



USAID
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

TAJIKISTAN

SNAPSHOT

Never Give Up!

USAID Dialogue on HIV and TB Project helps former inmates regain hope



A social worker, above, conducts an outreach session with Ravshan, right.

“The USAID program helped me understand that there is support for pre-release prisoners. Thanks to USAID and the project, I not only received comprehensive medical and social services, but also I was assisted in reuniting with my family.”

Ravshan grew up in Khujand, Tajikistan. He had no father and spent lots of time outside the home, sometimes pilfering in order to live. Influenced by his environment and lacking positive role models, Ravshan made friends with pick-pockets and started drug dealing. Later, he began taking drugs and was sentenced to prison for theft.

While serving his jail term, Ravshan decided to undergo HIV testing. Nearly one in five injecting drug users is infected with HIV in Tajikistan. When Ravshan learned he was HIV positive, he was devastated and did not know how he would ever recover from this news. Prison officials connected Ravshan with an NGO working through the USAID Dialogue on HIV and TB Project. He took part in consultations with outreach workers and received information about prevention and control of HIV and TB. Through programs like this, Ravshan and other prisoners are given the social support they need to live productive lives after prison.

Ravshan received additional consultations in a social reintegration center following his release from prison. Social workers from the local NGO partnering with USAID provided comprehensive social support ranging from information on HIV/TB issues to assisting him in recovering his identification documents, which are necessary for receiving medical treatment.

In addition to health care support, Ravshan was matched with a job at a private company producing bricks and started to re-establish contact with his family, who were reluctant at first because of his former drug addiction. This past summer, he was able to save enough money to travel to Russia and visit his mother.

Expressing his gratitude to the program, Ravshan said, “The USAID program helped me understand that there is support for pre-release prisoners. Thanks to USAID and the project, I not only received comprehensive medical and social services, but also I was assisted in reuniting with my family.”