The Secretariat of the TB/HIV Working Group is managed by the Stop TB Department of WHO.
Dr Gabriel Chamie of the University of California, San Francisco presented the results of a pilot study that used a carbon dioxide tracer gas decay technique to explore the link between household ventilation and TB transmission. The investigators included pulmonary TB cases and their household contacts within their study and described the physical and social characteristics of the patients’ home in Kampala, Uganda. They found lower ventilation levels in patient homes with TB, warranting further study in the area. Likewise they found that low-cost interventions such as opening windows at homes and the use of window bars for security and screens for malaria prevention could have impact in reducing TB transmission and merit further investigation. Dr Neil Martinson of the Perinatal HIV Research Unit from South Africa commented on Dr Chamie’s presentation and underlined the importance of similar studies to further understand the transmission dynamics of TB to yield effective interventions. He emphasized the need to incorporate TB transmission measurements into such studies and assess the impact of HIV on TB transmission.

Dr David Dowdy of John Hopkins University, USA presented modelling work that investigated the degree of ongoing community-wide TB transmission in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, that originates from spatial hotspots. He concluded that in Rio de Janeiro the hotspots despite representing only 6% of the population, contributed to 35% of TB transmission in the City. He underlined that targeted TB control efforts in the 6% population could have a long term impact. Dr Richard White of the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine provided commentary and emphasized the public health impact of the results of the modelling to argue for more health investment for disadvantaged communities.