The Partnership for TB Care and Control in India – a partnership of representatives from different sectors (non-governmental organisations, the private sector, communities and the government) aimed at enhancing the much needed involvement of all stakeholders in India’s gigantic battle against tuberculosis (TB) – organized two consultations: 7-8 April 2011 at Mumbai for western region and on 28 - 29 April 2011 at Hyderabad for Southern region. These consultations were attended by 84 partners from the states of Maharashtra, Gujarat, Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Goa, Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Karnataka and Kerala.

These events were organised by the Partnership’s Secretariat with the objective to provide a common platform to the partners to discuss the challenges of implementing the TB programme in the field, possible solutions, and actions from the civil society to implement these solutions. Dr. C. Udayasankar, State TB Officer, Tamil Nadu stressed the need of working on reducing of Multi drug resistant TB (MDR-TB) and looking at why the infection rate for TB remains the same in spite of all stakeholders efforts. Dr. Prakash Bhatlawande, ex Joint Director Health Services, Maharashtra quoted “such a meeting of all sectors working against TB is very important for collaborative actions between all stakeholders”. He encouraged for more similar platform in the state so each sector can collaborate and contribute to strengthening the RNTCP efforts.

During the group exercise, participants were divided into groups to discuss challenges in three critical areas - Service Delivery; Advocacy Communication and Social Mobilisation (ACSM); and Public-Private Mix (PPM).

Service Delivery group looked at:
- improving sputum collection centers, counseling services in the TB programme,
- Best ways of reaching vulnerable populations and underserved areas.

ACSM group deliberated on:
- innovations and dissemination of IEC material
- discussed the recognition and acceptance of CSOs by the local government
- Challenge of political will varying from state to state.

PPM group deliberated on:
- over the counter prescription of TB treatment by pharmacist/unlicensed service providers,
- Sub optimal involvement of the non formal service providers in urban areas.
- The group also discussed reasons for the low uptakes of existing PPM schemes by private providers.