



Partnership for TB care and Control in India- Call to Action

With the recent reports of the severe form of drug resistant TB emerging in Mumbai this is a **call to action** of all stakeholders nationwide working for TB control to scale up their efforts in actively identifying TB patients through approved, early, accurate and high quality diagnosis and ensuring completion of treatment of all TB patients.

As we are all aware that the reasons for drug resistance in TB are mostly due to poor reach of programme, inaccurate diagnostic methods, non adherence to treatment, improper treatment regimens, indiscriminate use of drugs through over the counter prescriptions and myths and misconceptions regarding tuberculosis diagnosis and its correct management including treatment and care.

Correct and effective implementation of the existing TB control program in area of surveillance, epidemiology, screening, laboratory diagnosis, patient management, addressing non adherence, specific requirements of vulnerable population like People living with HIV and infection control is a necessary pre requisite to prevent drug resistance.

Commitment needs to be increased in raising the levels of the beneficiaries and the providers with specific reference to; Treatment and its duration; Availability of free drugs in patient-wise boxes; Importance of taking medicines under the direct observation of DOT; complete adherence to the treatment and the consequence of non adherence.

Partnerships should involve the family members and community members in the care of person with TB so as to address the stigma and gender issues pertaining to the disease and its treatment. There is an urgent need for all stakeholders to **step up** their efforts to improve the quality of every aspect from prevention and early diagnosis to the care continuum for TB patients.

Failure to address these issues at this juncture will not only result in lack of confidence in TB patients from seeking timely treatment under the program, but more importantly make it difficult for India to reach the target of the millennium development goals by 2015. Also to ensure compliance of long MDR treatment there is a greater need to comprehend the gaps from provider to patient level as such cases of severe resistance will impact India's PMDT program which outlines a strategic plan to address multidrug resistance TB.

The time is now critical to make concerted efforts by all partners to support and strengthen TB care and control in India. There is a need for the urgent policy measures to address private and CSO sector dynamic role in TB care within India and proactively and positively regulate this sector right away in a true **partnership** spirit.

For more information: WHO has released some FAQs about TDR [Link to the FAQ](#)