

TB REACH NATIONAL TUBERCULOSIS PROGRAMME

Finding and treating people with TB in

Democratic Republic Of **Congo** Katanga

- Volunteers and former TB patients are improving access to care, providing sputum transport and educating communities
- More cases have been detected in the first 9 months of activities than in the whole of 2010
- Other funders are covering the increase in demand for drugs and patients are continuing treatment

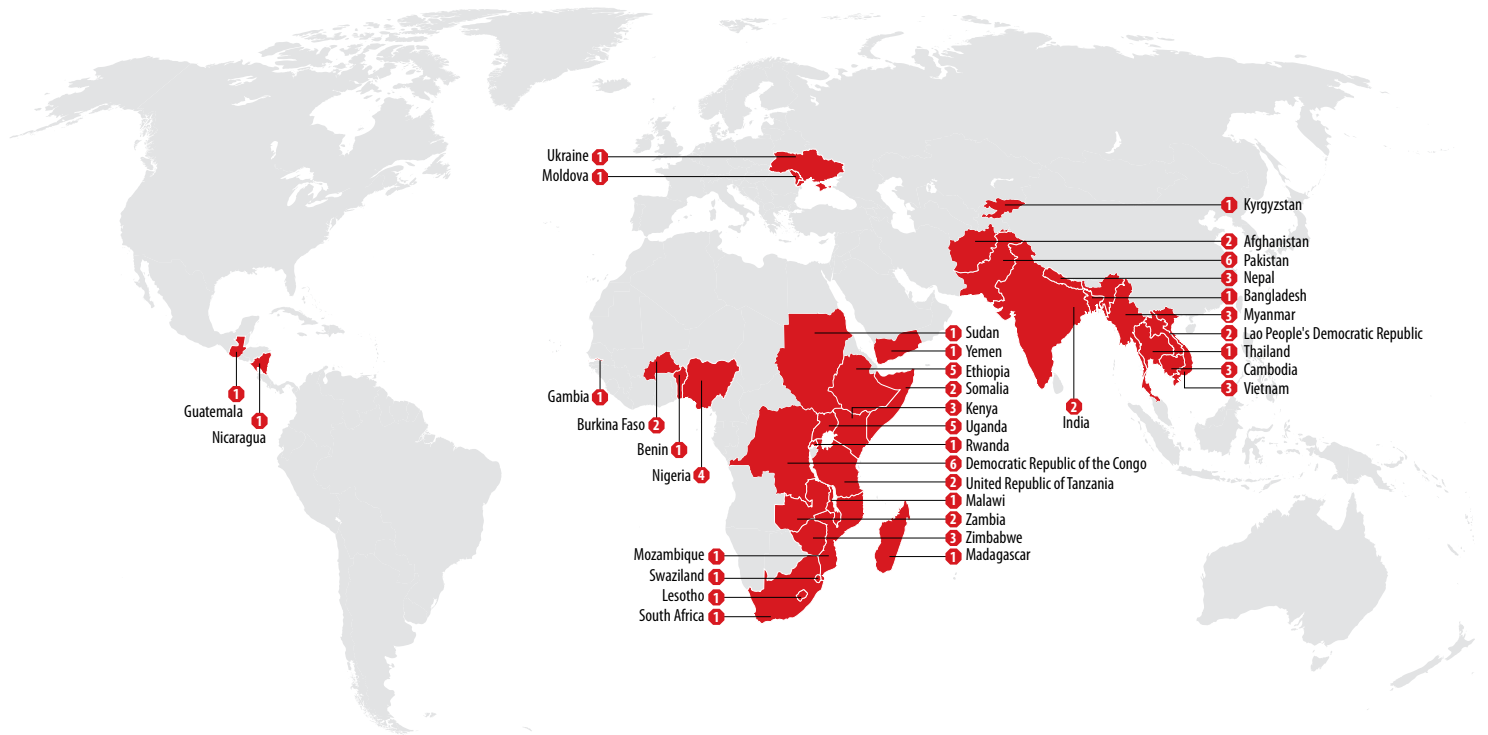


Katanga Province - Although the Democratic Republic of Congo has huge numbers of tuberculosis (TB) cases, many people remain undetected, transmit disease to others and eventually die due to poor access to care and exacerbated by a lack of understanding of TB. The National Leprosy and Tuberculosis Programme is addressing this issue through a number of innovative approaches, In communities with the lowest detection rates, active screening of the contacts of TB patients is being carried out by trained community volunteers and former TB patients. A network of satellite health centers is in place to gather sputum samples from those identified as TB suspects and, thanks to a programme subsidy, these samples are transported to a central diagnostic laboratory without the patient having to leave his village. The consultation and diagnosis are free for those unable to pay, thus removing a great obstacle to identifying and treating those suffering from the disease. Community participation is critical for the project. To encourage people to go to the

local satellite health centers for testing, radio broadcasts are being used to inform and educate people about the signs and treatment of TB. Former TB patients have also been enlisted to share their experience of treatment with the community at large and with primary school pupils whose early education is important. People in the past have resorted to traditional medicine to treat their symptoms, often continuing to spread the disease before dying. Thanks to the support of community volunteers, health-seeking behaviours are changing as people see the benefits of visiting satellite centers for diagnosis and treatment. Particularly in the populations that have formerly not been used to attending health centers for care, detection rates have gone up. Province wide, the numbers of the most infectious cases identified has increased more than 25% through the first 9 months of the project. Due to the increase, additional drugs were needed to treat this new and growing number of patients. The NLTP has ensured this as treatment has kept up with diagnosis.

TB REACH

FINDING AND TREATING PEOPLE WITH TB IN THE WORLD'S POOREST COMMUNITIES



Finding 140,000 new cases means saving 70,000 lives and preventing 1.4 million new infections.

More than **nine million people** around the world become ill with tuberculosis (TB) each year. About one-third of them fail to get an accurate diagnosis or effective treatment and are more likely to die from this curable disease. TB REACH offers a lifeline to people among this missing 3 million by finding and treating people in the poorest, most vulnerable communities in the world. In areas with limited or non-existent TB care, TB REACH supports innovative and effective techniques to find people with TB quickly, avert deaths, stop TB from spreading, and halt the development of drug-resistant strains.

- TB REACH was launched in 2010 and will run until 2016, thanks to a **CAD\$ 120 million** grant from the Canadian International Development Agency.
- TB REACH is committed to getting funds to projects with a very short turnaround time.
- In its first 18 months, TB REACH committed nearly **\$50 million to 75 projects in 36 countries** aiming to find and treat more than **140,000** people with TB who would otherwise have gone undiagnosed.
- Finding 140,000 new cases means saving 70,000 lives and preventing 1.4 million new infections. Scaling up successful TB REACH projects would multiply these figures.

Stop TB Partnership

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