

A word from the Co-Chairs and Secretariat

With this first issue, we are pleased to launch the Newsletter of the Stop TB Partnership's New Diagnostics Working Group. We hope that it will contribute to promote regular communication with our members and partners.

In line with the new Global Plan to Stop TB, our working group will undergo a restructuring aimed at better responding to the ambitious targets set for 2011-2015. While the Plan recognizes the substantial progress made in the development of new diagnostics since 2005, future efforts and resources need to focus on new tests for diagnosis of TB at the point of care, of MDR-TB at peripheral level and of latent TB infection.

In these pages we will provide updates on the organizational changes, as well as on the work accomplished by our working group.

This Newsletter covers recent advances in diagnostics for TB and latest news from the Stop TB Partnership. Its aim is also to share practical information and useful resources with all our members on topics such as events, publications, learning and funding.

In the next issues we would like to give more space to contributions from our members and we take this opportunity to invite you to send us any relevant information in one of the featured areas. We will be happy to include it in the next issue or to post it on our website.

*Dr. Giorgio Roscigno and Dr. Madhukar Pai,
Co-Chairs*

Alessandra Varga, Secretariat

World TB Day 24 March 2011

www.stoptb.org/events/world_tb_day

Topics in this issue

- News stories
- News from the Stop TB Partnership
- Funding Opportunities
- Upcoming Events
- Courses and Workshops
- Articles and Publications

News Stories

New rapid test endorsed by WHO

In December 2010, WHO endorsed the Xpert MTB/RIF test for TB and rifampicin resistance. Especially relevant in countries most affected by the disease, the test could revolutionize TB care and control by providing an accurate diagnosis in about 100 minutes, compared to current tests that can take up to three months to have results.

A major milestone

"This new test represents a major milestone for global TB diagnosis and care. It also represents new hope for the millions of people who are at the highest risk of TB and drug-resistant disease." said Dr Mario Raviglione, Director of WHO's Stop TB Department. "We have the scientific evidence, we have defined the policy, and now we aim to support implementation for impact in countries."

WHO's endorsement of the rapid test, which is a fully automated NAAT (nucleic acid amplification test) follows 18 months of rigorous assessment of its field effectiveness in the early diagnosis of TB, as well as multidrug-resistant TB (MDR-TB) and TB complicated by HIV infection, which are more difficult to diagnose.

Increase in diagnosis

Evidence to date indicates that implementation of this test could result in a three-fold increase in the diagnosis of patients with drug-resistant TB and a doubling in the number of HIV-associated TB cases diagnosed in areas with high rates of TB and HIV.

Many countries still rely principally on sputum smear microscopy, a diagnostic method that was developed over a century ago. But this new 'while you wait' test incorporates modern DNA technology that can be used outside of conventional laboratories. It also benefits from being fully automated and therefore easy and safe to use.

WHO is now calling for the fully automated NAAT to be rolled out under clearly defined conditions and as part of national plans for TB and MDR-TB care and control. Policy and operational guidance are also being issued based on findings from a series of expert reviews and a global consultation held last week in Geneva. The consultation was attended by more than a hundred representatives from national programmes, development aid agencies and international partners.

WHO roadmap for rolling out the Xpert test and other related material are available at:

http://www.who.int/tb/laboratory/new_rapid_test/en/index.html

New Diagnostics Working Group

News Stories

STAG-TB – Report of the 10th meeting

The 10th STAG-TB meeting took place at WHO headquarters in Geneva, Switzerland, on 27-29 September 2010. Among other areas of policy, strategy and technical assistance in global TB control, in Session 4, STAG-TB was requested to review and advise on diagnostics policies for commercial serodiagnostics, use of commercial IGRAs in low- and middle-income countries, and the Xpert MTB/RIF system.

The full meeting report is available from the WHO website at:

http://www.who.int/tb/advisory_bodies/stag_tb_report_2010.pdf

News from the Stop TB Partnership

Dr. Lucica Ditiu is the new Executive Secretary of the Stop TB Partnership

The Stop TB Partnership recently announced the appointment of Dr. Lucica Ditiu to the position of Executive Secretary. A native of Romania, Dr. Ditiu is a physician and researcher who has devoted her career to improving the lives of people living in communities heavily burdened by tuberculosis.

Dr. Ditiu first joined WHO in 2000 and served as a medical officer for TB within the disaster and preparedness unit of the WHO European Regional Office and then in the TB unit of the European Regional Office in Copenhagen. In January 2010, Dr. Ditiu joined the Stop TB Partnership Secretariat in Geneva to lead the TB REACH initiative.

Read the article on Dr. Ditiu's appointment at: http://www.stoptb.org/news/stories/2011/ns11_002.asp

Recently published: Global Plan to stop TB 2011-2015

In October 2010, the Stop TB Partnership presented the *Global Plan to Stop TB 2011–2015: Transforming the Fight - Towards Elimination of Tuberculosis*, which updates the *Global Plan to Stop TB 2006-2015* and sets new and more ambitious targets. The new plan identifies all the research gaps that need to be filled to bring rapid TB tests, faster treatment regimens and a fully effective vaccine to market. It also shows public health programmes how to drive universal access to TB care, including how to modernize diagnostic laboratories and adopt revolutionary TB tests that have recently become available.

The new Global Plan sets out to provide diagnosis and treatment approaches recommended by the World Health Organization for 32 million people over the next five years. In addition to helping public health programmes adopt existing modern diagnostic tests, the Global Plan sets a research agenda aimed at engendering two new "while-you-wait" rapid tests that trained staff at even the most basic health outposts can use to diagnose TB accurately.

Global Plan 2011-2015: http://www.stoptb.org/assets/documents/global/plan/TB_GlobalPlanToStopTB2011-2015.pdf

The Stop TB Partnership launches the 2011 World TB Day campaign

The World TB Day campaign 2011 has been launched by the Stop TB Partnership and is now live with a dedicated website. This is the second year of the two-year campaign **On the move against tuberculosis** whose goal is to galvanize innovation in TB care and research. The campaign, that is inspired by the new objectives of the *Global Plan to Stop TB 2011-2015*, focuses on recognizing individuals around the world who have found new ways to fight and stop TB in different settings and can serve as an inspiration to others. This year's campaign also features Dr. Catharina Boehme, who is Co-Chair of the Point-of-care Tests Subgroup of the New Diagnostics Working Group.

Discover the World TB Day campaign 2011 at: http://www.stoptb.org/events/world_tb_day/2011/

New Diagnostics Working Group

Funding Opportunities

Call for applications - TB-REACH Wave-2 funding

The main objective of TB REACH is to promote early and increased case detection of tuberculosis (TB) cases and ensure their timely treatment, while maintaining high cure rates within the National TB Programmes. TB REACH will encourage the development and application of innovative, ground-breaking and efficient techniques, interventions, and activities that result in increased TB case detection, reduced transmission and prevention of the emergence of drug-resistant forms of TB.

Since the launch of TB REACH in January 2010, thirty projects aiming to detect and treat an additional 40 000 new smear-positive TB cases, received funding under Wave 1.

The deadline for submitting proposals for Wave 2 is 28 February 2011.

You will find all key information, including eligibility criteria, technical guidance, application form and instructions at:

<http://www.stoptb.org/global/awards/tbreach/wave2.asp>

Upcoming Events

42nd Union World Conference on Lung Health, 26-30 October 2011, Lille, France

The Union announces a call for online submission of abstracts for oral presentation or poster sessions.

The deadline for submission is 7 March 2011.

Instructions and online submission at: <http://registration.theunion.org/useraccount/index.php?currserv=WConf>

International Childhood Tuberculosis Meeting, 17-18 March, 2011, Stockholm

Together with the Childhood TB Subgroup of the DOTS Expansion Working Group, the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC), is hosting a meeting on the topic of childhood tuberculosis (TB), in a joint effort to highlight the current situation and to move the agenda forward in order to achieve a concerted advocacy approach and to hear the voice of the children.

If you are interested to participate in the meeting, please contact Andreas Sandgren, in order to receive an invitation and all relevant details: andreas.sandgren@ecdc.europa.eu

Courses and Workshops

Advanced Course on TB Diagnostic Research, 5-8 July 2011, Montreal, Canada

This advanced course will cover the principles behind diagnostic research, diagnostic study designs, sources of bias, and value chain for TB diagnostics development. Also, critical appraisal of diagnostic studies, and conventional and advanced methods for systematic reviews (meta-analyses) of diagnostic tests will be presented, along with the GRADE approach to diagnostic policies.

This course will also introduce multivariable approaches to diagnostic research, and cover alternative designs which evaluate patient outcomes, including the diagnostic RCT, and implementation research, latent class analysis, mathematical modelling, costing and cost-effectiveness studies.

For course details, please visit: <http://www.teachepi.org/courses/tbdiagrx.htm>

New Diagnostics Working Group

Articles and Publications

The Lancet, WHO recommends against inaccurate tuberculosis tests, January 2011

A report on upcoming WHO recommendations against the use of commercial serological (antibody) assays:

[http://www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736\(11\)60005-6/fulltext#](http://www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736(11)60005-6/fulltext#)

or enter doi:10.1016/S0140-6736(11)60005-6 at <http://dx.doi.org/>

WHO Guidelines for intensified tuberculosis case-finding and isoniazid preventive therapy for people living with HIV in resource-constrained settings

http://whqlibdoc.who.int/publications/2011/9789241500708_eng.pdf

The New Yorker, A Deadly Misdiagnosis, November 2010

The New Yorker published article on TB diagnosis: "A Deadly Misdiagnosis. Is it possible to save the millions of people who die from TB?"

http://www.newyorker.com/reporting/2010/11/15/101115fa_fact_specter

TropiKA story: The Scandal of TB Misdiagnosis

<http://www.tropika.net/svc/news/20101113/Chinnock-20101113-News-TB-India>

The Lancet.com, India towards universal health coverage, series published January 2011

<http://www.thelancet.com/series>

Development of a Standardized Screening Rule for Tuberculosis in People Living with HIV in Resource-Constrained Settings: Individual Participant Data Meta-analysis of Observational Studies, Getahun H et al., PLoS Med 2011; 8(1): e1000391

<http://www.plosmedicine.org/article/fetchArticle.action?articleURI=info:doi/10.1371/journal.pmed.1000391>

or search for e1000391 at <http://www.plosmedicine.org>

Pathways to better diagnostics for tuberculosis. A blueprint for the development of TB diagnostics, by the New Diagnostics Working Group

http://www.stoptb.org/wg/new_diagnostics/documents.asp

Call for papers

Tuberculosis Research and Treatment
Special issue on Detection of Tuberculosis Disease

http://www.stoptb.org/wg/new_diagnostics/assets/documents/dtbd.PDF

Visit our website

www.stoptb.org/wg/new_diagnostics/

You will find new updates in the section on Resources with latest WHO policies and guidelines.

Annual Meeting of the New Diagnostics Working Group

The last annual meeting of the NDWG was held in Berlin on 11 November 2010 in conjunction with the 41st Union World Conference.

You will find all the presentations from the meeting on our website at:

www.stoptb.org/wg/new_diagnostics/meetingsa.asp

Some links to websites on TB

- NDWG Subgroups
 - Evidence synthesis www.tbevidence.org
 - Point-of-care tests www.tbdiagnostics.org
 - TB and Poverty www.stoptb.org/wg/dots_expansion/tbandpoverty
 - Paediatric TB <http://www0.sun.ac.za/NDWGChildTB/>
- Some NDWG affiliates and partners
 - FIND www.finddiagnostics.org
 - McGill University www.mcgill.ca
 - The Union www.theunion.org
 - GLI www.stoptb.org/wg/gli/
 - CDC www.cdc.gov
- Other key websites
 - Stop TB Partnership www.stoptb.org/
 - WHO www.who.int/tb/laboratory/en/
 - TDR <http://apps.who.int/tdr/>

Join us!

If you would like to become a member of the New Diagnostics Working Group, please complete and return the application form which is available at:

http://www.stoptb.org/wg/new_diagnostics/

Contact

For enquiries about the New Diagnostics Working Group or if you would like to contribute to this Newsletter, please contact the Secretariat at:

NDWG@finddiagnostics.org