



Advocating for Grandmothers, Vulnerable Children and Youth in Africa  
Soutien aux grand-mères, enfants et jeunes vulnérables en Afrique

## THE FIGHT TO END TUBERCULOSIS (TB)

### INTRODUCTION

For the first time ever, world leaders will come together at a special United Nations meeting in September to discuss TB and the steps needed to tackle this global health emergency. Canada must take a strong lead to make sure there is a robust outcome with measurable targets for testing, treating, and preventing TB, both in Canada and around the world.

### GRAN ADVOCACY ASKS

1) We call on the Prime Minister to attend the September 26, 2018 High-Level Meeting on TB in New York City, and to support the “Key Asks” endorsed by the UN Global TB Caucus.

2) We call on the Prime Minister to announce his government’s commitment to funds directed towards the elimination of TB by 2030 (The elimination of TB by 2030 is among the health targets of the Sustainable Development Goals.) through:

- a continued focus on ending TB in Canadian Indigenous communities;
- an increased commitment to the 2019 replenishment of the Global Fund, and continued Global Affairs Canada support and funding for the UN Stop TB partnership; and
- committed funding for the Life Prize.



### CHALLENGES

Tuberculosis is a highly contagious and deadly lung disease. It is one of the top 10 causes of death worldwide, killing more people each year than HIV/AIDS and malaria combined.

Close to 95% of cases and deaths occur in low and middle-income countries, mainly in Africa and Asia.

In 2016, there were 10.4 million new cases, of which one million were children. (1.7 million people died from the disease.)

TB is especially difficult to diagnose in children. There are no child-friendly drug formulations that are safe and effective, especially for those with multi-drug resistant (MDR) TB. Although TB rates for children are similar to those of adults, the numbers of children receiving treatment are very low. Over 250,000 children died from TB in 2016.

People with HIV/AIDS are very often co-infected with TB. At present, TB is the leading cause of death for people with HIV/AIDS, accounting for 40% of all deaths.

There is ongoing neglect of older adults with TB, especially in low and middle-income countries. Older people often develop atypical forms of TB (eg, renal and skeletal) that are difficult to diagnose and treat.

Here in Canada, Indigenous communities, especially among the Inuit, have high rates of TB.

**However TB is both curable and preventable.** Social determinants such as poverty, poor nutrition, inadequate housing, overcrowding, lack of health and community resources, all play a huge role in the spread of TB.

But present treatment is lengthy, arduous, outmoded, toxic and costly. Treatment failure rates are close to 50%. Many never complete their full course of treatment, contributing to the development of MDR TB. The incidence of MDR TB is rising. **This is why there is an urgent need for new TB drugs to be developed.**

## FUNDING

Recently Jane Philpott, Minister of Indigenous Services Canada, and Natan Obed, President of Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami, announced \$27.5 million over 5 years to implement a TB Elimination Action Framework across Nunangat by 2030, with a decrease of 25% of active TB cases by 2025.

The Global Fund is the largest international funder for TB diagnosis, treatment and drug development. Yet it has only 50% of the funds it needs - a shortfall of more than \$2.2 billion. There is a further shortfall of \$1.3 billion in research funding.

Since 2010, Global Affairs Canada has contributed substantial funding to the UN Stop TB ship. From 2016 to 2021, Canada will contribute \$85 million (50% for Africa) for innovative, gender-sensitive approaches to diagnosis, treatment and monitoring of TB.

**The Life Prize**, a new initiative by the Union to Stop TB, would challenge researchers to develop a one-month treatment regimen for all types of TB which will work for everyone everywhere. The resulting drug regimen data would be pooled and the intellectual property committed to the Medicines Patent Pool (MPP) to enable development of more affordable generic drugs.

### Other agencies and civil societies working to eliminate TB include:

#### International:

United Nations Global Health Caucus  
World Health Organization (WHO)  
Stop TB Partnership  
Global Fund to Fight HIV/AIDS, TB and Malaria  
Union to Stop TB (Life Prize)  
MSF Stop TB Campaign

#### Canadian:

Global Affairs Canada  
TB Reach via WHO  
Indigenous Services Canada  
Interagency Coalition for AIDS and Development  
Results Canada  
Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami  
National Collaborating Centre for Aboriginal Health