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EIFL-PLIP

Improving lives and livelihoods through innovative public library services

Libraries mobilize communities to fight TB

Kyrgyz Libraries Information Consortium, Kyrgyzstan

IMPACT CASE STUDY

Faced with a tuberculosis (TB) epidemic, the government has introduced an intensive national TB prevention and control programme. The Kyrgyz Libraries Information Consortium (KLIC) ‘No to TB!’ project, in partnership with civil society organizations like Project HOPE and the Red Crescent Society, mobilizes public libraries to support government goals. The project –

- Established ‘No to TB!’ information corners in over 190 libraries.
- Mobilized and trained over 800 ‘No to TB!’ campaigners – teachers, pupils, parents, social workers, doctors’ assistants, journalists and librarians – to work in communities.
- Reached thousands of people through awareness-raising campaigns in schools, through newspapers and by staging events and flashmobs in town centres.
- Demonstrated the power of a public library network in supporting delivery of a national government health programme.

“My father was sick and we did not want to go to the hospital. At the village meeting we learned that our library had literature on TB. We came to the library, and librarians were very sensitive in approaching our problem. They told us about tuberculosis and its symptoms and how to prevent TB. They recommended that we should go to the hospital.

Thanks to the librarians and their advice, and the doctors, we were able overcome this disease!” – Jukov family, Novo-Pokrovka Village.

TB is one of the most urgent health problems in Kyrgyzstan. At about 103 cases per 100,000 people, TB is now at epidemic levels (World Health Organization, 2009). Kyrgyzstan also has the seventh highest rate of multi-drug resistant TB (MDR-TB) in the world. MDR-TB is especially difficult to treat because it does not respond to standard drugs. TB spreads through poverty, migration, over-crowded living conditions, rising levels of HIV/AIDS which reduces resistance to infection, stigma, fear and ignorance about the disease.



“At the ‘Stop TB’ flashmob, we distributed information. By informing people, we can protect ourselves and others from the disease.” – Sudaba Kasumova, school pupil and ‘No to TB!’ campaigner.

With a grant of US\$15,000 from EIFL-PLIP to cover equipment and some operational costs for one year, KLIC bought three laptop computers and three projectors for screening films. They set up ‘No to TB!’ corners in three libraries in Northern Kyrgyzstan: Republic Library



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for Children and Youth in Bishkek, serving an urban population; Chui Province Library in Kant, serving a peri-urban community, and Novo-Pokrovka Rural Library, serving villagers and farmers. Very quickly, 190 more rural libraries signed up and established 'No to TB!' corners.

“Public libraries are doing great work in TB prevention!” – Anvar Beisembayev, National TB Centre.

In less than a year, KLIC...

- Conducted 15 workshops for 360 school pupils, students, health-workers and community members to promote use of the internet, social media tools and e-resources to raise awareness about TB.
- Hosted meetings and debates about TB, attended by 5,600 people.
- Designed and distributed a handbook for librarians, titled 'TB is Curable. Learn More', and hundreds of leaflets, bookmarks and posters.
- Created a lively [TB information website](#) which attracted over 7,000 visitors, and an e-resources repository including articles, books, handouts and videos.

The future

This is the first time public libraries in Kyrgyzstan have worked together on a major national health campaign. With the support of the government, hospitals, schools and civil society organizations, KLIC will continue to say 'No to TB!' in over 190 libraries. Kyrgyzstan has over 1,000 public libraries, and KLIC will share their experiences with these libraries to expand the project.

The EIFL-PLIP grant was awarded in November 2011. A year later, the library assessed the impact of the project. Information presented here is based on the library's impact assessment. For further information contact project coordinator, Ms Safia Rafikova – rafikova_s@mail.auca.kg

[EIFL](#) (Electronic Information for Libraries) is an international not-for-profit organization dedicated to enabling access to knowledge through libraries in more than 60 developing and transition countries in Africa, Asia, Latin America and Europe. EIFL's Public Library Innovation Programme (EIFL-PLIP) supports libraries to implement community development projects. Learn more at www.eifl.net/plip. EIFL's Public Library Innovation Programme is supported by a grant from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation.

Public libraries - partners in development

“Through the project, our librarians have acquired knowledge of TB prevention. Together, we have organized a coordinating centre to fight TB, consisting of NGOs, the courts of elders, representatives of Novo-Pokrovka district and librarians. We are supporting the librarians and we will continue to support them.”

- Liubov Loenko, Executive Secretary of Novo-Pokrovka District.

“The library has established itself as a reliable partner. The public libraries have shown their ability to provide correct information on TB for different segments of the population. We are very glad to continue our collaboration with KLIC.” – Saltanat Mamyrbayeva, Coordinator, TB Prevention Programme, Red Crescent Society.