



Educate, Track, Test, Treat.

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TBAI acknowledges the support of the following:

- » Governments of Andhra Pradesh, Delhi, Haryana, and Telangana
- » NTEP
- » District units of NTEP
- » STOs of Andhra Pradesh, Delhi, Haryana and Telangana
- » Clinton Health Action Initiative (CHAI)
- » FIND India
- » Johnson & Johnson Pvt Ltd
- » Karnataka Health Promotion Trust (KHPT)
- » Stop TB Partnership
- » TB Alert

Photographs: TB Alert India

Design & Layout: The Pen & Mouse



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“The object of all health education is to change the conduct of individual men, women and children by teaching them to care for their bodies well ”

DR. CHARLES H. MAYO



Abbreviations

TB	Tuberculosis
NA	Needs Assessment
PRIs	Panchayati Raj Institutions
DOT	Directly Observed Therapy
DOTS	Directly Observed Treatment, Short-course
NTEP	National Tuberculosis Elimination Programme (India)
PHC	Primary Health Center
RNTCP	Revised National Tuberculosis Control Programme (India)
BCG	Bacillus Calmette-Guérin (vaccine)
STS	Supervisory Treatment Supervisor
ASHA	Accredited Social Health Activist (India)
ANM	Auxiliary Nurse Midwife (India)
MDR-TB	Multidrug-resistant Tuberculosis
XDR-TB	Extensively Drug-resistant Tuberculosis
PMTBMBA	Pradhan Mantri TB Mukh Bharat Abhiyan (Prime Minister's Tuberculosis Free India Campaign)

About TB Alert

TB Alert India (TBAI) is a not-for-profit organization working with a vision to make India free from TB. It has a strong presence in Telangana, Andhra Pradesh, Delhi and Haryana, headquartered in Hyderabad. The projects at TBAI focus on increasing TB knowledge, health seeking behaviour, new TB case detection and successful treatment outcomes. Community Engagement and Private Provider Engagement including both formal and informal providers are the key strategies of the projects. TBAI works in close coordination with NTEP officials of state, district and TU/DMC level staff and joins hands with other allied stakeholders and works closely with them for TB prevention, care, support services, and leverages and mobilises community support to sustain the impact gained through projects activities. All projects of TBAI aim at supplementing the National TB Elimination Program (NTEP), mobilizing, and linking local communities and service providers both formal and informal in the fight against TB.





NOTE TO READER

Dear Reader,

It's that time of the year again, when we at TBAI are eager to report on what we have been doing the past year, our successes, learnings and unveil future plans and aspirations.

TB elimination rests on four vital pillars. These four pillars have been accorded priority by the National Tuberculosis Elimination Programme (NTEP) in specific terms – Detect, Treat, Build and Prevent. TBAI in its efforts to strengthen the efforts of the programme has adapted these strategies and implemented activities that can make a difference to the last person on the ground. This report showcases some numbers and impact stories that indicate our efforts are in the right direction and infuses hope in us that **WE CAN END TB ONE DAY!**

The Team at TBAI



EDUCATE

Awareness on TB is the most important step towards elimination of a disease that has challenged us for centuries. TBAI subscribes to NTEP's understanding that awareness can help people seek treatment early, reduce stigma and promote greater investments and political commitment to TB elimination.

The need for elimination of TB cannot be emphasised enough as according to WHO it is among the world's top 10 killer diseases. It is also an airborne infection that spreads with great speed and renders people sick, causing economic losses as well as widespread disruption.

TBAI works towards TB elimination by creating awareness on TB among vulnerable communities about TB as well as promoting the benefits of accessing government facilities. Outreach activities used for this are traditional street plays, IEC shows, interpersonal communications with key influencers such as traditional healers, pharmacists, private practitioners and other important stakeholders. The data below demonstrates TBAI's strong outreach activities in the reporting year.



Number of TB Awareness Meetings conducted
14080



Number of People reached with TB messages
2598115



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A Story of Hope: Praveen's Journey Toward Recovery

Praveen, a young man from Chatrinaka in the Uppuguda area of Jangammet TU, comes from a very poor family. Living with his mother Chandrakantha, he was the sole breadwinner, working as a delivery boy for Zomato. However, life took a challenging turn when Praveen was diagnosed with HIV. Unable to work for two months due to his deteriorating health, the family's livelihood fell solely on his mother, who works as a domestic helper. Her modest income was barely enough to meet their basic needs, let alone afford medication for Praveen.

During this difficult time, the Mahalakshmi Self-Help Group (SHG), one of the Community Structures (CS) in the area, observed that Praveen exhibited TB symptoms. Understanding the urgency of the situation, the SHG referred him for a TB test. However, Praveen faced another challenge—he didn't even have money for transportation to the testing facility.

The SHG quickly stepped in, utilizing the BtB project's health auto service to transport Praveen to the facility. There, he was tested for TB and connected with an HIV counselor, ensuring he received holistic care. With the guidance of the counselor, Praveen obtained the necessary TB medication from the TU and returned home to begin his treatment.



Praveen's mother, Chandrakantha, expressed her heartfelt thanks to the SHG and the BtB team for their timely intervention. "The health auto helped my son reach the facility and get the medicine he needed. Today, he is mentally stronger and is regularly taking his TB medication," she shared with relief.

Praveen's journey highlights the power of community-driven initiatives like the BtB project. By identifying vulnerable individuals, providing transportation support, and connecting them with essential health services, the project not only restores hope to patients but also eases the burden on their families. This story reflects the transformative impact of partnerships between community structures and public health initiatives, ensuring that no one is left behind in the fight against TB.

TRACK

Contact tracing involves identifying contacts of an infected TB patient and screening them for symptoms. An infection may have occurred as a result of the coughing and sneezing of the patient, releasing bacteria in the air. The aim of contact tracing is to identify and treat people who have been infected and prevent them from contracting tuberculosis.

TBAI has a vibrant and active contact screening intervention which includes identifying people with symptoms and referring them for testing. On testing positive for TB, they are assisted with treatment options and helped right through to their complete recovery. The data below demonstrates the strength of the programme.



Number of People with
symptoms referred for Testing
21740



No. of HH Contacts screened
159178



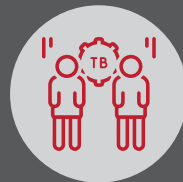
Number Diagnosed with TB
1988



No of HH Contacts Eligible for
TPT Initiation
124231



Number TB patients followed
up for Treatment Adherence
1956



No. of HH Contacts initiated
on TPT
92518



No. of IPs visited
70196



No. of HH contacts completed
treatment successfully
75864



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Moinuddin's Journey: From Fighting TB to Becoming a Champion

In 2019, Mr. Moinuddin began experiencing persistent fevers, particularly at night. Initially, he dismissed the symptoms as minor, resuming his daily life without much concern. However, as weeks turned into months, his condition worsened. Three months later, a terrifying sign appeared—he coughed up blood. Alarmed, he immediately sought medical attention at a nearby hospital.

Doctors advised him to get tested for tuberculosis (TB) at a diagnostic center. To his surprise and dismay, the results confirmed that he had TB. But his journey was far from over—Moinuddin was diagnosed with drug-resistant TB (DR-TB), a form of TB that is more challenging and requires prolonged treatment.

Moinuddin was admitted to the hospital for 15 days and began his grueling nine-month treatment regimen. The journey was physically draining and mentally exhausting, as he had to endure endless medicines and strict treatment protocols. Coping with the stigma and isolation of TB, especially DR-TB, was one of the hardest challenges he faced.

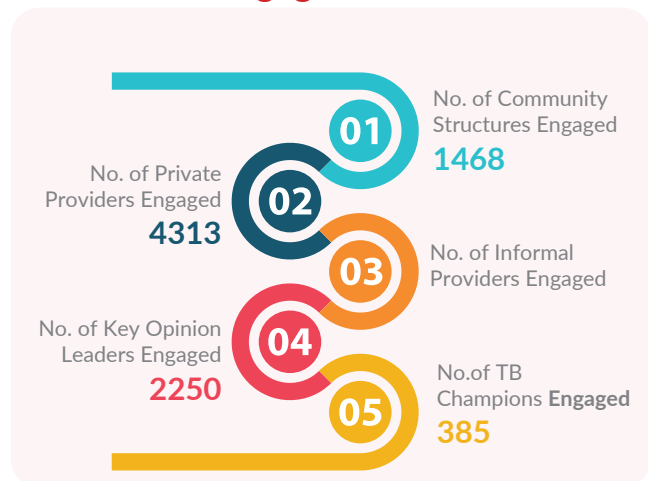
But Moinuddin didn't fight this battle alone. The TBAI meetings and support from Nikshay Mitras provided him with the guidance and mental strength he needed to overcome the trauma. These platforms offered him a safe space to share his struggles, gain emotional support, and stay motivated to complete his treatment.

Moinuddin's story is one of resilience, courage, and determination. His transformation from a patient to a community leader exemplifies the strength of the human spirit. Champions like him are not only survivors but also torchbearers in the fight against TB, inspiring countless others to persevere and overcome.

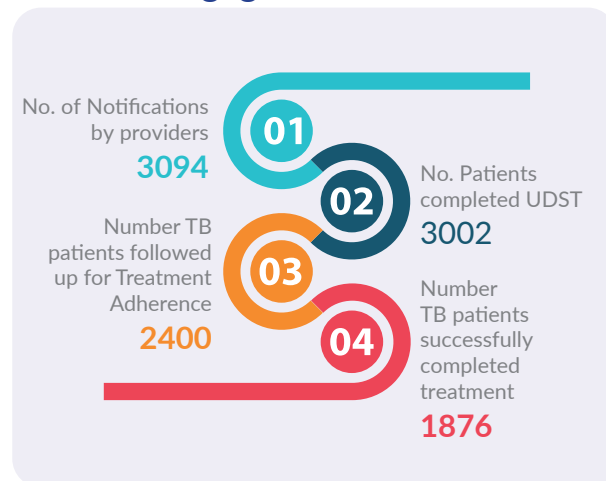
We salute Moinuddin and all such TB Champions for their unwavering spirit and dedication to a TB-free future.

Projects reach for the year 2023

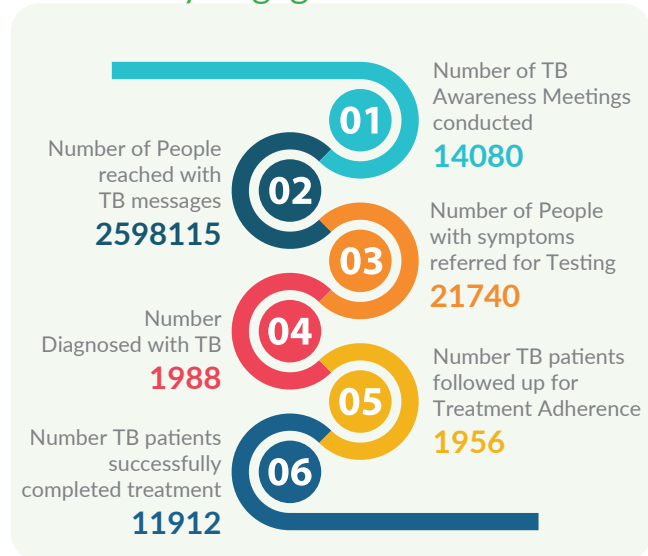
Stakeholder Engagement



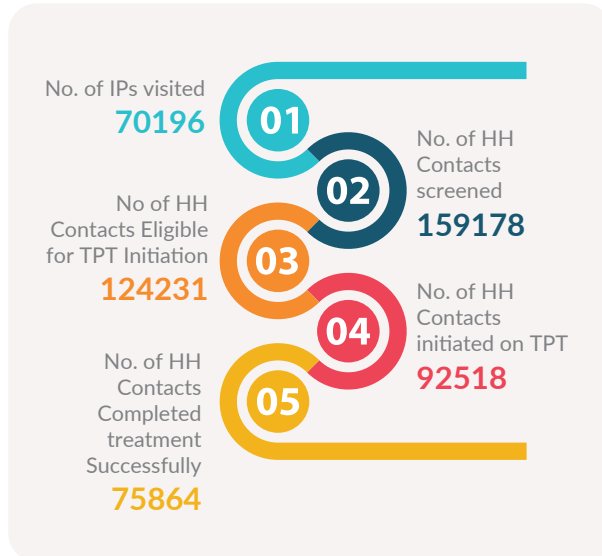
Provider Engagement



Community Engagement



TB Prevention





Patient Stories

My name is **Rekha**, and I am a mother who faced an unexpected challenge: tuberculosis. When my son developed a persistent cough, a concerned neighbor suggested we visit the TB Alert India Center in Mukundpur. There, he was diagnosed with drug-sensitive TB.

The treatment journey was not easy. The medication caused side effects that left him weak, and our family felt isolated. However, the nearby TB Alert India Center became a source of hope and support. The daily routine of three pills—a fixed-dose combination—offered the promise of recovery.

I dream of a world free from TB, where no one has to endure the struggles my family faced. Today, I stand strong, fighting not just for myself but for my children and **for a future without tuberculosis.**



My name is **Bubbly**, and my journey with tuberculosis began unexpectedly. It started with pain in my leg, followed by fever, and then the unthinkable—coughing up blood. Tests confirmed my worst fears: I had TB.

The early days were incredibly tough. I felt weak, sick, and confined to bed. During this challenging time, my sister took care of my two young daughters, and my husband stood by me with unwavering support. The nearby TB Alert India center became a lifeline, making the treatment process more manageable. I followed my treatment plan diligently, taking one pill a week under the supervision of a provider and the remaining doses at home.

After three months of ups and downs, I am now healthy and deeply grateful. The fight isn't over, but I am determined to keep going—for my children, for myself, and **for a future where tuberculosis is a thing of the past.**





My name is **Manisha**, and my journey began with a battle against typhoid. Despite completing the treatment, my health didn't improve. I returned to Babu Jagjeevan Ram Hospital, where I received a new and terrifying diagnosis "Drug-Resistant Tuberculosis". The treatment was overwhelming two years of MDR-TB therapy with six pills a day becoming my lifeline.

I have now been on treatment for 14 months and have followed the routine diligently. However, six months into my treatment at the TB Alert India center, a shortage of two critical medicines occurred. This crisis affected Delhi and other states in India. I was devastated, fearing the worst. But thanks to Ms. Shobha, who worked tirelessly to arrange the medicines for me, I was able to continue treatment despite missing a few doses during the shortage. Those missed doses still worry me, leaving me uncertain about my full recovery.

The TB Alert India team supported me through this difficult time, providing not only medicines but also counseling for me and my family. Their guidance and encouragement gave me the strength to stay on treatment. Without their help, I might have lost hope during the crisis.

Today, I feel much better and have completed nearly 14 months of treatment. I am determined to finish the full course without missing another dose. Inspired by the counseling and support I received, I joined the Divine Project as a volunteer. I now participate in patient support group meetings, share my experiences, and motivate other patients to adhere to their treatment. ***Together, we fight for a future free of TB.***

My name is **Pooja**, and my daughter **Bhumi's** health journey took an unexpected turn. It all began when Bhumi complained of pain near her ear. Concerned, I quickly took her to our local doctor, who referred us to another hospital for further tests.

The diagnosis was unexpected-tuberculosis. But instead of fear, I was determined. People get sick, and TB is treatable. Bhumi's treatment began under the pediatric drug-sensitive TB protocols.

What made this journey easier was the nearby TB Alert center in our community. There was no need for long travels or added stress just accessible care and healing. I am grateful for the support provided by the TB Alert center team, who not only helped us stay on track with regular counseling but also connected us to the Government of India's Ni-kshay Poshan Yojana. Through this program, we received INR 500 per month to support Bhumi's nutrition.

However, Bhumi faced her own challenge with the pills. As her mother, I came up with a strategy: I hid her medication in toffees to make sure she took every dose and to prevent vomiting. It was a small trick, but it helped keep her on track with her treatment.

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TEST & TREAT

TBAI has a comprehensive care and support intervention that plays a crucial role in providing high quality services to patients found positive for TB. This includes testing, treatment, emotional support and treatment adherence counselling and nutrition support.

After identifying persons displaying symptoms of TB, testing is the next, vital step that must be undertaken in order to put the patient, if found positive on the road to recovery, by initiating treatment swiftly. Additionally, it helps to prevent the patient from spreading the infection further.





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Mrs Shobha: From Overseeing Testing and Treatment to Counselling

Mrs. Shobha is a senior employee of the Divine Project who has been serving with dedication for the past 13 years. She began her journey as a Lab Technician and has since taken on the additional responsibility of leading the project as a Project Coordinator while continuing her lab technician roles.

Based at the Mukundpur center, she manages the operations of the Divine Project across its three sites: Mukundpur, Burari, and Bawana. Under her leadership, the project has been highly effective in testing sputum samples of TB suspects, playing a crucial role in facilitating early case detection.

In addition to overseeing testing and treatment, Mrs. Shobha actively supports TB patients through her counselling skills, ensuring they adhere to their treatment regimens without defaulting. Her extensive experience and expertise have been instrumental in helping the Divine Project achieve its goals and make a meaningful impact in the community.



Collaboration is the key to TB elimination in a country that has a big disease burden, public and private players in the path of testing and treatment. Additionally, the rural areas of India need special attention given their disadvantaged communities, dispersed geographies and remoteness. This calls for collaboration and a coming together of stakeholders who can strive for greater impact in the elimination of TB. TBAI is working towards this in an active manner as the case study below demonstrates.

Nikshay Gram Sabha – an example of collaborative success

The Gram Sabha is the fulcrum of the Panchayati Raj and village development. People use the forum of the Gram Sabha to discuss local governance and development, and make need- based plans for the village. Likewise, Nikshay



Gram Sabha is an initiative developed by the Central TB division to engage all the stakeholders in a gram panchayat to accelerate TB elimination efforts for a TB free village. This strategy is a multi-sectoral convergence activity where all the important decision makers and stakeholders come on to a single platform to discuss action plan on TB elimination in the village. It involves care and support for TB patients on treatment and regular screening for TB presumptive cases and encourages early detection and fights stigma in the community with the right information.



In the tribal district of Mahabubabad in Telangana state, TBAI has intervened in few vulnerable sites



with a Nikshay Gram Sabha initiative, as part of community engagement. They have followed a step wise process to institutionalize and regularise these meetings in the villages. The components discussed in a meeting are TB burden in the village and ways to improve awareness on TB and advocacy of free NTEP services and to dispel myths and misconceptions around the disease. The members of a Gram Sabha include Gram Sarpanch (Elected village head), Village secretary, Elders and leaders, Anganwadi workers, village organisers, Health Centre staff and Panchayat Raj Institution members along with elected ward members and allied committees in the village.

A Nikshay Gram Sabha meeting contains discussions on TB in India and in the respective village. The members are sensitised to the basics of TB, NTEP, and treatment options. The effects of



stigma are given special attention. All stakeholders as mentioned above are encouraged and motivated to get involved. The NTEP team provides technical support. Based on the outputs and discussions in the Nikshay Gram Sabha, an action plan is made along with planned activities and timelines, including a medical and TB screening camp at the nearest PHC. These meetings have resulted in active involvement from stakeholders.



CASE STUDY

A health worker herself, when Swapna noticed odd symptoms like cough and fever in her body, she immediately tested for TB. Once positive, our on-ground coordinator interacted with her daily to support her and help her recover successfully.

The coordinator used guessing techniques to foster positive thinking. She is now healthy and happy, and credits her success to the team that was with her every step of the way.







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