

**Ashgabat, October 3, 2025** — From September 30 to October 3, 2025, the WHO Country Office in Turkmenistan provided practical and methodological support to national tuberculosis specialists. The mission was led by Dr. Vladimir Antonenko, head of the Department of Global Partnerships and Development at the Institute of Microbiology and Laboratory Medicine, Gauting, Germany, a WHO supranational reference laboratory for tuberculosis.

The visit was conducted as part of the Global Fund TB Project Work Plan for 2025–2027 and aimed at strengthening the technical capacity of the National Tuberculosis Reference Laboratory (NRL), part of the Centralized Laboratory of the Directorate of Infectious Disease Centers of the Ministry of Health and Medical Industry of Turkmenistan.

A key component of the mission was a three-day training course aimed at refreshing participants' knowledge of the testing process, result interpretation, and quality assurance for pretomanide (Pt) and cycloserine (Cs) using the MGIT system.

In addition to the training, Dr. Antonenko assessed the current DST processes at the NRL. The evaluation also included a review of key quality indicators within the laboratory's quality assurance program. Based on this assessment, NRL specialists and the WHO expert jointly developed tailored quality improvement plans to ensure that national practices align with international laboratory standards.

This initiative underscores Turkmenistan's continued commitment to advancing TB control efforts through strengthened diagnostic services and international collaboration. By building local expertise and improving laboratory quality systems, the country takes another significant step toward achieving global TB elimination goals.