



UNITAID and Tuberculosis

UNITAID is engaged in finding new ways to prevent, diagnose and treat tuberculosis (TB) more quickly, more cheaply and more effectively. Some of our interventions include:

Accelerating diagnosis

The most widely used test for TB is to take a sample of sputum from a patient and identify the bacterium under the microscope. The bacteria are then grown in a dish containing anti-TB drugs to see if it is resistant to the most commonly used drugs to treat TB. This can take 2 to 6 weeks to get results.

- UNITAID has committed \$25.9 million to **scaling up the use of GeneXpert®** — a machine that identifies genetic material from drug-resistant strains of TB in less than 2 hours.

Enabling better treatments

The vast majority of TB cases can be cured, but many patients do not have access to appropriate medicines.

- UNITAID's \$60 million endTB project, with PIH and MSF, is **reshaping the market for treatment for a multi-drug resistant form of TB (MDR-TB)** by expanding access to the new TB drugs bedaquiline and delamanid in 16 countries.
- UNITAID's \$16.7 million STEP-TB project, with TB Alliance and WHO, aims to provide improved access to correctly dosed, properly formulated, affordable, high-quality **TB medicines for children.**

New areas for intervention

- Current MDR-TB regimens are complex, expensive, long, toxic, and often ineffective. UNITAID will **speed access to better, shorter MDR-TB treatment.**
- TB is one of the top 10 causes of death in children. But children with TB are treated with suboptimal medicines, if at all. UNITAID will **scale up better TB treatment in children** using the new child-friendly medicines launched in 2015 as a result of the STEP-TB project.
- Vulnerable groups, including children under five years old and people living with HIV, are particularly at risk of developing active TB following initial infection. UNITAID will **enable preventative TB treatment in high risk groups.**

What next?

The WHO End TB Strategy aims to reduce TB deaths by 95% and to cut new cases by 90% between 2015 and 2035, and to ensure that no family is burdened with catastrophic financial costs due to TB.

From 2016, **UNITAID will be launching calls for proposals** to encourage new strategies to prevent, to test for, and to treat tuberculosis.



Some of our partners

Foundation for Innovative New Diagnostics (FIND), Global Drug Facility, The Global Fund, Global Laboratory Initiative, Interactive Research and Development (IRD), Médecins sans frontières (MSF), Partners in Health (PIH), Stop TB Partnership, TB Alliance, World Health Organization (WHO).

Tuberculosis is an infectious disease caused by the bacteria *Mycobacterium tuberculosis*, which generally affects the lungs. TB spreads through the air when people who have active TB cough, spit, speak, or sneeze. According to WHO, in 2014, 9.6 million people fell ill with TB and 1.5 million died from the disease. That year an estimated 480,000 people developed MDR-TB.