Unitaid is the world’s largest multilateral funder of tuberculosis (TB) research and development. Our investments focus on improving treatment for all forms of the disease including medicines uniquely formulated for children and cutting-edge preventative treatment. With new investments launched in 2022 to advance TB detection, we are paving the way for a comprehensive and patient-centered approach to find, treat, and cure the most vulnerable populations with TB globally.

**WHAT IS TB?**

*Tuberculosis (TB)* is a bacterial infection that causes more deaths each year than any other infectious disease besides COVID-19. It spreads through the air when a person with TB coughs, sneezes, spits, or even speaks. The bacteria can live in a dormant state in a person’s body for years before developing into active disease. Drug-resistant strains of TB are a growing problem making treatment significantly more complicated, toxic, and costly. About one-third of all deaths related to antimicrobial resistance are from TB.

The COVID-19 pandemic has had a devastating impact on TB efforts worldwide with disruptions and delays in services leading to an increase in deaths from TB for the first time in over a decade.

**MAJOR ADVANCES**

Vital medicines and diagnostic tools that form the backbone of TB programmes across the world today would not be widely accessible without Unitaid’s support.

**CHILD-FRIENDLY MEDICINES TO ADDRESS NEGLECTED CHILDHOOD TB:**

Unitaid funded the development of the first high-quality, affordable, properly dosed and good-tasting TB medicines for children. These formulations, which are now available in 123 countries accounting for 75% of the child TB burden, have transformed TB treatment for the most vulnerable and helped save countless lives. Additional support is helping further research to improve treatments for children affected with more complicated, drug-resistant strains of TB too.

**FASTER DETECTION IS KEY TO FIGHTING TB:**

Unitaid secured a 40% price reduction to grant low- and middle-income countries access to a ground-breaking TB diagnostic technology that enabled faster and more accurate TB detection. This reduced the amount of time required to identify drug resistance to under two hours, compared to up to two months through previously employed methods. Today, 130 countries procure millions of these test cartridges every year at the lower rate negotiated by Unitaid and partners.

**MAKING TB PREVENTION SAFE & AFFORDABLE:**

Unitaid and partners negotiated a nearly 70% price reduction for more effective TB preventive therapy that cut treatment to once a week for three months, from daily medicines for six to nine months. In addition, Unitaid and partners showed that this new regimen, called 3HP, is safe to administer in combination with DTG, the first-line HIV treatment, helping to surpass UN targets for TB prevention amongst people living with HIV. Unitaid is also working to make an ultra-short one-month preventive treatment, called 1HP, more accessible to all people in need.
TB is preventable and curable when people have access to the right tools and treatments. With US$ 240 million currently invested and more to come, Unitaid is working to ensure people everywhere can benefit.

Our current projects are supporting global efforts to end TB:

- Expanding access to more more effective, affordable, shorter, and less toxic treatment regimens for multidrug-resistant TB
- Improving access to more effective TB prevention regimens for high-risk groups including people living with HIV and young children
- Reaching more children at risk of TB infection through optimized integration of services
- Developing child-friendly medicine formulations to treat and prevent MDR-TB
- Implementing genome sequencing technologies to diagnose drug-resistant TB more quickly and accurately
- Improving technology and tools to enable TB diagnosis and treatment for children
- Introducing new technologies that help patients succeed in treatment, including smart pillboxes and mobile apps that issue reminders
- Developing long-acting medicine formulations to prevent TB that free patients from daily pill regimens
- Accelerating access and use of the best TB detection tools at the community level to find millions of missing TB patients
- Contributing valuable evidence compiled through Unitaid projects to shape WHO guidance and improve care for people worldwide.

The innovative products and strategies demonstrated through Unitaid’s work is made possible through the large contributions from civil society and communities and enables partners like Global Fund, USAID, and PEPFAR to scale these advances globally.

This work is delivered in close collaboration with our partners and grantees, who include: the Aurum Institute, Clinton Health Access Initiative (CHAI), Elizabeth Glaser Pediatric AIDS Foundation (EGPAF), FIND, KNCV Tuberculosis Foundation, the Medicines Patent Pool (MPP), Partners in Health (PIH), Stellenbosch University, TB Alliance, Université de Bordeaux, University of Liverpool, and the World Health Organization (WHO), and many additional subgrantee partners.

Unitaid’s donors are: Brazil, Chile, France, Japan, Norway, the Republic of Korea, Spain, the United Kingdom and the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. As part of Unitaid’s response to the COVID-19 pandemic and leadership of the ACT-Accelerator, the organization received additional resources from Canada, Germany, Italy, Portugal, and Wellcome.

Unitaid is a hosted partnership of the World Health Organization.