

RESULTS Canada

A New Year Deserves New Ideas

“If you think research is expensive, try disease!”—Lary Woodard Lasker

All across the world, people are waking up to a new year: 2015—the year of the metaphorical finish line for so many of the world’s problems and the completion of the Millennium Development Goals (MDG). Now that we’re here, what is the status of our progress? Have we reached our goals? Solved the world’s problems? Where do we go from here?

MDG 6 called on us to combat HIV, Malaria, and other diseases, which included Tuberculosis (TB), and to both halt and reverse the incidence of these major diseases. Yet, TB still the #1 killer of people with HIV, and among the top 5 causes of female deaths between the ages of 15 and 44. Moreover, in 2013, 9 million people contracted TB, resulting in 1.5 million deaths at the hands of this disease. With stats like this, it seems safe to say that we are far from completing the mission set out by MDG 6.

TB REACH: a proven initiative for diagnosing the hardest to reach:

Every year, 9 million people become sick with tuberculosis and one-third of them (approximately 3 million people) will never even be diagnosed. The disease takes the lives of 1.4 million people each year, many of whom never knew they are infected. In response to this enormous need, [TB REACH seeks “to promote early and increased case detection of TB cases and ensure their timely treatment, while maintaining high cure rates within the national TB programmes.”](#)

Over the course of the past 5 years, TB REACH has provided grants to 145 projects across 36 countries. TB REACH grantees are specifically dedicated to increasing case detection of TB through new, innovative approaches, and they have had immense results: in the first wave of funding alone (TB REACH is currently implementing the fourth wave of funding), results showed an average increase in case detection by 33%, with some projects even doubling regional case detection within the first year of programming.

All of this is thanks to initial funding from Canada. TB REACH has proven itself as a life-saving, cost-effective solution to the global TB crisis:

- **Reaching the missing 3 million.** TB REACH funds projects that focus specifically on finding and diagnosing cases of tuberculosis in the most vulnerable, hardest to reach regions of the world.
- **Engaging the community.** Grants from TB REACH are much smaller compared to the Global Fund—the maximum funding amount per project is \$1 million—which encourages community-led initiatives to apply. These small projects can then be scaled up, and some are even adopted by their respective country’s Ministry of Health for further expansion.
- **Using unique, innovative approaches.** [Many of the programs funded through TB REACH](#) are utilising new technologies and methods of case detection to ensure they are finding as many people and diagnosing as many cases as possible.

New World Technology Meets Old World Ideals:

12% of the population in the Adamawa State of Nigeria is made up of nomadic pastoralists. In many places across the world, and especially in Nigeria, nomads are at significant risk of contracting TB due to a number of factors, including poor access to healthcare, high rates of malnutrition, low immunization rates, and overcrowded housing. However, despite these high risk factors, access to routine TB diagnosis and treatment is limited due to the mobility of the pastoralists.

The Adamawa State Tuberculosis and Leprosy Control Programme, together with the KNCV Tuberculosis Foundation, knew they needed to think slightly out of the box to address this problem, and came up with a three-pronged approach: active case finding, awareness raising activities, and the introduction of GeneXpert testing.

1. They worked to improve the capacity of the existing TB health centers by investing in new equipment, renovating the spaces, and providing additional training for staff.
2. They focused their attention on the media: radio messages intended to increase knowledge of TB and the treatment services available were produced in Fulfulde, Hausa, and English, which were aired extensively. The English messages were aimed specifically at policy/decision-makers. The manager of the National TB Programme also appeared regularly on State television to discuss TB, and in particular, the issue of TB among the nomadic communities. Moreover, they lobbied the Ministry of Health regularly, which resulted in the co-financing of many of their initiatives.
3. They organized 378 TB screening days, led by community leaders, at nomad livestock resting stations, settlement areas, and market days, where volunteers could systematically screen attendees. In addition to screening people for TB, they organized presentations and plays that focused on the issues and risks surrounding TB.

In total, over the course of two years, 96,376 people were verbally screened, 9,890 suspected cases of TB were identified, and 1,339 positive cases were found and subsequently referred for treatment. This initiative led to a 41% increase in case notification for the entire Adamawa State.

TAKE ACTION

A new year offers an opportunity to renew our commitment to the world's poorest who face the greatest risks from the TB epidemic.

The Government of Canada needs to know that the world's poorest rely on this innovative TB program and that Canadians care about maintaining funding support for TB REACH. You can take action by **calling on Canada to renew its support to the fight against TB by pledging \$120 million CAD over 5 years to TB REACH.**

1. **Write a letter to Minister Paradis:** Use the new year as your hook and call on the Canadian government to renew its funding of \$120 million to TB REACH. Renewing Canada's support to TB REACH should be his New Year's resolution!
2. **Meet with your MP:** The House of Commons will not be in session again until the last week of January, so this is a perfect opportunity to secure a meeting while they are still at home. You can ensure that constituent support for TB REACH is heard by your MP, helping to build broad support in Parliament.
3. **Tweet @christianparad** using the hashtags #TBREACH and #StopTBNOW: Urge him to re-commit to reaching the hardest to reach as his New Year's resolution!

Sample Tweets:

- Renewing support to #TBREACH should be #Canada's New Year's #resolution. @christianparad #StopTBNOW ! #cdnpoli
- We need continued Canadian leadership to Find.Treat.Cure TB. @christianparad please renew Canada's support to #TBREACH & #StopTBNOW
- Canadians support using #innovation to reach the hardest to reach. @christianparad, #StopTBNOW! Renew Canada's pledge to #TBREACH.
- TB is the leading cause of death for those living with #HIV. @christianparad renew Canada's support to #TBREACH & #StopTBNOW

Additional Resources:

[2013 TB REACH overview video](#) (3.42 minutes) – English only

[Read more](#) about all of TB REACH's other successful grantees on their website:

[Read about Millennium Development Goal 6](#)