

## Key facts

Tuberculosis (TB) incidence and mortality in the Region declined by **6% and 17%**, respectively, between 2015 and 2019.

An estimated **1.8 million** people fell ill with TB and 90 000 died from it in the Region in 2019. About 20% of the total TB cases remain **undiagnosed or unreported**.

Undiagnosed people with TB, the spread of drug-resistant TB, and inadequate quality of care and prevention efforts remain the **main challenges to ending TB** in the Region.

The **current system for TB service delivery is inadequate** to ensure quality, efficiency, equity, accountability, sustainability and resilience to achieve universal health coverage, posing **challenges to control TB**.

Tuberculosis remains a major cause of ill health throughout the Western Pacific Region. The disease is **one of the leading causes of death** from a single infectious agent. An estimated 10 million people developed TB globally in 2019, about 18% of whom reside in the Western Pacific Region. Despite significant improvements in the past decade, **progress has been too slow** to reach the 2025 milestone of the End TB Strategy (75% reduction in TB deaths, 50% reduction in the TB incidence, compared with 2015, and zero catastrophic costs due to TB).

**Sociodemographic and economic trends, such as ageing, urbanization and the ever-growing burden of noncommunicable diseases, will require additional efforts to keep TB under control.** Noncommunicable disease risk factors such as diabetes, harmful alcohol use, air pollution, malnutrition and tobacco use must be considered in the design of TB programmes. Moreover, as the TB burden continues to decline, coupled with future technological advances, the TB epidemiological situation, service delivery systems and surrounding environment are likely to be different in 2030 than they are today. This requires countries to **act today to address the challenges of tomorrow**.

**Four groups of impediments** challenge TB control and elimination in the Region, namely **TB-specific** challenges in TB care (TB diagnosis, treatment and prevention), **beyond-TB** challenges of the health system that influence TB care, **beyond-health** challenges related to social determinants of TB, and **overarching governance issues** that influence TB care.

The **COVID-19 pandemic has stressed health systems and disrupted essential health services**, including TB prevention and care services. However, it has also created opportunities to develop innovative strategies to ensure the continuity of TB services and, ultimately, to strengthen TB care, prevention and control.

## WHO response

Against a backdrop of decreasing TB incidence among the general population, successful TB control in the coming decade will depend on effective, strategic and setting-specific interventions delivered by the health system. **The Regional Framework provides strategic guidance and context for achieving the 2030 global goals to reduce TB incidence and deaths in the Western Pacific.**

To address challenges for the TB response, **WHO provides technical assistance to national TB programmes to strengthen essential TB functions**, including ensuring equitable people-centred TB services, like early diagnosis and quality care with state-of-the-art technologies for vulnerable populations.

**WHO supports countries in strengthening their health system foundations** by enhancing collaboration with other health programmes, establishing national-level research networks, and ensuring meaningful participation of community and civil society organizations.

Since weak collaboration between different sectors prevents necessary multisectoral actions needed to address poverty, undernutrition and other TB risk factors, **WHO promotes health beyond the health sector** to enhance social protection mechanisms and facilitate whole-of-government and whole-of-society approaches in national TB responses.

To address the overarching management and governance challenges, **WHO supports countries to be able to sustain adequate financing for TB, translate policy into practice, and manage TB in emergency situations.**

WHO is also supporting countries to develop and implement national strategic plans for TB, and WHO's global, regional and country offices are working as one in a coordinated effort to end TB.

