

## Importance of community-based tuberculosis care and support: Godfrey's story

Godfrey Akoonay was 30 years old when he was diagnosed with tuberculosis (TB) on April 22, 2013. The diagnosis came after a long period of pain and suffering. Eight months before, Godfrey had started experiencing a terrible cough and frequent fevers. He tried treating the cough with cough syrups, but instead of getting better, he started coughing up blood and experiencing excessive night sweats. He also lost almost one-third of his body weight, dropping from 62 kilograms to 42 kilograms.

"Thinking that I had been bewitched, I turned to traditional healers for cure," he said. "However, my health kept deteriorating."



Joseph (left) and Godfrey (right) at Godfrey's workplace.

Because of his poor health, Godfrey had to stop his business as a secondhand garments' seller at the market in Karatu. In despair, he turned to alcohol for comfort.

It was during this time that Godfrey's friend Joseph came to his rescue. Joseph is a former TB patient who is a member of AMANI. AMANI is a community-based group associated with UMATU (Upendo na Matumaini), a community-based organization that, with support from PATH, works to identify TB cases in Karatu.

Joseph was strongly convinced that Godfrey could be suffering from TB disease, so he referred Godfrey to Karatu Health Centre for sputum examination. Godfrey was diagnosed with TB and immediately put on anti-TB treatment. Joseph became his treatment supporter, making sure that Godfrey followed his treatment protocol for the full six months it takes to be cured.

Within only a month after Godfrey was put on treatment, his health dramatically improved and he had gained almost five kilograms. During an interview with UMATU's leader, Godfrey could not help expressing his gratitude and great desire to help the community in the fight against TB.

### For more information

To learn more about PATH's work in Tanzania, please contact Dr. Zahra Mkomwa at [zmkomwa@path.org](mailto:zmkomwa@path.org). To learn more about USAID's work in TB, please contact Elizabeth Pleuss at [epleuss@usaid.gov](mailto:epleuss@usaid.gov).

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