



# Tuberculosis—The Business Case

## *Moving Beyond the Status Quo*

### THE CHALLENGE

- Tuberculosis (TB) is one of the world's most devastating infectious diseases, with one-third of the globe thought to be infected with latent TB. It is contagious and opportunistic, and, similar to the common cold, spreads through air. Unlike the common cold, which resolves on its own, TB has devastating effects if left untreated, and nearly 2 million people die of TB each year.
- Like HIV, TB affects people of prime working age, resulting in great loss to businesses, communities, and national economies. In some countries, there is significant loss of productivity attributable to TB (4-7 percent of GDP per capita in Asia and 16 percent in South Africa).
- The impact of TB on business results from workflow disruption, reduction in productivity, absenteeism, increases in direct costs related to care and treatment of employees, and indirect costs, such as the replacement and retraining of workers who fall ill or die after infecting others. The World Health Organization estimates that TB is directly responsible for a US \$13 billion decline in worker productivity each year.
- The world spends about US \$1 billion on TB tests that screen some 100 million people annually and over US \$300 million on drugs for treatment. Nevertheless, of the estimated 9 million people who develop active TB every year, most do not receive a laboratory-confirmed diagnosis.
- The problem of TB is exacerbated by two factors: its lethal connection to the HIV epidemic and the recent emergence of multi- and extensively drug-resistant (MDR and XDR-TB) forms of the disease. With XDR-TB resistant to nearly all treatment, the spread of this form of TB carries an additional threat to countries that have thus far managed to deliver effective treatment to their TB-infected populations. MDR-TB costs 10 times more to treat than primary TB.

### THE OPPORTUNITY

- Fortunately, companies (especially those with long-term investments in developing countries) understand that fighting TB and other diseases has become a necessary part of their investment strategy. They have therefore begun to mitigate the impact of the disease on their business in numerous ways. New TB tool development, workplace TB programs, and increased corporate social responsibility spending are just a few examples.
- Since the discovery of anti-TB treatments, decades have passed without new drugs or vaccines. In the meantime, TB epidemics in the developing world and emerging economies continue to occur. With heightened corporate interest to outsource and invest in these regions, the strength and voice of the business community can bring renewed vigor to put TB back on the agenda for product developers, donors, policy makers, civil society, and communities around the world.

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## AREAS IN WHICH THE PRIVATE SECTOR CAN ENGAGE

### Core Competency

Whether large or small, companies can contribute to the global fight against TB by tapping the core business competencies they use in day-to-day operations, including:

- Strategic planning
- Project/knowledge management
- IT and communications
- Logistics and advocacy
- Human resources management
- Innovative product development, distribution, and marketing

### Supply Chain

Companies can multiply the impact of their interventions by engaging their suppliers and other business partners in efforts to tackle TB. Small and medium-sized businesses employ 80 percent of the world's workers, but most do not have workplace health programs to protect employees from epidemics. Companies with established workplace TB programs can support their supply chain networks by sharing knowledge and resources and working with internal champions.

### R&D for New Tools

The skills, experience, and infrastructure of pharmaceutical and medical technology companies are essential to developing and delivering the innovative tools we need to stop TB. As demands for sustainable business development continue to rise, there may be opportunities for these companies to strengthen the business case for investment in developing these tools.

Organizations like the Aeras Global TB Foundation, FIND (Foundation for Innovative New Diagnostics), and the Global Alliance for TB Drug Development offer many incentives and resources for companies who want to engage in R&D for TB.

- Aeras: [www.aeras.org/home/home.php](http://www.aeras.org/home/home.php)
- FIND: [www.finddiagnostics.org/](http://www.finddiagnostics.org/)
- TB Alliance: [www.tballiance.org/home/home.php](http://www.tballiance.org/home/home.php)

## PRIVATE SECTOR ENGAGEMENT A FEW EXAMPLES OF SUCCESS

**Aditya Birla Group, American Express, Anglo Ashanti Gold, Anglo American, Chevron, Gap, Heineken, Jubilant Organosys, Reliance Industries, Tata Steel, Unilever, and Xstrata** provide TB workplace programs and have extended interventions to surrounding communities.

The **Lilly MDR-TB Partnership** comprises 18 health and development organizations, academic institutions, and companies in over 60 countries and employs staff in selected countries who oversee program implementation with partners. Major activities include: transfer of manufacturing technology, global advocacy, community support, workplace awareness, and training of health-care professionals in the management of TB and MDR-TB.

The World Economic Forum developed the **India Business Alliance to Stop TB** to stimulate and facilitate business engagement in TB control in India through advocacy, technical support for developing policies and programs, and delivering TB preventive and treatment services through partnerships.

**Kempinski Hotels** support the Luis Figo Campaign to Stop TB by distributing postcards in guest rooms that explain how TB is curable if it is diagnosed and treated effectively. Kempinski also launched an educational drive for its staff and has a comprehensive workplace TB program.

**AstraZeneca, Bayer, J&J, Lupin, Otsuka, Pfizer, Sanofi-aventis, Sequella, and Tibotec**, and have identified and are developing new TB drugs to improve treatment efficacy of uncomplicated pulmonary TB and to treat M/XDR TB. Other companies, like **GlaxoSmith-Kline, Dafra, and Vertex**, have drug discovery programs and are actively seeking new targets and drug classes for all forms of TB.

**Becton Dickinson (BD), Oxford Biotech, Celestis, Sequella, Hain Lifescience, and Cepheid** have commercialized, are fielding, or have field-tested new diagnostics for primary TB and M/XDR-TB. BD also supports advocacy efforts; for example, James Nachtwey's photos of XDR-patients.

Executives within **Mérieux Alliance** are champions on behalf of TB, using their influence and advocacy to support this cause. In addition, **bioMérieux** provides TB diagnostic solutions for all levels of health systems.

**Transgene** (a Mérieux Alliance company) is actively engaged in vaccine development, with a special focus on improving today's implemented BCG vaccination.

**Google's** search engine is integrated into the Stop TB Partnership website. A Google homepage promo created for World TB Day in 2009 provided links to key information while requesting support for the Stop TB Partnership.

**Accenture, CfC Stanbic Bank Kenya, Coca-Cola Company, DHL, Pfizer, Premier Medical Corporation, SAB Miller, and Standard Chartered Bank** are a few of the companies partnering with NGOs and public health organizations to bring TB screening, HIV testing, malaria bed nets, and de-worming medication to two million Kenyans. This initiative, called Health at Home/Kenya, is led by

the Global Business Coalition on HIV/AIDS, TB and Malaria.

**The Hindu Group of Publications** features TB-related stories, covers related events, and donates advertising space. The Hindu Group also provides TB workplace care and control services to employees, their dependents, and the community.

## WHAT KIND OF INNOVATIONS DO WE NEED?

The private sector excels at innovation, and innovation is exactly what the TB field needs—for the benefit of businesses whose employees may be susceptible to TB, for those currently suffering from the disease, and for the rest of the world that is exposed to drug-resistant forms at an exponentially increasing rate. Below are examples of the kinds of innovations that would enable us to address this disease more effectively and increase awareness about how to mitigate its threat.

**SMS messages to spread awareness and remind patients to complete treatment, or easily-accessible IT-enabled compliance tracking and monitoring systems**

**Drugs, vaccines, and other needed items (in the context of appropriate prescriptions) on trucks that deliver commodities or provide courier services to the most remote corners of the world**

**An inexpensive, portable, rapid, point-of-care diagnostic for uncomplicated, as well as M/XDR-TB**

**Media campaigns to increase awareness on the signs and symptoms of TB and the importance of completing treatment**

**Health insurance companies to provide social security programs to TB patients**

**Documentation/materials support to National TB Programs through user-friendly management information systems**

**Educational information about TB on packaging of non-health products**

**Consulting agency support for forecasting and quality assurance**

## Advocacy & Leadership

Business leaders hold tremendous power to promote change and influence policy. Their leadership can help to scale up National TB Programs, provide advocacy for future investment in TB control to governments and policy makers, educate the community, and help strengthen health-care systems.

Within their companies, executives can address stigma and discrimination, promote prevention, ensure that infected employees receive necessary treatment, and facilitate employee social responsibility through fundraising campaigns and other efforts.

Such advocacy in recent years has helped to foster an environment where public health players are open to and seek out partnerships with business.

## Community Involvement

Since workers can be exposed to TB by breathing the same air as individuals with active infection, reduced incidence and expedited TB treatment among community members also means a healthier community and significantly lower risk to a company's workers.

Companies can facilitate community TB initiatives through philanthropy, local program development, workplace program expansion, health sector support, and public-private partnerships with governments, NGOs, and civil society.

## Workplace Programs

The sound implementation of workplace TB programs helps companies decrease costs by reducing sickness-related worker absenteeism and provides companies with an opportunity to demonstrate commitment to its workforce. Workplace efforts can be as simple as improving ventilation, dust control, and having protective equipment in offices.

Programs are often most cost-effective when they address both TB and HIV/AIDS at the same time.

## WHERE DOES AN INTERESTED COMPANY START?

### *Join the Stop TB Partnership*

The Stop TB Partnership serves as a global gateway to TB knowledge and information. Housed by the World Health Organization, it comprises a network of over 500 organizations working together to realize the vision of a world free of TB. The Stop TB Partnership works to forge consensus on strategies, coordinate responses, promote the supply of high-quality anti-TB drugs, and generate action for the development of new diagnostics, drugs, and vaccines. The Stop TB Partnership supports businesses by:

- clarifying roles for and expectations of different kind of companies;
- helping businesses connect with key stakeholders, such as people living with TB, local communities organizations, and government bodies;
- providing materials, assets, skills, and networks of contacts;
- creating opportunities to promote results through Stop TB communications; and
- exploring innovative ways to engage companies, potentially through Stop TB corporate championship programs.

### *Become a Member of the Stop TB Private Sector Constituency*

The Private Sector Constituency (PSC) is a key portal for private sector involvement in efforts to stop TB. The PSC works with its constituency to leverage networking capabilities of members, mobilize the business sector to participate in Stop TB events, and stimulate participation in Stop TB Working Groups and Task Forces. The PSC has recently mobilized resources to conduct strategic analyses for increasing business engagement to stop TB. Key activities of the PSC include:

- leading meetings that link industry executives with key global health leaders in different countries from 2007-2009;
- ensuring private sector representation and participation on the Stop TB Coordinating Board; and
- developing a 2-year strategy and value-proposition, the objective of which is to facilitate engagement of both health and non-health companies in the effort to achieve a TB-free world.

The PSC initiative is led by Jean-François de Lavison of Mériex Alliance, with Matti Ojanen of AstraZeneca as alternative representative. Both are active with the PSC's core member group, noted for their strong commitment and ongoing involvement with the TB cause. The **World Economic Forum**, through its Global Health Initiative, has provided support to the PSC since 2004 by catalyzing private sector engagement, contributing advocacy efforts during annual and regional meetings, and developing tools for workplace programs. The **Global Business Coalition (GBC) on HIV/AIDS, TB and Malaria** also recently joined hands to support PSC activities. Sign up as a new private sector member<sup>[2]</sup> on the website, and the PSC will send you a set of materials to familiarize you with what the corporate sector can do to help tackle TB.<sup>[3]</sup>

Further information and to sign up online: [www.stoptb.org/partners/joinus.asp](http://www.stoptb.org/partners/joinus.asp)

Or contact the PSC Chairs directly: [jean-francois.delavison@merieux-alliance.com](mailto:jean-francois.delavison@merieux-alliance.com); [Matti.Ojanen@astrazeneca.com](mailto:Matti.Ojanen@astrazeneca.com)

[1] As listed in the Partnership Partner's Directory, May 2009.

[2] Membership is restricted to organizational entities; membership as an individual is not possible.

[3] Guidelines for Workplace TB Control Activities, WHO; Tuberculosis and Air Travel: Guidelines for Prevention and Control, WHO; TB Toolkit: Protecting Your Workforce and Surrounding Communities from Tuberculosis, World Economic Forum; Tackling TB: The Business Response, World Economic Forum

