

Armenia and Nagorno-Karabakh

Tackling TB and STDs

International staff: 16
National staff: 97

| MSF programs target mental health issues, sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) and tuberculosis (TB) in Armenia and the autonomous territory of Nagorno-Karabakh in Azerbaijan. Sovereignty of the enclave remains contested, though a cease-fire has held since 1994.

| In Stepanakert, MSF works with health authorities to combat TB using the DOTS (Directly Observed Treatment Short-course) strategy, as well as training staff and providing public information. Some 533 patients have been included in the program since 1997, 52 of them needing adapted therapy for drug resistant TB. With an 80% cure rate for patients finishing DOTS and only 11% defaulting, the program is evolving positively and MSF will hand it over to the health authorities at the end of 2002.

| In Yerevan, MSF has run a combined medical, psychological and social care program since 1997 for young people placed in the Vardashan Institute. The team also provides outreach to high-risk children and their families in the city.

| In late 2001, MSF began outpatient support for people with mental disorders in Sevan, and opened a day center there in June 2002 for therapeutic and community integration activities.

| In Tavush province, MSF runs an STD/HIV program targeting sex workers and the general community in Bagratashen. In May 2002, MSF opened a counseling and information center with a women's group in Berd, as part of a joint project on family planning and STD/HIV prevention.

| MSF has worked in Armenia since 1988 and in Nagorno-Karabakh since 1989.

Georgia

Card-based programs increase access to health care

International staff: 15
National staff: 110

| Political and economic insecurity continues to beset Georgia. Against this background, MSF works to increase access to health care for society's most vulnerable in the capital Tbilisi, Akhmeta and the separatist republic of Abkhazia, where it also combats the high incidence of tuberculosis (TB).

| MSF and the International Committee of the Red Cross have identified 18,000 people in Abkhazia as vulnerable and without access to health care. These people have been given cards entitling them to free medical treatment from selected doctors at a number of hospitals. MSF provides the doctors

Givi, 37, hopes not to infect his 13-year-old daughter with TB, for which he is being treated at the Guliripchi TB hospital in Abkhazia. He was transferred there from prison after a visiting TB specialist found him in agony, vomiting blood on his straw mattress and weighing only 30kg. Despite manifesting symptoms of TB, a highly infectious disease, he was still sharing a cell with nine other inmates.



Kazakhstan | TB continues to ravage population

- International staff: 8
- National staff: 29

Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan | DOTS in 30 districts

- International staff: 20
- National staff: 110



with medical supplies, equipment and financial support. An MSF doctor-and-nurse team also provides home care in Sukhumi, Abkhazia's capital, for those unable to travel.

| A similar card-based program is underway in Varketili, one of Tbilisi's poorest suburbs. MSF opened a clinic there in January 2002 to care for 10,000 people identified as vulnerable, many of them internally displaced people or refugees.

| MSF diagnoses and treats TB in Sukhumi at the Gurilipchi hospital, several outpatient clinics and the prison using the DOTS (Directly Observed Treatment Short-course) strategy. Some 219 new patients started treatment in the year ending March 2002. A specialized program for multi-drug resistant TB began in mid-2001, with 15 patients included so far.

| In Akhmeta, MSF supports surgery for refugees and disadvantaged local people by providing medicines and medical equipment.

| MSF has been active in Georgia since 1993.

| Public health has suffered in Kazakhstan since it gained independence in 1991. Tuberculosis (TB) was declared a national disaster in 1998. Many cases are resistant to conventional treatment.

| Since 1998, MSF has been working with local health authorities to implement the DOTS (Directly Observed Treatment Short-course) TB strategy in the districts of Baidibek and Ordobassy in the South Kazakhstan region.

| MSF does case-finding, treats patients at two 80-bed TB facilities in Karaspan and Mombulak, trains staff and supports two laboratories. It also does health education and rehabilitates TB facilities. Its current program will close at the end of 2002, having implemented all planned activities.

| MSF has been working in Kazakhstan since 1996.

| Despite some international attention to the environmental disaster of the shrinking Aral Sea, the health of the people living in nearby areas of Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan remains neglected. MSF is focusing medical activities on the high incidence of tuberculosis (TB); and continues to research links between the degraded environment and human health.

| MSF has implemented the DOTS (Directly Observed Treatment Short-course) strategy to fight TB in a total of 30 districts in the autonomous republic of Karakalpakstan and Khorozm in Uzbekistan, and Dashoguz in Turkmenistan. Over 13,000 patients have registered since 1997. Patient compliance is good and treatment success rates average 70-76%. High levels of multi-drug resistant TB (MDR-TB) are a main reason for treatment failure. MSF is preparing a pilot program to treat MDR-TB in the coming year. It is also rehabilitating a 600-bed TB facility in Nukus.

| Another project in Karakalpakstan, handed over to the Ministry of Health in March 2002, trained more than 500 health workers in the prevention and management of respiratory infections and diarrheal diseases in children under five.

| In the Ferghana Valley, MSF provides health education through traditional social structures called *makhallas*.

| Ashgabat in Turkmenistan was an important staging point for MSF when it was forced to leave Afghanistan in late 2001, and is still used for logistical support (for more on MSF and Afghanistan, see page 67).

| MSF has been in Uzbekistan since 1997 and in Turkmenistan since 1999.