure will be approved by the Ministry of Health of Uzbekistan jointly with the Supervisory Board.

## **Human Resources**

Staffing pattern of the Center shall be approved by the Ministry of Health.

Recruitment of the staff and trainers will be the prerogative of the Center manager and based on competitive process and fixed-term contracts. The responsibilities of the fixed-term staff will be to maintain effective operation of the Center. Recruitment and dismissal of workers will be in compliance with the legislation of Uzbekistan.

It is envisaged to pay for the services of the trainers on treatment, care, and support to the people living with HIV from the funds of the Central Asia AIDS Control Project until the establishment of the Center and hereinafter from the funds or resources of the host organization (Tashkent Institute of Post-Diploma Training of Doctors).

## **Trainers/Teachers**

Trainers for the educational process will be contracted among qualified practitioners – international, regional, and national specialists with the experience of implementing educational programs for treatment, care, and support to the people living with HIV. The criteria for short-listing trainers will be developed separately.

The number of trainers of the Center for the academic process will be determined depending on the areas of training courses.

## **Training Format and Conditions**

It is planned to use the following format:

1. Trainees will be selected based on the findings of country need assessment and the lists of persons recommended for training in treatment, care, and support to the PLWH submitted by the countries;
2. Training will be full-time and based on modern training methods with preference for interactive techniques;
3. Training process will include lectures and practical sessions to be held at the special clinical base of the Republican AIDS Center and Pediatrics Research Institute, Virology Research Institute, Research Institute of Obstetrics and Gynecology of Uzbekistan.
4. Tashkent Institute of Post-Diploma Training of Doctors will conduct examination and issue certificate of completion of the course on PLWH Treatment, Care, and Support.

## **Collaboration with Partners**

Partners are defined as organizations providing assistance in implementation of Center's initiatives. The relations with them will be based on the Memoranda of Understanding, which may be made both for a specific initiative (project) of the Center and a certain timeframe listing the joint activities.

The relations between the Center and service providers are envisaged to be regulated by the treaty relations according to the legislation of Uzbekistan.

Center's activities are planned to be implemented in close collaboration with the Ministries of Health and Republican AIDS Centers of the Central Asian countries, Tashkent Institute for Post-Diploma Training, American International Health Association, World Health Organization (WHO), Global Fund, and other stakeholders in the Central Asian countries.

## **Financing**

Initially it is envisaged to finance the project by the funds of the Central Asia AIDS Control Project and other donors as direct contribution to the development of the Center (based on agreements).

Additional funding is expected to come from grants, applications for individual projects by submitting required financial reporting forms.

After termination of direct support of the donors, the Center should transfer to self-financing or seek financing from host institution.

## **List of Documents Required for Establishment of the Center**

(Subsequent steps)

1. Finalizing the Concept of Central Asian Training and Information Center for Treatment, Care, and Support to the People living with HIV incorporating the comments and proposals of the participants of the Roundtable held on April 10, 2008;
2. Development of Action Plan for implementation of the Concept;
3. Draft Statute on Central Asian Training and Information Center for Treatment, Care, and Support to the People living with HIV including the structure, goals, objectives, etc.
4. Development of the strategy/business plan for sustainable development of the Center (for the nearest two years);
5. Draft Statute on the Supervisory Council of the Center and mechanisms of election of the members of the Supervisory Council;
6. Draft Statute on Expert Council and mechanism for selection of the members;
7. Criteria for recruitment of Center's trainers and criteria for compensation;
8. Samples of the Memoranda on Mutual Cooperation with partner organizations;
9. Samples of contracts with trainers.