

## Integrating TB and HIV

Tuberculosis (TB) was once a social disease, complicated by isolation, fear, and stigmatization. The advent of modern treatment did much to erode these attitudes and fears, and TB began to be seen as a treatable condition. But the ground gained in the fight against TB is now in danger of being lost again as the disease re-awakens in the shadow of a HIV and AIDS. In Kenya, the high rates of HIV infection are contributing to the high number of new TB cases. TB incidence has increased dramatically; the country's annual increase in incidence rate of 12 percent is among the highest in sub-Saharan Africa. An estimated 29 percent of TB patients are HIV-positive, and TB-HIV co-infection is now a significant problem. PATH has received funding from PEPFAR, the Capacity Project, and the Global Fund to work with National Leprosy and TB Control Program (NLTP), KNCV, WHO, and the Kenya Association for the Prevention of TB and Lung Disease (KAPTLD) to scale-up TB/HIV activities in 10 priority districts and nationally. The key activities include:

- Building human resource capacity in TB/HIV
- Scaling-up TB/HIV integrated activities by increasing the number of patients tested for HIV and initiating care, and increasing the number of TB cases diagnoses and efficiency of diagnosis among PLWHA.
- Strengthening TB/HIV management monitoring and evaluation
- Stimulating community-level demand for HIV testing and TB diagnosis
- Strengthening laboratories and improving the general quality of TB/HIV diagnostic capability.



Upon completion of a behavioral study in 2000, PATH, in collaboration with the National Leprosy and TB Program, developed a series of print materials, including flyers that featured short, realistic stories of fictionalized clients on the road to recovery. The flyers were broadly distributed in the community, clinics, hospitals, and schools. PATH also designed an instructional brochure for non-TB health care providers, to increase referrals to government TB clinics.

### Communication Strategy

In October 2006, PATH developed a National Tuberculosis Communication Strategy with NLTP, entitled *Lights of Hope*. This strategy is based on a study of health-seeking behaviors among Kenyans, strategy design workshops with stakeholders, and meetings with frontline TB workers. It aims to reduce the impact of TB in Kenya through communication strategies that will create public awareness that TB is curable if diagnosed and treated early, regardless of HIV status; build health worker capacity to diagnosis and treat TB; increase confidence in government health facilities to diagnose, treat, and cure TB; increase family involvement in adherence to TB treatment.

PATH will facilitate workshops with policy makers to encourage them to address TB and HIV at the policy level, create and broadcast radio programs to increase community awareness, and train current Magnet Theatre troupes in TB and support theatre performances that explore TB-HIV related themes.

### Building Capacity for TB-HIV integration

PATH is addressing the need for increased diagnosis and testing of both HIV and TB by building health worker capacity throughout Kenya. PATH created provincial and district-level training plans with the NLTP in Rift Valley, Coast, and Central Provinces and is working with NLTP provincial level trainers to train health workers and district-level coordinators in TB-HIV co-infection. PATH is assessing the quality and effectiveness of current monitoring and supervisory tools and is working with the Ministry of Health to strengthen on-the-job training in the use of monitoring and supervisory tools.

In many programs the laboratories are not included in TB-HIV activities; PATH is working to change this by conducting an assessment of laboratory capacity and infrastructure with provincial-level teams to improve the capacity to diagnose TB. In addition, PATH will train laboratory personnel to improve their knowledge and skills for diagnosing both TB and HIV. PATH also plans to address the current conditions of microscopes used for diagnosing TB by developing guidelines for replacing missing or worn out microscope and parts.

**PATH improves the health of people around the world by advancing technologies, strengthening systems, and encouraging healthy behaviors.**

For more information, contact:  
 Dr. John Kembe  
 TB Team Leader  
[jkembe@path.org](mailto:jkembe@path.org)