

What can YOU do?

It is a rare occasion when the world suddenly finds itself poised to make quick and decisive action against a formidable and long-standing threat. Yet that time is currently at hand for the global tuberculosis (TB) epidemic.

- ▷ The strategy to reach the target is available
- ▷ Targets have been set for the control of TB by the year 2005
- ▷ Control programmes have been established
- ▷ Detailed national plans have been developed
- ▷ Implementation costs have been calculated
- ▷ A broad-based coalition has been organised
- ▷ New international support mechanisms have been established

So what is missing?

- ▷ Emphasis on tuberculosis eradication in development goals
- ▷ Sufficient health care infrastructure and personnel
- ▷ Volunteers, as well as informed patients, knowing a cure exists
- ▷ Financial commitment, from national budgets and international assistance

What can YOU do for DOTS and against poverty on World TB Day?

People's community groups and social movements

DOTS is a cost effective, accessible intervention for all those involved in the fight against poverty.

- ▷ Include promotion of DOTS on the platform for action, and organise special events for World TB Day, March 24.

Teachers and Trainers

Information and prevention among youth. Telling them DOTS cures TB permanently will also help spread the word to their community and stop stigmatisation of TB patients.

- ▷ Teach children and adolescents about TB and organise events that foster understanding of TB symptoms and cure.

What can YOU do?

Health care staff and health volunteers

Spreading of adequate information, training and practice on DOTS is essential for the expansion of DOTS coverage for both public and private health practitioners, and represent a major asset to decrease nosocomial transmission of TB. Health care workers can insist on having adequate equipment for DOTS centres.

- ▷ Talk to the media. Use newspapers, the radio and TV talk shows to spread your knowledge to TB sufferers and the general public so that those with TB symptoms will come to your treatment centre for diagnosis.
- ▷ Spread awareness of proper TB treatment.

Private sector leaders and local businessmen

Business leaders have a stake in TB control. A TB-free workforce increases productivity and the Gross National Product (GNP). Provide TB detection and treatment services in your workplace to ensure a healthier workforce.

- ▷ Pressure local elected officials and national government to fund and implement DOTS expansion programmes. An information, detection and care programme for TB in the workplace, as well as in the communities where the workforce live, is a very efficient form of investment and indirect marketing for the company.
- ▷ Promote the fight against TB on a global level by supporting the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, TB and Malaria.

Lobby, promote and implement DOTS for TB!

Media outlet and advocacy groups

Newspapers and media outlets have traditionally spread the word on World TB Day. From now on there will be a year-round flow of information on TB as the campaign is stepped up. To reduce the stigma often attached to TB, and reduce the burden of the disease, it is essential that there be open discussion of TB and of DOTS as a major contribution in the fight against poverty and a tool for better national economic performance.

- ▷ Produce articles on TB and DOTS as an issue for the Financial, Economics, and Sports sections of local and national newspapers and magazines. TB is not just a medical issue.

What can YOU do?

- ▷ Use radio programmes, television advertisements, soap operas and theatre to press home the message that TB can be treated and can assist in poverty alleviation.

State governments and elected representatives

Political leaders can make the difference by speaking up on TB, as a number of developing countries' Heads of State did last year. Governments, as in the case of Japan, can announce that they urge local State representatives to see to it that public health centres act swiftly when TB cases occur - ask medical associations and hospitals to improve their therapeutic capabilities and prevent in-hospital infection, and recommend people take medical check-ups as a preventive measure.

- ▷ Bring up the issue of DOTS provision and expansion in your speeches.

Religious leaders and organised groups

In 2002, March 24th is a Sunday. Anglican Archbishop Desmond Tutu said TB cure is a basic human right. Muslim political leaders in a number of countries have called for mobilisation against TB.

- ▷ During religious services, include information about TB, and about the existence of efficient treatment and the inequity of stigmatising such a curable disease.
- ▷ Mention TB and its victims that weekend.

Action by different religious leaders is a powerful call for a united human front against a common enemy.

People living with HIV/AIDS (PLWA) and people living with TB

TB is the leading cause of illness and death among PLWAs. Winston Zulu, the Zambian leader of Africa-wide PLWA groups, has spoken out on the right to proper TB treatment as a major demand and requirement for PLWAs. DOTS prolongs the life of PLWAs even in the absence of antiretrovirals.

- ▷ Include TB on the AIDS agenda and demonstrate for DOTS on World TB Day.

What can YOU do?



***A broad-based
social movement
can put us on
the right track
to help the poor
get rid of TB!***

***Highlights of World TB Day 2001
presents an array of best practices around the World
(available at www.stoptb.org)***

World TB Day 24 March 2002 Stop TB, fight poverty