TB/HIV COMMUNITY MOBILIZATION IN AFRICA: Ongoing activities, achievements and challenges

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Ongoing Activities (1)

A few examples of:

- **Community education:**
  - Botswana Treatment Literacy Coalition (BTLC): Producing materials accessible to communities; Infection Control PSA
  - Community Health Media Trust (CHMT) – mass media communications – TV and radio shows, DVD series in various Southern African countries
  - Treatment Action Campaign (TAC): Equal Treatment magazine, door-to-door campaigns
  - The Good Neighbor: CSO training on collaborative TB/HIV activities
  - ARASA: IC poster for health facilities, TB flipchart for trainings in rural Lesotho
Ongoing Activities (2)

A few examples of:

- **Contributions to policy:**
  - The AIDS Law Project: Research and recommendations on legal and human rights framework on the management of DR TB in South Africa
  - ARASA: Campaign around Mines, Migrant Labor and TB/HIV in Southern Africa
  - ICW: Capacity-building for treatment advocacy on TB/HIV
  - ARASA/TAC/ALP: Submissions on national DR TB guidelines
Ongoing Activities (3)

A few examples of:

- **Implementing and monitoring programmes:**
  - Collaborative Fund Grantees: Adherence support, home based care, advocacy on TB and HIV service integration
  - TB Care: TB education and prevention programs in prisons
  - Medecins Sans Frontiers: Community health workers and expert patients function as infection control monitors in health facilities and assist with patient follow-up
Achievements

• Involvement of communities has presented opportunities for progress in areas that were previously neglected, e.g.
  – Prisons
  – Thorough follow-up of patients in communities
  – Dedicated infection control monitors in facilities
  – Community-based DR TB care

• Greater community awareness of TB/HIV promotes health-seeking behaviour and improved treatment outcomes

• Mobilization of HIV activists around TB allows for campaigning on already well-established platforms: significant progress over past twelve months
Achievements

• Stronger advocacy pushes TB/HIV further up political agenda – new SA MOH identified as priority issue
• Monitoring and flagging TB drug stock-outs encourages a faster response: e.g. Zambia
• Advocacy on access to treatment for TB/HIV patients, especially migrants, has proven critical, e.g. IDPs in South Africa; Mthandazo Sibanda in Botswana
• Advocacy on GLC participation: initiated by ARASA in June 2008; pushed with TAC and BTLC at national level – SA uncertain; Botswana to apply by end of year.
Challenges

• Lack of clarity on the Three I’s, particularly IPT
  – WHO responded through production of FAQ based on problematic questions

• Inadequate scientific knowledge on TB/HIV among activists
  – ARASA organizing advanced TB training for HIV activists from SADC in Feb 2009

• TB world more closed to community participation than HIV world
  – Civil society excluded from critical review processes for voicing criticism (Botswana IPT review)
  – Activists now pushing for increased participation in national and regional forums – e.g. SADC TB Partners Forum
Challenges

• Hysteria created by media around TB
  – CS organizing training on TB for SA journalists

• Lack of accountability in TB/HIV response
  – Lack of proper collaboration between programs creates confusion on who is accountable for what
  – Silence at all levels on extreme under-performance regarding TB/HIV targets and plans

• Broader failures within health systems
  – Advocacy on Three I’s held back by poor capacity of health systems to implement these interventions
  – Great need for TB/HIV activists to dedicate more efforts to advocacy on HSS
Opportunities

• General fear around TB, esp DR TB, can be transformed into energy to drive change
• Increasing levels of scientific knowledge lead to increasing awareness of criminal neglect in response to TB/HIV – stimulate activism
• More models of TB care relying on community involvement strongly demonstrate the need for this approach
• Increased involvement of communities in national, regional and international forums adds valuable perspective to global response
  – Must be translated into meaningful action on the ground
Thank You