

Celebrating 10 years of achievements

Ten years ago TB Alert was launched in the House of Commons, bringing together leading experts to work on eradicating TB across the world.

Since our launch on World TB Day, in March 1999, we have made a huge difference to people's lives. Thanks to your continuing support, we have helped more than 35,000 people access life-saving treatment for TB.

That long list of survivors includes Raheena, who nearly died because her TB went

undiagnosed for such a long time, until her friend heard about one of our projects and recommended she go there. Raheena was diagnosed, treated and is now cured of TB.

A big thank you

We'd like to thank every person and organisation that has supported our work to help so many women, men and children across the UK and worldwide.

We couldn't have done it without you. We hope you will be with us for the next 10



Raheena, now better and back at school

years, to help us expand our work in the UK and developing countries.

Government-backed project hits high in first year



A key feature of this new project will be mobile drama and other awareness raising activities

Our first overseas project to attract UK government funds has achieved spectacular results in its first year.

The Andhra Pradesh Community Health Intervention Project (APCHIP) in southern India has seen a staggering 389 community health support

groups established in just nine months – beating the 250 group target set for year one.

This is the first time we have received funding (£500,000) from the Department for International Development for an overseas project, so early success sends back a positive

message that we are doing effective work overseas. And it shows that the communities in India are committed to making long-term improvements to their health.

The five-year project, set in the Andhra Pradesh state, involves working with 36 local community organisations to support the existing public health services. It aims to increase detection and treatment of TB by providing quality, locally available health information, education and patient support.

The aim is to reach 4.6 million people, making them aware of TB and its symptoms – and of the free treatment they can access. Its focus is on working with the poorest people, who are especially vulnerable to TB and other diseases.

Continued from page 1

The project is managed by our sister organisation, TB Alert India, who work closely with lead partner, the Rural Institute for Social Education (RISE), and a coalition of 36 community organisations, who already work with and are trusted by the communities.

These 36 partners have one or two health workers who raise awareness of TB, HIV and other major health issues – and that free treatment is available.

The cost of not knowing

TB Alert's Chief Executive, Mike Mandelbaum, visited the project in March this year. During the trip he met with a 12-year-old girl and her family, who had spent six months and half their income on private medical fees but with no success.

Fortunately, the project's workers recognised the girl's symptoms as typical of TB and referred her to a government

clinic, where she was diagnosed and successfully treated – at no cost to the family.

Commenting on the case, Mike

said: "So many people in India are still paying for treatment that they could get for free.

They often go to private practitioners who are not

trained to recognise the symptoms of TB. This can mean they don't get the right diagnosis and treatment and are pushed further into poverty because of high medical bills.

"This project will help people to understand how to look after their health and access free treatment when they need it.

"It is an ambitious project that shows new and effective ways of reaching millions of people. Early success in the first year

shows there is a huge demand for these services and just how many people we can help."

The health support groups, which the community health workers are helping to establish, will be permanent health hubs for villages. They will help people to identify and

address key health issues specific to their area.

Following a successful year in the first three districts of Anantapur, Chittoor and Kadapa, this summer TB Alert launched Phase 2 in the other three project districts of Nellore, Prakasham and Kurnool.

The project covers over a third of the total area of Andhra Pradesh, which is towards the south of the India, on the east coast.

"This project will help people to understand how they can look after their health and access free treatment when they need it."

Dramatic increase in testing in Zimbabwe

An MP has praised a TB Alert project in Zimbabwe, where joint testing for TB and HIV has increased by nearly 80 per cent.

The project is based at Murambinda Mission hospital in the eastern district of Buhera. Zimbabwe has the second highest incidence of TB in the world (with an annual rate of 782 cases per 100,000).

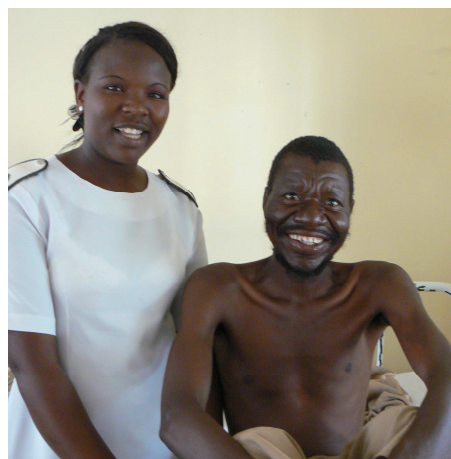
TB Alert's Chief Executive, Mike Mandelbaum, has recently visited Murambinda during a trip to the African country with Nick Herbert MP. Mr Herbert, who is co-chair of the All-Party Parliamentary Group, was visiting the country on a fact-finding mission and to publicise TB and TB-HIV issues, and the work of Zimbabwean health

agencies and non-governmental organisations, in the UK media.

Commenting on the impressive work being done, Mr Herbert said: "Zimbabwe's health system, once the envy of its neighbours, has all but collapsed. This has led to a situation where people are unable to access basic health services due to hospital closures, a shortage of drugs and medical professionals and a high level of poverty.

"The impact on people with HIV and TB is huge, with patients' health deteriorating and increasing levels of drug-resistant TB.

"The few existing TB services such as those at Murambinda



Nurse and TB patient at Murambinda Hospital

are a lifeline for hundreds of thousands of people and urgently need our continued support."

TB Alert has supported the Murambinda Mission Hospital since 2003.

Working in the UK to eradicate TB

TB Alert is unique because it is the only UK-based organisation that focuses on eradicating TB in the UK and internationally. Last year our UK work received a significant boost from the Department of Health (DH), and we are working with them to raise awareness of TB among groups that are more at risk of TB.

Thanks to DH funding, we are expanding our UK-based initiatives that target affected communities. In this feature we talk about our UK work and explore some of the ideas we are translating into tangible results.

People are often shocked to hear that TB remains a public health problem in the UK – many believe it was wiped out in the last century.

TB cases did fall dramatically after the introduction of antibiotic treatment in the 1950s but the number of cases began to increase in the 1980s. London was the only capital city in Western Europe to see a rise in TB cases between 1995 and 2006. In 2008 there were 8,679 cases of TB in the UK, with nearly 40 per cent of them in London.

Our approach

A constant theme of TB in the UK – and around the world – is that it affects the most vulnerable people in our society and those who often do not use health services, for a variety of reasons.

TB Alert's approach to its UK and international work is the same: to help people recognise the symptoms of TB, overcome the barriers to accessing diagnosis and treatment, and put them on the road to recovery.

We know that TB requires specialist treatment but we also know that social factors must be addressed if we are to control and ultimately eradicate TB. We take this two-pronged approach because we know that the "social model of health" (see the box below) is the most effective way for us to carry out our mission to eradicate TB.

Indeed, the DH's *TB Action Plan* recognises that a crucial element in the fight against TB

is to raise awareness among people most likely to be affected by the illness. Primary Care Trusts (PCTs) have overall responsibility for carrying out this work in their local areas, and we are funded by the DH to support the work that they do.

Building partnerships

Our approach is to encourage PCTs to build partnerships with voluntary organisations from affected communities, so that they can bring together their local knowledge and expertise. Alongside this, we work with these voluntary organisations to develop innovative ways to integrate TB awareness into their work.

TB Alert is also part of various groups that develop and deliver TB strategies and plans across London.

"social factors must be addressed if we are to control and ultimately eradicate TB"

What is the Social model of health?

The social model of health looks at how wider determinants than disease affect people's health. These include culture and beliefs, income and access to housing, along with political and economic conditions.

Adopting this model can help us to understand some of the barriers that compromise individual and societal health.

The TB Action Group

The TB Action Group (TBAG) was formed last year to give a voice to those in the UK personally affected by TB.

TBAG's members have valuable insights into patients' experiences of TB and they want to increase the level of awareness about TB and help improve UK services. As a result of their personal experiences, members aim to support other people as they go through treatment.

We are supporting TBAG in its early stages of development, but its members decide on TBAG's focus, strategies and activities.

If you or someone you know would like to know more, please contact Tessa Marshall, our Information and Awareness Officer, at info@tbalert.org; or 01273 234770.

Visit the TBAG forum at www.tbactiongroup.ning.com

New UK-based awareness campaign

Later this year, with funding from the DH, we will be launching a range of campaign materials called *The Truth About TB*. The campaign will help to raise awareness among those who face barriers to health such as being homeless. The materials will be adapted and developed for use in local awareness campaigns around the country by a range of partner organisations.

As part of the *The Truth About TB* series of campaign products, we have produced a film called *The Real Story*. The film tells the story of five people's journeys through TB, exploring their personal experiences from early symptoms, to diagnosis and the treatment that put them on the road to recovery.

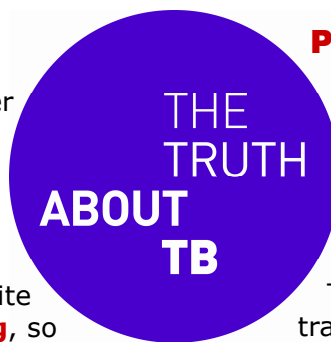
Because we know TB affects people of many nationalities, we have produced a DVD that can be played in Arabic, Bengali, English, French, Gujarati, Polish, Portuguese, Somali, Swahili, Tamil, Tigrini and Urdu. We are also in the process of

developing a new website, which is due to go live later this year. We will keep you posted about this launch, and all our new developments on the TB Alert website www.tbalert.org, so keep visiting the site for updates.

Vulnerable groups

Homeless people are particularly susceptible to TB because of poor living conditions and from having weakened immune systems. In London, the Find & Treat project runs a mobile x-ray unit that visits hostels and offers screening to check residents for TB.

In an innovative new programme, we are working with Find & Treat and a self-help network for the homeless, Groundswell, to encourage the maximum number of people to be screened.



Peer support

The programme is based on peer education, which lets people talk to and learn from others who have been through similar experiences. There are now eight trained peer educators, who have been homeless and have had TB. One of them will visit each hostel before the x-ray unit arrives, to explain to residents why they should be screened and to answer questions or concerns.

As part of the *The Truth About TB* campaign we are working with Find & Treat and Groundswell to develop materials to support the peer educators in their work. Currently in its pilot stage, this peer educator's pack will help them to confidently give accurate information about TB. Through this programme we are reaching hundreds of people who are at risk of TB and helping those with the illness get treatment.

Supporting people with TB

Since 2005 we have provided small grants (£50-£500) to TB patients through our "Patient Support Fund".

The fund was set up to ensure that financial hardship does not prevent people from finishing their treatment, for example they have enough money to travel to appointments or have a nourishing meal every day, which is key to recovery. These grants also help TB nurses in their difficult job of supporting a complex caseload of patients through the long TB treatment.

This year our summer appeal focused on Natalie, a young mum from Halifax, Yorkshire,

with renal (kidney) TB.

Natalie's TB nurse was concerned that living a long way from the TB services she needed to visit regularly was adding to Natalie's exhaustion and impeding her recovery. Natalie's TB nurse applied to us for help and we were able to give Natalie a £104 grant to cover the costs of moving closer to town.

Now recovered, Natalie is an active member of the TB Action Group and has spoken at two TB medical conferences to give a patient's perspective of TB services and treatment in the UK.



Natalie and her sons outside their new home

The Patient Support Fund is open to all TB patients but applications must be made via a health professional. For more information contact Tessa Marshall – info@tbalert.org or 01273 234770.

Clinical trial of new TB vaccine

The first proof-of-concept trial of a new preventive TB vaccine in more than 80 years was launched earlier this year.

The Phase IIb clinical trial has been developed at the University of Oxford. The trial, which has been approved by the Medicines Control Council of South Africa, will test 2,784 children under the age of one, who received the BCG vaccine at birth.

The vaccine has been developed in partnership with the Aeras Global TB Vaccine Foundation, the Oxford Emergent Tuberculosis Consortium, Isis Innovation, the Wellcome Trust and the University of Capetown,

and is the most clinically advanced of a new generation of vaccines under development to combat the TB epidemic.

It is expected that the trial will generate important safety, immunogenicity and preliminary efficacy data about the vaccine.

TB Alert meeting

Following the launch, TB Alert chaired a meeting in May with key stakeholder groups to highlight the vital need for new vaccines to fight TB. A key message of the meeting was the urgent need to engage civil society organisations and UK science and research bodies in developing new research tools.



Christmas cards

Our new Christmas cards are now available. You can see some designs on the flyer sent out with this newsletter but even more are available at: www.christmas-cards.org.uk/tbalert

Shopping for good

Thanks to a great new partnership with Amazon, every time you shop via the Amazon link on the front page of our website (www.tbalert.org), TB Alert will earn at least 5p for every £1 you spend.

Amazon now sells just about everything, including books, DVDs, electronics, health and beauty, and fashion and household good. And yes, you can even buy the kitchen sink.

So if you weren't looking forward to Christmas shopping crowds – go online and get it all delivered to you – all for a good cause!

Clicks mean money

We need you to get clicking for TB Alert! Just go to www.everyclick.com/tbalert and set it as your search engine, and we'll get paid each time you do a search – its that simple.

Are you a fan?

Keep up to date with all our latest news on facebook and twitter. At facebook.com search for TB Alert, become a fan and get your friends to join us too, and find our tweets on twitter.com/TBAlert_charity.

United approach to TB/HIV

This summer TB Alert helped facilitate a workshop in Entebbe, Uganda which focused on how best to integrate key HIV and TB messages in awareness programmes and interventions aimed at tackling the diseases.

The two diseases are linked because HIV damages the immune system, allowing TB to flourish, and active TB disease speeds the replication of the HIV virus. Worldwide health statistics confirm this link - in 2007, according to the World Health Organisation, a quarter of the 1.7 million TB deaths around the world were HIV-related and around 1.37 million new cases of TB occurred in people living with HIV (PLHIV).

But despite this close relationship, responses to the two diseases are not always connected and the awareness messages disseminated by country programmes and activists compound these challenges. For instance, the AIDS community stress that TB is "the leading cause of death among PLHIV" but national TB programmes talk about TB as "a curable disease".

Commenting on the workshop, Lee Abdelfadil from International HIV/AIDS Alliance, said: "It was very enriching to learn from the experience and perspective of each participant from both TB and HIV fields on issues we deal on a daily basis, like treatment illiteracy among PLHIV and TB patients and misconceptions regarding TB."



A TB/HIV advocate at Bwafwano, a TB Alert project already integrating action against TB and HIV.

Hair today, gone tomorrow for Peter and Gavin



Peter before his haircut



Gavin, with just a little bit more to come off

We are always on the lookout for "hair-brained" schemes for our supporters to help us raise money. This year, two supporters came up with some great "hair-raising" ideas.

Peter Ballard from Sawbridge in Herts, and Gavin Pidwell from Brighton, both decided that they

would cash in on their "flair for hair".

Peter (left) was sponsored to NOT get his hair cut and Gavin (right), raised money by going under the shears, for an extreme look.

Peter, Managing Director of

Genus Pharmaceuticals, normally looks extremely well groomed but went a full six months without "pruning".

Commenting on his hairy project, Peter said: "I don't know why I did it – it was a moment of madness. It took some courage going to business meetings like that, especially as people were giggling and pointing in the street by the end. But it was all worthwhile, given the amount it raised for such a good cause."

Barman Gavin, had his beloved locks shorn off in front of all the regulars at the Brighton club where he works.

These hairy exploits raised more than £4,000 for TB Alert. Well done Peter and Gavin for "baldly going" where others fear to follow.

Raise a glass to TB Alert

If the idea of taking scissors to your barnet fills you with dread, take inspiration from Kirsten Scott, Hannah Mc Kerchar and John Somner, who combined a love of wine and countryside with an attempt at fitness.

You may have read in our last newsletter how the wine-loving trio raised nearly £5,000 for our Murambinda project in Zimbabwe by running the Beaujolais marathon.

Now you can follow the Beaujolais trail too, as entries for 2009 are now open (please note the website is in French). So if you fancy a big run and a small tippie – or the other way around (there is a Beaujolais 12k too), why not enter?

Register at www.marathondubeaujolais.org

Generous helpings

If you are more "Beaujolais" than "marathon" why not arrange a drinks party or dinner in aid of TB Alert? We have registered with a fantastic new site called Dinner4Good, which helps you do just that.

It couldn't be easier. You create a personalised "Dinner Page" on their website (takes about five minutes) and then email invitations will be automatically sent from the site. Your guests then accept and donate online, which means you can see who's coming and how much is being raised any time. It reduces the awkwardness of asking for money and there's no hassle with collecting cash. Dinner4Good takes care of everything, including the Gift Aid application, so all you have to do is eat, drink and enjoy yourselves!

Register now at www.dinner4good.com

Find out more The TB Alert website at www.tbalert.org has information about our work.

Contact us Call 01273 234029, email office@tbalert.org, or write to **TB Alert**, Community Base, 113 Queens Road, Brighton, BN1 3XG.



Want to donate?

Donate online by going to www.tbalert.org and clicking on "Donate Now"; call or we can take credit or debit card details on the telephone; or write a cheque payable to TB Alert and post to the above address. Thank you for your support.