

STOP TB NEWS

SEPTEMBER 2007

FROM MESSENGER TO AMBASSADOR: ANNA CATALDI JOINS STOP TB

Author and journalist Anna Cataldi, who served as a [United Nations Messenger of Peace](#) from 1998 to 2007, has joined the global fight against tuberculosis. Ms Cataldi, who was appointed as an Ambassador of the Stop TB Partnership on 20 September, will raise awareness worldwide about the unfair burden of tuberculosis on refugees, migrants, people living in poverty and other disadvantaged groups.

"I am grateful to the Stop TB Partnership for giving me this opportunity to advocate on behalf of those suffering from this disease," Ms Cataldi said.

Welcoming the announcement, former UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan praised Ms Cataldi for her tireless efforts and devotion. "She was an active, compassionate and productive Messenger. She travelled to difficult places, such as Afghanistan and Somalia, to bring support, encouragement and hope to the desperate and voiceless. I am delighted she will now devote her energies to the Stop TB campaign," he said.

[Press release](#)

NEW RESPONSE PLAN TO CONTAIN DRUG-RESISTANT TUBERCULOSIS

Hundreds of thousands of cases of drug-resistant tuberculosis could be prevented and as many as 134 000 lives saved through the implementation of a two-year, US\$2.15 billion response plan launched in June by the [World Health Organization](#) and the Stop TB Partnership.

[The Global MDR-TB and XDR-TB Response Plan 2007-2008](#) sets out immediate measures to prevent, treat and control extensively drug-resistant TB (XDR-TB) and multidrug-resistant TB (MDR-TB), as well as longer-term actions to reach a 2015 goal of providing access to drugs and diagnostic tests to all MDR-TB and XDR-TB patients, which would save up to 1.2 million additional lives.

Country-specific needs will account for 80% of the plan's budget, while US\$102 million has been allocated for essential support functions to fight TB drug resistance by international partners at the global, regional and national levels.

[Press release](#)

[Fact sheet on the Global Response Plan: \(English\) \(French\)](#)



UNAIDS SOUNDS “WAKE-UP CALL”: MORE INVESTMENT NEEDED FOR TB CONTROL

The [United Nations Joint Programme on HIV/AIDS \(UNAIDS\)](#) Programme Coordinating Board has asked the international community to significantly increase spending for basic tuberculosis control programmes while dedicating additional resources to filling the long-term global financing gaps for tuberculosis and HIV.

In his speech to the Board in Geneva on 28 June, UNAIDS Executive Director Dr Peter Piot acknowledged tuberculosis as the leading cause of illness and death in people living with HIV. "We continue to miss valuable opportunities to detect tuberculosis and prevent it spreading among people living with HIV. The emergence of extremely drug-resistant tuberculosis strains is a dramatic wake-up call: if we don't factor and integrate tuberculosis into HIV treatment programmes, we will get nowhere", he said.

HIV/AIDS and TB are so closely connected that the term "co-epidemic" or "dual epidemic" is often used to describe their relationship, which is also referred to as TB/HIV or HIV/TB. Many people infected with HIV in developing countries develop TB as the first manifestation of AIDS. The two diseases represent a deadly combination, since they are far more destructive together than either disease alone. At least one-third of the 38.6 million people living with HIV worldwide are co-infected with TB and the rest are at greatly increased risk of developing TB.



CIVIL SOCIETY RISES TO THE CHALLENGE: GRANT WINNERS ANNOUNCED

Twenty-two civil society groups operating at the grassroots level around the world have won funding under the [Challenge Facility for Civil Society](#), launched on World TB Day (24 March) 2007 by the Stop TB Partnership Secretariat.

These groups, selected by an independent committee of seven experts, will share approximately US \$385 000 to support their efforts to shape health-related policy making at the local and national levels, advocating for greater resources for TB control as well as improved access for all—particularly the poorest—to public health infrastructure.

Once the concept for this new mechanism has been proven and operating procedures refined, new rounds of the Facility, each for duration of one year, will be held, subject to the availability of funds.

[List of winning organizations](#)



Stop TB Partnership Japan launched in Tokyo

This new national Partnership was inaugurated at an event hosted by the Japan Anti-Tuberculosis Women's Society and attended by Her Imperial Highness Prince Akishinomiya, honorary president of the Japan Anti-Tuberculosis Association, notables from the Japanese government and 800 participants. The new Partnership's first general meeting will take place on 19 November 2007, at which time a board of directors will be elected. Results Japan is making an effort to enroll parliamentarians to endorse the Partnership.

REGIONAL ADVOCACY WORKSHOP IN THAILAND ACHIEVES SOLID OUTCOME

Nearly 40 participants from eight countries attended the first-ever Asia regional planning workshop on advocacy, communication and social mobilization (ACSM) for tuberculosis control in Bangkok, Thailand from 20-24 August.

The purpose of the workshop was to build capacity and provide tools for the effective implementation of ACSM activities, particularly within [Global Fund](#) grants.

Local, provincial and national officials as well as civil society representatives from Cambodia, India, Indonesia, Nepal, Papua New Guinea, the Philippines, Thailand and Viet Nam discussed ways of planning, implementing and evaluating ACSM activities and were able to go back home with solid action plans to move ACSM forward in their countries. Participants also agreed to build a regional network to facilitate the continued sharing of best practices.

The workshop was organized by the Stop TB Partnership Secretariat, the [United States Agency for International Development \(USAID\)](#), and the [Program for Appropriate Technology in Health \(PATH\)](#).

[More about the workshop](#)



RESEARCH NEWS

BILL & MELINDA GATES FOUNDATION COMMITS US\$280 MILLION FOR TB RESEARCH

On 18 September, the [Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation](#) announced \$280 million in grants to speed development of TB vaccines, diagnostic tests and drugs. The funds are specifically dedicated to supporting the priorities of the [Global Plan to Stop TB \(2006-2015\)](#).

The grants focus on three areas:

- **Vaccine development:** \$200 million over five years to the [Aeras Global TB Vaccine Foundation](#) to conduct clinical trials of up to six TB vaccine candidates.
- **Diagnostics:** \$62 million over five years to the [Foundation for Innovative New Diagnostics \(FIND\)](#) to develop TB tests that are more accurate and simpler to use.
- **Drug discovery:** Nine grants totalling \$18 million to identify new TB treatments to combat drug resistance. Grant recipients in this category include the Seattle Biomedical Research Institute, Colorado State University, Weill Cornell Medical College, Johns Hopkins University, Ordway Research Institute, Northeastern University and the Ecole Polytechnique Fédérale de Lausanne in Switzerland.

Welcoming the announcement, Dr. Marcos Espinal, Executive Secretary of the Stop TB Partnership, noted that stopping the global threat of tuberculosis must be a top priority: "We have an achievable action plan to reduce the TB burden, and it is encouraging to see new resources going to Stop TB partners to support this plan."

STAGE IS SET FOR TWO CLINICAL MILESTONES IN TB DRUG DEVELOPMENT

[The Global Alliance for TB Drug Development \(TB Alliance\)](#) and its partners have two promising clinical candidates moving into the next phase of research in TB patients: PA-824 and moxifloxacin.

PA-824 is the first TB drug developed by a public-private partnership to enter clinical trials in patients, with Phase II research already under way in South Africa and additional Phase II studies planned. PA-824 is a nitroimidazole, a new class of anti-bacterial agents for the treatment of TB.

Moxifloxacin, a type of antibiotic already approved for other indications, moves into large-scale Phase III trials this fall in Kenya, South Africa, Tanzania and Zambia to evaluate its efficacy as a replacement for either of two drugs in the current four-drug TB regimen. Developed by [Bayer HealthCare AG](#), moxifloxacin has demonstrated efficacy for the treatment of acute respiratory and some skin infections. It also has an excellent safety record, having been used more than 60 million times in 104 countries.

FINDING BETTER TESTS TO DETECT MDR-TB AND XDR-TB

Recent lethal outbreaks of extensively drug-resistant tuberculosis (XDR-TB) have highlighted the need for diagnostic testing that goes beyond sputum microscopy, but the laboratory infrastructure in countries threatened by XDR-TB is very limited. Even where the capacity exists for drug-susceptibility testing (DST), standard methods for DST are cumbersome and extremely slow. Results often come back after 8-18 weeks of waiting, during which time many XDR TB patients may have died, transmitted resistant bacilli to their contacts, or both.

In response to this urgent problem, the [Foundation for Innovative New Diagnostics \(FIND\)](#) has bolstered its portfolio for detection of drug-resistant TB strains—especially those resistant to rifampin, the single most important drug in the standard DOTS regimen. FIND is working on four commercial technologies for detection of drug-resistant TB:

- **MGIT:** The Mycobacterial Growth Indicator Tube from [Becton, Dickinson and Company](#) provides results in just days instead of weeks. MGIT has, for several years, been approved by major regulatory agencies for the detection of resistance to first-line drugs; multi-center studies showing the utility of the MGIT system for testing second-line drugs have recently been completed and FIND is exploring the feasibility of more widely implementing this system for the detection of drug-resistant tuberculosis.
- **FASTPlaque-Response:** This phage-based test from [Biotec Laboratories](#) was developed in collaboration with FIND and was the first [CE-marked](#) product to come out of the FIND portfolio. The test uses a rapid biological amplification method and allows detection of rifampin resistance directly from patient sputum in only two days, at very low cost, using equipment and procedures available in laboratories performing mycobacterial culture. A large-scale comparative evaluation study of this test has recently been completed and FIND is now demonstrating the test in India, Russia, South Africa, Turkey and Viet Nam.
- **GenoType MTBDRplus:** This reverse hybridization line probe test from [Hain Lifescience](#) was developed and CE-marked for use on TB isolates found in culture. FIND is now working with Hain to evaluate and register the test for application to smear-positive sputum samples that have been processed prior to culture, providing same-day results. Following an evaluation study that indicated excellent test performance for the diagnosis of MDR-TB, FIND is carrying out a large-scale demonstration study of MTBDRplus in South Africa.
- **Xpert TB:** FIND is working with [Cepheid](#) to develop a diagnostic test for TB based on real-time PCR that integrates automated sputum processing, DNA extraction, gene amplification and target detection into a single, hands-free test. Cepheid's Xpert TB, which is being developed in collaboration with the University of New Jersey Medical and Dental Schools, can detect both the presence of TB and of rifampin resistance in less than two hours. Clinical trials of the test are scheduled to start in 2007.

NEW MEMBER FOR EUROPEAN TB VACCINE CONSORTIUM

In August, the German company [Vakzine Projekt Management GmbH \(VPM\)](#) announced that it had joined the [TBVAC](#) consortium, an integrated research project initiated in 2004 by the European Union to speed up the development of improved vaccines, particularly for the young adult population.

The Hanover-based company hopes that its candidate, VPM1002, will provide protection against antibiotic-resistant forms of TB.

COUNTRY NEWS

The Philippines doubles budget for TB control A

In September the government of the Philippines announced it would raise its tuberculosis control budget to P280 million starting next year--a 100 percent increase--to make the Department of Health more effective in treating people affected by the disease. TB is the sixth leading cause of illness and death among Filipinos.

This increase will allow the government to procure more anti-TB drugs and fund education and training programs for early detection and prevention of childhood TB.

UGANDA FINDS NEW PARTNER FOR LABORATORY STRENGTHENING

A public-private collaboration between the Republic of Uganda and the [Foundation for Innovative New Diagnostics \(FIND\)](#), launched on 8 August, will strengthen Uganda's laboratory services and facilitate the introduction of diagnostic tests for the early detection and treatment of diseases including tuberculosis, malaria and sleeping sickness. The collaboration is also expected to increase the rational use of drugs and reduce chronic ill health and high household costs.

"I am delighted to welcome FIND to Uganda. FIND is joining other partners who have been working with us to strengthen laboratory services in the Country," said the Honorable Dr Richard Nduhura, Uganda's Minister of State for Health (General Duties).

Other partners supporting Uganda's efforts to improve its laboratory services include the [World Health Organization](#), the [United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\)](#), the [African Medical and Research Foundation \(AMREF\)](#), the [German Leprosy and Tuberculosis Relief Association](#) and the private sector.

[Press release](#)

SANTA TAKES ON THE "TERRIBLE TWINS" IN THE WESTERN CAPE

[SANTA \(South African Tuberculosis Association\) Western Cape](#) has targeted primary and secondary schools in the greater Cape Town area, informing pupils about the "terrible twins" of tuberculosis and HIV/AIDS—what they are and how they are spread—and training them to become peer educators. Interest from principals, teachers and pupils is high and SANTA is expanding the programme from the 20 schools covered last year.

Following an increasing number of calls from businesses asking for tuberculosis-related advice, SANTA has also begun workplace information sessions to inform staff about TB and what to do when they have come into contact with a person with TB disease.

LEARNING ABOUT TB IS CHILD'S PLAY IN ROMANIA

Building on its success in providing TB health education and materials to thousands of children in northeastern Romania, the [Romanian Christian Humanitarian Foundation \(RCHF-UK\)](#) has announced a new weapon in the fight against TB: an interactive Stop TB board game.

The game was developed in collaboration with [The Pulmonary Disease Hospital of Iasi \(Spitalul Clinic de Pneumologie Iasi\)](#) and Rom Research Iasi. A larger floor-game version is also being produced.

"Children learn more easily and enjoy learning more when they themselves participate," said Brian Douglas, Voluntary Director of RCHF-UK.

RCHF-UK is hoping to find funding to make the game—which is currently available in Romanian only—available in other languages so that this kind of education can be enjoyed by children across the globe.

COOPERATION IS KEY IN SLOVAKIA

Slovakia's [National Institute for Tuberculosis, Lung Diseases and Thoracic Surgery](#) and its [Catholic University](#) (CU) have announced their cooperation on multiple levels to fight tuberculosis.

Their collaborative efforts center on training and education, with a particular focus on reaching the often-marginalized Roma ethnic group:

- Tuberculosis experts from the National Institute participate in the training of nurses at CU, and nursing students are able to do practical training at the National Institute.
- The institutions collaborate on the training of Roma assistants, who serve as facilitators between doctors and Roma patients to overcome language barriers and lack of trust.
- The National Institute and CU have launched a project to educate communities in the poorest Roma villages and settlements, which have a very high incidence of TB, especially among children. Community response has been very positive, and the programme is being expanded to additional villages and settlements with the cooperation of the State Work Office and Community Centers.

[Contact for the National Institute: Dr Ivan Solovic](#)

[Contact for Catholic University: Dr Vladimir Littva](#)

EVENTS

RECENT EVENTS

EDINA BAKATUE FESTIVAL: UNITY, DEVELOPMENT AND PROGRESS AGAINST TB

Edina Bakatue is a festival celebrated in Elmina (also known as Edina) Township, Ghana, celebrated on the first Tuesday of July and followed four days later by a Grand Durbar of chiefs and people of the area. The festival brings together the local community as well as their friends and visitors from within and outside Ghana around the theme "Unity, Development and Progress".

This year, the Bakatue Day and Grand Durbar gatherings were used to communicate simple messages from the National TB Control Programme and to invite the community to become partners for the prevention and cure of TB. Stop TB t-shirts, scarves and caps bearing various slogans were worn by participants including chiefs, elders, palanquin carriers, traditional drummers and dancers, and distributed (along with free condoms for HIV/AIDS control) at the Durbar ground.

In his welcome address at the Durbar, The Omanhene (Paramount Chief) of the Edina area, Nana Kwodwo Conduah IV, said, "The health of the citizen of every nation should be of prime importance to its government. It is for this reason that the Traditional Council, in collaboration with the Ghana Society for the Prevention of TB, are organizing this awareness programme."

Following the success of this event, efforts are now under way to organize paramount chiefs and their divisional chiefs into a branch of the Ghana Society for the Prevention of TB, which is part of the [Stop TB Ghana Partnership](#).

6TH MEETING OF THE STOP TB WORKING GROUP ON MDR-TB

The Stop TB Partnership's [Working Group on MDR-TB](#) met from 20-22 September in Tbilisi, Georgia, bringing together people who have worked on projects approved by the [Green Light Committee](#) and representatives from countries around the world that are engaged in MDR-TB management. Its aim was to share best practices and challenges with a view to developing strategies for accelerating the scale-up of MDR-TB management in accordance with the [Global MDR-TB and XDR-TB Response Plan 2007-2008](#).

UPCOMING EVENTS

2009 STOP TB PARTNERS' FORUM: HOST CITY SOUGHT

The Stop TB Partnership has issued a call to WHO Member States and Stop TB partner organizations to submit nominations for a host city for the Third [Stop TB Partners' Forum](#), to be held early in 2009.

The Forum is the General Assembly of the Stop TB Partnership and the ultimate authority to which all elements of the Partnership are answerable. The Forum is an inclusive, consultative meeting of representatives of all Stop TB partners, with particular emphasis on high level representation from affected countries, donor countries and key partners.

The selection process will be managed by a selection committee, established for the purpose, under the

auspices of the [Stop TB Partnership Coordinating Board](#). The winning host city and date of the Partners' Forum will be formally endorsed by the Board at its next meeting on 24 October.

The deadline for nominations is 15 October.

[Host city nomination form](#)

ALL AGAINST TUBERCULOSIS: WHO EUROPEAN MINISTERIAL FORUM

Ministers of health, ministers of justice, ministers of foreign affairs and international development and other high-profile health leaders from the 53 Member States of the WHO European Region will meet at a one-day forum co-hosted by WHO/Europe and the Ministry of Health of Germany in Berlin on 22 October 2007.

The objectives of the Forum are:

- to strengthen political commitment to ensure implementation of the WHO Stop TB Strategy across the European Region, and to include tuberculosis control within policies aimed at strengthening health systems;
- to obtain commitment from all governments to ensure full and appropriate financing of tuberculosis control;
- to adopt a Regional Declaration on Tuberculosis;
- to endorse and support the goals of the Stop TB Partnership for Europe.

The Regional Declaration on Tuberculosis will help reset health agendas across the whole of the Region, with urgent and necessary commitment, and to ensure that funds are in place within the countries' health systems to halt the spread of TB, and eliminate it from the European Region.

In 2005 alone, there were over 445 000 new cases of TB in the World Health Organization's European Region, causing 66 000 deaths. The rates of MDR-TB in the countries of central and eastern Europe and the CIS are estimated to be among the highest in the world. The region also reports the highest rate of treatment failure (7%).

COORDINATING BOARD MEETING

The 13th Stop TB Coordinating Board meeting will be held in Berlin, Germany on the 23rd and 24th of October 2007.

[Meeting of the Coordinating Board](#)

38TH UNION WORLD CONFERENCE ON LUNG HEALTH

This year's conference will be held in Cape Town from 8-12 November 2007. More information is available on the [conference website](#).

The Stop TB Partnership Secretariat has prepared a **roadmap** for Partnership activities during the conference.

Date	Event	Type	Time	Location	Focal Point
Sunday 4 November	ACSM Joint Core Group meeting	Closed meeting	12.00-18.00	Southern Sun The Cullinan Hotel	Nicole Schiegg
Monday 5 November	ACSM Working Group Global and Country group meetings	Open meeting	All day	Southern Sun The Cullinan Hotel	Nicole Schiegg
	Stakeholders meeting	Closed meeting	TBD	Table Bay Hotel	TB Alliance
Tuesday 6 November	ACSM Working Group Global and Country group meetings	Open meeting	All day	Southern Sun The Cullinan Hotel	Nicole Schiegg
	Partners meeting	Closed meeting	All day	Arabella Sheraton Hotel	KNCV
Wednesday 7 November	ACSM Media and Events Task Force meeting	Open meeting	14.00-18.00	Southern Sun The Cullinan Hotel	Judith Mandelbaum-Schmid
	Laboratory Strengthening Subgroup meeting	Open meeting	14.00-17.00	Convention Centre	Mohamed Abdel Aziz
	DOTS Expansion Working Group and Laboratory Strengthening subgroup, Core group meeting	Closed meeting	09.00 - 17.00	Convention Centre	The Union & DEWG secretariat (Léopold Blanc & Malgosia Grzemska & Mohamed Abdel Aziz)
	Building National Partnerships Task Force	Closed meeting	09:00-12:00	Southern Sun The Cullinan Hotel	Louise Baker
Thursday 8 November	Stop TB Symposium on XDR-TB and TB-HIV	Open session	09.00 - 17.00	Convention Centre	Organized by WHO Stop TB (Léopold Blanc/Malgosia Grzemska)
	Laboratory Strengthening Subgroup meeting	Open meeting	14.00-17.00	Convention Centre	Mohamed Abdel Aziz
	New TB Vaccines Working Group, Core group	Closed meeting	09.00 - 17.00	Convention Centre	Uli Fruth

	meeting				
Friday 9 November	New TB Drugs Working group, Annual meeting	Open meeting	09.00-12.00	Convention Centre	Heather Ignatius
	Retooling Task Force, Forum	Open meeting	09.00 - 12.00	Convention Centre	Rachel Bauquerez
	Childhood TB Subgroup, Forum	Open meeting	14.00 - 17.30	Convention Centre	Dermot Maher
	Kochon Foundation ceremony	Opening Ceremony	17:30-19:00	Convention Centre	Louise Baker
Saturday 10 November	TB Research Movement, Forum	Open meeting	16.30 - 18.30	Convention Centre	Dermot Maher
	Public-Private Mix Subgroup, Core group meeting	Closed meeting	TBD	TBD	Mukund Upeklar
Tuesday 13 November	TB and Poverty Subgroup, Forum	Open meeting	09.00-17.00	Convention Centre	Bertie Squire

FORTHCOMING PUBLICATIONS

OVERCOMING TUBERCULOSIS: A HANDBOOK FOR PATIENTS

This user-friendly guide, intended to help patients feel well as they recover from tuberculosis and complete all their treatment, will be released in November 2007.

POLICY GUIDANCE ON TB DRUG SUSCEPTIBILITY TESTING OF SECOND-LINE DRUGS

A detailed technical manual on laboratory methodology, laboratory bio-safety and standard operating procedures related to second-line drug susceptibility testing will be finalized and available online in December 2007

EVENTS CALENDAR

OCTOBER 2007

TBC		Brussels, Belgium	Informal European Council Summit
20/10/07	22/10/07	Washington DC, USA	World Bank Annual Meeting
2/10/07		Berlin, Germany	European Ministerial Forum

24/10/07	25/10/07	Berlin, Germany	13 th Stop TB Partnership Coordinating Board
30/10/07	03/11/07	Berlin, Germany	Global Forum for Health Research (Forum 11) Global Forum Health web site - Programme
TBC		Manila, Philippines	Regional Workshop on Building National TB Consultant Capacity

NOVEMBER 2007

08/11/07	11/12/07	Capet Town, South Africa	38 th Union World Conference On Lung Health The Union World Conference
24/11/07	26/11/07	Kampala, Uganda	Commonwealth Heads of Government

DECEMBER 2007

02/12/07		Global	World AIDS Day
04/12/07	06/12/07	San Salvador, El Salvador	Follow up meeting on PAL strategy implementation STB Workshop on Grant Negotiation and Implementation of Global Fund Round / Round 7 TB Round Proposals
09/12/07	12/12/07	Geneva, Switzerland	NTP & Technical Working Group Regional Joint TB-HIV Meeting (with HIS)
09/12/07	13/12/07	TBC	Advanced Training Course of MDR-PPM
TBC		HCM City, Viet Nam	EU European Council
TBC		Seoul & Manila	
TBC		Lisbon	

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