



XDR-TB: extensively drug-resistant tuberculosis

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Stop TB Department www.who.int/tb

RESULTS FROM THE LARGEST SURVEY ON DRUG-RESISTANT TUBERCULOSIS TO BE PUBLISHED ON 26 FEBRUARY, 2008

Findings from the largest ever survey on the global spread of drug-resistant TB will be published this month by WHO. The report, which covers data from more than 80 countries, will include for the first time data on extensively drug resistant TB (XDR-TB) from 33 countries, plus information from more than 30 countries that have never previously reported on drug-resistant TB.

The surveillance project to map the extent of drug-resistant TB began in 1993. This fourth report charts the spread, trends and development of the multidrug-resistant TB (MDR-TB) epidemic over a 13-year period. It also includes a current list of countries and settings with some of the world's highest rates of resistance. The report, 'Anti-Tuberculosis Drug Resistance In The World', will be launched at a news conference on 26 February in Washington DC by the Director of WHO's Stop TB Department, Dr Mario Raviglione, with WHO experts also available for media interviews in London and Brussels.

For more information about press activities in Geneva, Washington DC, London and Brussels, plus multimedia press materials, please contact thomasg@who.int.

Botswana confirms XDR TB case

The government of Botswana has confirmed two cases of XDR-TB - the first cases outside South Africa and Mozambique - as well as 100 new cases of MDR-TB.

The two patients were identified as XDR-TB cases last month, and are currently being treated in a special isolation ward at a hospital in Gaborone. One of the patients, an HIV-positive man, had been employed in the mining industry in South Africa and had failed to respond to his MDR-TB treatment which he had started in 2005. The second case, an HIV-negative woman, had begun her MDR-TB treatment in Botswana a year earlier in 2004.

In response, the government has instigated intensive training in infection control to reduce the risks of XDR-TB being transmitted to health workers and patients. The country's Ministry of Health has also urged people living with HIV/AIDS to go for TB screening and advised anyone with a chronic cough, and who may have been exposed to patients with active TB, MDR-TB or XDR-TB, to visit their nearest health centre. They have also issued reminders to patients with tuberculosis about the importance of completing their full treatment regimen to prevent the emergence of drug-resistant TB strains.

Ukraine study: "Urgent measures" needed to address HIV and drug-resistant TB

A study by WHO and its partners on the links between HIV and MDR-TB in Donetsk Oblast in Ukraine concludes with a warning that the overlapping of the epidemics is likely to result in poorer treatment outcomes and greater disease transmission.

The findings, based on research from nearly 1,500 patients diagnosed with TB between July 2005-2006, call for urgent measures to improve HIV prevention, MDR-TB control, collaboration between HIV and TB control activities, and infection control in high risk areas.

Ukraine is second only to the Russian Federation among countries of the Former Soviet Union in the size of the epidemics of HIV and tuberculosis.

The research focused on the civilian and penitentiary sectors of Donetsk, the largest Oblast of Ukraine and home to nearly 10% of the country's population.