

South Africa – already beginning its paradigm shift to treat TB

Some countries are already showing that a paradigm shift is possible and have created and begun to roll out ambitious plans to hit the 90-(90)-90 targets by 2020.

South Africa, the country with the world's highest TB rates, has embarked on a broad, four-year campaign to dramatically drive down TB rates in the country. The country has already largely integrated its HIV and TB care, seeking to ensure that every individual diagnosed with HIV is also tested and if necessary treated for TB, using modern tools.

The campaign now focuses on those most vulnerable – going house-to-house in six mining districts where TB disease rates are the highest – to reach 5 million people. In the coming years, the campaign will expand to additional cities and provinces with high burdens. It will test at least 90% of the country's 150 000 prisoners.

This initiative is the result of a joint push from South Africa's President Jacob Zuma and Health Minister, Dr Aaron Motsoaledi, with strong support from the country's parliament. Their efforts have provided strong signals to all local leaders to engage in the fight.

South Africa, with its infrastructure and research capacity, is also playing a critical role in the research and development of new, more effective tools to prevent, diagnose and treat TB. South African researchers are making major contributions to global efforts to develop these new tools, from early-stage research through to large-scale clinical trials.

For more details:

Dr David Mametja

National TB Programme Manager, South Africa

+27 716 77 3333