



PRESS RELEASE

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Somalia, Somaliland celebrates 113,000 patients cured from TB

World Tuberculosis Day sees Somalia and its breakaway region of Somaliland celebrate more than 10 years of consistent treatment of the disease in a very fragile environment.

World Vision has been working with 23 local and international partners, as well as government authorities across various regions in the country for more than ten years on tuberculosis treatment

Funded by the Global Fund to Fight Aids, Tuberculosis & Malaria (GFATM), World Vision has now assisted the treatment of 113,000 tuberculosis patients with an 88% success rate since 2004.

Somaliland currently has a specialised centre that treats Multi-Drug Resistant (MDR) tuberculosis and there are further plans to open new treatment centres in Puntland and South Central Somalia.

“By expanding the tuberculosis program, we hope to fast track the 2015 Millennium Development Goal of reversing tuberculosis incidence and reducing the tuberculosis mortality rate by 50%,” says Francois Batalingaya, World Vision Somalia, Country Director.

Coordinated and proactive joint action between 23 local and international partners, alongside local government authorities, has dramatically improved community resilience across the country.

Somalia’s two decades of civil war, severe drought, floods, famine and mass population movements have given rise to many of the factors that made tuberculosis more prevalent.

The issue is exacerbated by a weak health system, unregulated private tuberculosis clinics, and unregulated tuberculosis drugs on sale, meaning patients receive inadequate or interrupted tuberculosis treatment.

In spite all the challenges, tuberculosis facilities have expanded from 34 to 68 treatment facilities since the program began, with a recent evaluation indicating that the treatment ratio has been brought down to 100,000 people per treatment centre in 2014. This is a dramatic decrease from the original headcount of 500,000 people per treatment centre in 2004.

According to Dr. Vianney Rusagara, Global Fund Programme Director for World Vision Somalia, more than 50% of tuberculosis patients still remain undetected, as the facilities are simply not adequate.

Treatment of tuberculosis can last up to eight months, with patients required to make daily trips to tuberculosis treatment centres to take medication under direct observation.

Due to conflict displacement, lack of food and long distances, some patients are simply unable to maintain these regular visits and as such forgo treatment.

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