



Message from the Chair and the Secretariat of the TB/HIV Working Group, September 2011

Dear members of the TB/HIV Working Group and friends of TB/HIV,

We have pleasure in sharing a brief overview of recent activities by members of the Working Group and the Secretariat, as well as a round-up of the TB/HIV issues raised at the IAS conference in July together with upcoming events, funding opportunities and dates to note in the diary.

1. Increasing advocacy and scaling-up the implementation of collaborative TB/HIV activities in the Region of the Americas

The Stop TB Department of WHO, in collaboration with PAHO, the Secretariat of the TB/HIV Working Group, CDC Atlanta, UNAIDS, USAID and regional members of civil society convened a two day meeting entitled "*Scaling-up the implementation of collaborative TB/HIV activities in the Region of the Americas*" in Panama City between 7th – 8th July 2011. Attended by representatives of National TB and AIDS programmes and civil society from the region, it aimed to share regional and global experiences and best practices for greater political advocacy, resource mobilization and scale-up in the implementation of collaborative TB/HIV activities and integration of TB and HIV services in the Region of the Americas. The meeting culminated in a [Call for Action](#) by participants to expand TB/HIV collaborative activities in the Americas. More details of the meeting can be found at the following [link](#). This meeting was preceded by a civil society meeting, held on 6th July and convened by the Secretariat of the TB/HIV Working Group, in collaboration with Treatment Action Group, UNAIDS and regional members of civil society. This meeting aimed at empowering civil society from Latin American and Caribbean countries to advocate for increased access to collaborative TB/HIV services. It also facilitated regional networking opportunities among participants and helped them translate their experiences and concerns about TB/HIV into needs-based advocacy recommendations. More details can be found at the following [link](#).

2. TB/HIV at the 6th IAS Conference on HIV Pathogenesis, Treatment and Prevention

In collaboration with the Consortium to Respond Effectively to the AIDS/TB Epidemic (CREATE), the Stop TB Department of WHO and the Secretariat of the TB/HIV Working Group of the Stop TB Partnership organized a TB/HIV research meeting in conjunction with the 6th Conference on HIV Pathogenesis, Treatment and Prevention on July 17, 2011 in Rome, Italy. Attended by more than 60 participants, the meeting promoted high level scientific interchange of ideas and research priorities on new and novel anti-TB drug development with specific issues related to childhood TB and people living with HIV. A full meeting report with presentations can be found [here](#). The IAS conference itself was dominated by breakthrough results from clinical trials such as the [HPTN 052 study](#), the first randomized trial to examine the role of earlier initiation of ART in TB prevention showing significant reduction in incidence of TB among people living with HIV ([link to PowerPoint presentation](#) from the session). The ThRio study from Brazil also showed between 28% and 44% reduction in TB incidence or mortality with the use of IPT and ART ([link to PowerPoint presentation](#)). Elsewhere, TB/HIV saw considerable coverage and was included in special sessions such as *The Impact of the Economic Crisis on HIV Programmes: Is Integration of Services and Operational Research the Solution?* and *The Integration Imperative: HIV Services and Health Systems*. A roadmap of all the TB/HIV sessions at the conference containing links to the related abstracts can be found [here](#).

3. Round 11 of the Global Fund Call for Proposals is now open

[Round 11 of the Global Fund](#), launched on 15 August 2011 with a submission deadline of 15th December 2011 promises to encourage further integration and scale-up of TB/HIV activities. Applicants are advised by the Technical Review Panel to address TB/HIV collaborative activities in their proposals, even if they are not seeking support for these activities. Highlighted as new in the Global Fund's information note for Collaborative TB/HIV activities this year is the need to adapt and roll-out the latest [Guidelines on intensified TB case-finding and Isoniazid preventive therapy](#) for people living with HIV in resource-constrained settings. It also recommends that National TB programmes assess whether the TB burden and local context justify seeking additional resources for the adoption of the new automated DNA test for TB, [Xpert MTB/RIF](#), and urges countries where it is available, to use it as the primary diagnostic TB test for people living with HIV and presumptive TB. Collaborative TB/HIV activities are also mainstreamed into the technical guidance notes of *Harm reduction for people who use drugs* and in *Strengthening maternal, newborn and child health interventions*, the latter recommending the integration of TB prevention, screening and treatment in prevention of vertical transmission of HIV, antenatal care services and related maternal and child health services in high prevalence settings. Applicants this year are advised to pay attention to consistency in TB/HIV activities between the TB and HIV proposals, and due care to value for money for which there is a separate briefing note. As part of efforts to support in quality proposal writing, the Stop TB Partnership has established a [website](#) providing guidance and tools, and links to other partners' resources. The Stop TB Department of WHO and the Stop TB Partnership Secretariat have also launched an e-mail-based Round 11 hotline gfr11tbhelp@who.int to answer questions that come up as countries write their proposals. Sixteen countries have been prioritized by [TBTEAM](#) for more intensified technical assistance support during the proposal preparation in this round. These countries include Botswana, Burundi, Cambodia, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Guatemala, Lesotho, Malawi, North Sudan, Republic of Moldova, Sierra Leone, South Sudan, Tajikistan, United Republic of Tanzania, Uzbekistan, Zambia and Zimbabwe. In addition, UNAIDS, in consultation with WHO and other UNAIDS cosponsors has developed a [Resource Kit for Global Fund HIV Proposals](#) and a [Toolkit for Key Populations Proposals and for the Targeted Pool](#).

4. TB Technical Assistance Mechanism TB/HIV consultants

TBTEAM facilitates access of all stakeholders that implement TB control activities (e.g. NTP, NGOs, CBOs, FBOs, patients groups, etc.) to a network of technical partners and well-coordinated technical assistance and provides a platform for coordination, encourages collaboration, promotes available expertise and facilitates planning for technical assistance according to needs. The criteria for qualifying for the TB/HIV consultants roster were changed in September 2011 and can be found on the TBTEAM website at the following [link](#). Candidates are requested to submit their CV together with a motivation letter when applying to be a TBTEAM TB/HIV Roster consultant. Application will be reviewed by the Secretariat of the TB/HIV Working Group and by an independent assessor.

5. PEPFAR Fiscal Year 2012 Country Operational Plan Guidance (August 2011)

The latest PEPFAR [Country Operational Plan Guidance](#) (COP) for the fiscal year 2012 was sent to all US government (USG) teams in August. This is a vehicle for documenting USG annual investments and anticipated results in HIV/AIDS and the basis for approval of annual USG bilateral HIV/AIDS funding in most countries. For programmes that have or are negotiating Partnership Frameworks, it serves as the annual work plan for the USG's contribution to the Partnership. In this year's COP TB/HIV is not only mainstreamed throughout, but TB/HIV integration is also listed as one of the prioritized strategic areas with a TB/HIV specific section and countries strongly recommended to maximize TB/HIV programming.

6. Towards Lab-Free Tuberculosis Diagnosis

August saw the release of the report [Towards Lab-Free Tuberculosis Diagnosis](#). Jointly commissioned by the TB/HIV Working Group, Medecins Sans Frontieres and Treatment Action Group, the report gives an overview of progress made so far towards identifying a much needed point of care TB diagnostic test, analyzing the resources available, the barriers preventing development and providing recommendations on the best strategic approach to realize its development within the next 5-7 years. The report was written by experts at the Division of Infectious Diseases, Department of Medicine, Imperial College, London through a process of literature review and expert consultation including with Core Group members of the TB/HIV Working group and the New Diagnostics Working Group. A shorter version that highlights the key advocacy messages and the short and longer-term strategic objectives to better focus funding, and research and development efforts can be found [here](#).

7. EU 7th Research Framework call for proposals

The 7th Research Framework Programme of the European Commission CORDIS has recently published a call for health research proposals [FP7-Health-2012-Innovation-1](#). Of the total budget, Euro 54,000,000 will be made available for “Translational research in major infectious diseases: to confront major threats to public health”. This grant will fund a number of HIV and TB research programmes, including a maximum of Euro 6,000,000 per project for one or more collaborative small or medium-scale projects that focus specifically on the co-infection of two or more of the following diseases: HIV, malaria, tuberculosis, hepatitis. The grant aims to support basic, translational and/or clinical research that improves disease prevention, therapeutic management and prognosis of these co-infections. Proposals are expected to address key research questions such as immunological mechanisms and responses to co-infection and may include investigator driven clinical trials on prevention, treatment or treatment combinations for co-infected individuals as well as clinical and epidemiological consequences. The deadline for Stage 1 proposals is 17:00 (Brussels time), 4th October 2011.

8. Upcoming events

TB/HIV Regional Workshop, Chisinau, Moldova, 27-29 September

As part of the continued effort of the TB/HIV Working Group Secretariat efforts to scale-up the implementation of collaborative TB/HIV activities in Eastern Europe and Central Asia, the WHO Europe Regional office in collaboration with the Stop TB and HIV/AIDS Departments will be organizing a TB/HIV regional workshop in Chisinau, Moldova. The meeting participants will include members of civil society, and national and international experts on TB, HIV and drug dependence support services. The meeting will share successful models, best practices and barriers to the integration of TB, HIV and drug dependence services in countries of the WHO European region and will be documented to provide a baseline for producing a regional operational guide.

42nd Union World Conference on Lung Health, Lille, France, 26-30th October

The theme for this year’s Union Conference is “Partnerships for scaling-up and care” and it aims to highlight the importance of collaboration in our common efforts to address conditions affecting lung health and HIV. The deadline for pre-registration is 5 October 2011. For the roadmap of HIV and TB/HIV sessions click [here](#).

Next Core Group Meeting, Beijing, 9th-11th November

As reported in our last letter, the next TB/HIV Core Group meeting will be co-hosted by the Ministry of Health of the People’s Republic of China and will be held in Beijing on 9th – 11th November 2011.

16th International Conference on AIDS and STIs in Africa (ICASA), Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, 4th – 8th December

The theme of this year's ICASA is "Own, scale-up and sustain". This offers an excellent opportunity for discussing the scale-up of collaborative TB/HIV activities and sharing experiences in Africa. Late breaker submission is open from 19th September – 17th October and we very much encourage you to apply. For more information please visit the [ICASA website](#).

You can also keep up-to-date with TB/HIV news on a more regular basis by monitoring the [TB/HIV Working Group homepage](#) or by following us on Twitter @HIVTB. If you "like" us on [Facebook](#) you will receive news feeds which you or your organization can share with your followers. In addition, please do provide us with news items you would like to be included in future letters.

Regards

Diane Havlir, MD
Chair

Haileyesus Getahun, MD, PhD
Secretariat