



## XDR-TB: extensively drug-resistant tuberculosis

March 2007

Stop TB Department [www.who.int/tb](http://www.who.int/tb)

### US\$ 650 m needed for global MDR-TB & XDR-TB response in 2007

US\$ 650 million is needed annually to diagnose and treat over 1.5 million patients with drug-resistant TB by 2015. This is in line with TB universal access aims for 2010 and the 2015 Stop TB Partnership targets. The figure was presented to delegates at the [opening session of the 14th Conference on Retroviruses and Opportunistic Infections by Dr Paul Nunn](#) of the WHO Stop TB Department. It includes US\$ 42 million for global and regional coordination and planning, and technical support. WHO also estimates that more than US\$ 600 million is needed for countries to create or expand programmes that manage drug-resistant TB. Just under US\$ 200 million of this amount is already budgeted for by countries using domestic or international funds, leaving a gap of about US\$ 400 million. The detailed plan is now circulating among WHO's major partners for consultation.

#### XDR-TB confirmed in all G8 countries as Italy identifies cases

Cases of XDR-TB have been confirmed in Italy, with the identification of eight samples of the highly drug-resistant form of TB. With Italy reporting XDR-TB, all Group of Eight (G8) countries have now confirmed the presence of XDR-TB. Italian researchers studying all culture-confirmed TB cases diagnosed between 2003 and 2006 by national TB reference centres found links between XDR-TB and a five-fold increase in the risk of death, longer hospitalization, longer treatment duration and delayed microbiological conversion. G8 countries and other donors are being urged to reaffirm their commitment to the *Global Plan to Stop TB, 2006–2015* and emergency efforts to ensure there is a global coordinated response to XDR-TB, to protect public health and security and to serve poor and vulnerable populations.

#### South Africa Health Minister says Government is committed to working with all stakeholders on XDR-TB

In a speech during a visit to a hospital TB unit, South Africa's [Minister of Health, Dr Manto Tshabalala-Msimang](#), said that her government was committed to "working with stakeholders, both locally and internationally, to contain the spread of XDR-TB" and ensure all reported cases are effectively managed. She also outlined measures under way to strengthen infection control at health facilities to help reduce TB transmission: "Multidrug-resistant TB units are being improved countrywide to deal with infection control. Where it is not possible to extend the facility, wards are identified in hospitals for accommodating additional patients and the necessary structural adjustments are made". She said that in addition to resources available in provinces, the government has allocated an extra R 3.6 million (US\$ 0.5 million) from a Global Fund grant to support the infection control renovation projects.

#### Health activists launch global XDR-TB campaign

A call for an immediate and urgent global response to XDR-TB has been made by international health activists, following the launch of an online campaign to raise awareness on drug-resistant TB. The [One-In-Ten](#) campaign aims to also bring front-line perspectives to current MDR-TB and XDR-TB discussions, and advocate for TB patients to receive the best possible care. According to latest estimates, 10% of all new TB infections are resistant to at least one anti-TB drug, and the One-In-Ten organizers (Health and Development Networks and the AIDS Care-Watch Campaign) underline the grave public health threat that drug-resistant poses, especially in populations with high rates of HIV. The campaign will run up to World TB Day 2007.

#### World TB Day 2007, 24 March – What you need to know about XDR-TB

Fact sheets are being released in conjunction with [World TB Day](#) on 24 March, with information on XDR-TB prevention, control and treatment. The theme for World TB Day is *TB anywhere is TB everywhere*, and events to raise awareness on TB, MDR and XDR-TB, and TB/HIV will be held worldwide.

#### Related planning, capacity building and investigation efforts

- WHO officers are to begin assisting the KwaZulu-Natal authorities in South Africa in late March in the investigations into the origin and spread of XDR-TB in the province. These investigations are likely to last several months.
- Southern Africa updates : national XDR-TB response plans have now been received from Botswana, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Swaziland and Zimbabwe. WHO and partners visited Lesotho to help plan XDR-TB surveillance and treatment, as well as strengthening basic TB control. Similar missions will take place in Malawi and Swaziland this month. Lesotho has completed a rapid survey on suspect XDR-TB cases and Botswana has started one. Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia and Swaziland have plans to start surveys within a few months. Madagascar, Mozambique and the United Republic of Tanzania have anti-TB drug resistance surveys ongoing, with Angola, Lesotho, Malawi, Namibia, South Africa and Zimbabwe planning to start surveys later this year.
- The United States Centers for Disease Control will be issuing new data on XDR-TB in the USA in March in its *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report* journal.