

**INDIAN BUSINESS
ALLIANCE TO STOP
TUBERCULOSIS**

MARCH 2004

Current members of the Indian Business Alliance to Stop TB are Aditya Birla, Confederation of Indian Industry, the Global Partnership to Stop TB, Larsen & Toubro, Lupin Ltd, Modicare Foundation, Novartis India, Reliance Industries, the Indian Government's Revised National TB Control Program, Tata Steel, Triveni Sugar, and the World Health Organization.

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Companies in the Indian Business Alliance to Stop Tuberculosis (TB) Note:

TB poses a fundamental challenge to India's current productivity and future growth. TB in India	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is carried by one in three Indians. • Kills one person per minute, 1,000 per day. • Causes new illness in 5,000 people per day, each of whom typically infect up to 20 other people. • Targets people in their most economically productive years. • Causes the loss of 100 million workdays and 13.5 billion INR per year, slowing economic growth overall.
TB is curable and cost-effective to treat	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A curative six-month course of antibiotics under WHO treatment methodology (DOTS) costs as little as US\$ 10 per patient. • Workers can often return to productive employment within weeks if given effective TB treatment. • The World Bank ranks TB treatment as one of the most cost-effective healthcare interventions. • India could save US\$ 27 billion by 2020 by establishing treatment by 2005.
The Government of India is focusing on TB	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TB programmes are expanding rapidly (30-fold in 5 years), treating over 6.2 lakh cases in 2002 and reducing death rates by 7-fold. • The target is to control TB in India by achieving full DOTS coverage by 2005.
But significant challenges remain	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Programmes need to be standardized and linked. • Stigma, meaning that people would rather choose to die rather than admit that they are sick and need help. • The government could benefit from additional resources – financial, in-kind and implementational.
Indian companies have a unique and vital role in the eradication of TB	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Companies have long-term interests in ensuring the national development of human capital – a healthy and educated workforce – and in macroeconomic development and the market growth it entails. TB undermines both. • Companies can bring significant resources in terms of core business skills, implementation capacity and reach out to populations at risk. As such, businesses can complement traditional public sector and civil society activities.

Therefore this Alliance commits to:

1. Making it a priority to stop TB

Companies should review the risk of their workforce to contract TB and use the Forum, WHO and ILO workplace guidelines to:

- Review relevant company employee policies to cover TB, including non-discrimination policies for employees affected by TB;
- Develop and implement sustainable workplace programmes to educate, prevent and treat TB;
- Integrate TB initiatives into relevant community programmes.

2. Openly sharing company TB programmes

Within the Alliance, companies will work together to share programmes in a standardised and comparable fashion, thereby:

- Providing an opportunity to publicise company programmes and be accredited for their contribution to the health of the broader community;
- Enabling other businesses world-wide to learn from existing programmes;
- Creating ongoing transparency within the Alliance business and non-business partners, so that results can be collected on a nation-wide basis and enable clear monitoring of the Indian situation to achieve eradication targets.

3. Collaborating as full partners with the public sector to stop TB

Key partners from the public sector include the World Health Organization, the Indian Ministry of Health, the local National TB Programme and NGOs who can bring technical expertise and access to the discounted resources necessary to run such programmes cost effectively.

Successful TB management – including the avoidance of multi-drug resistant TB – requires rigorous practices at every stage from awareness to diagnosis, from treatment to reporting. Targets for corporate programmes to stop TB should be aligned with those of the public sector. TB programmes developed by the business sector should therefore:

- Follow standard DOTS treatment and regimens;
- Achieve 70% case detection;
- Achieve at least 85% successful treatment of all cases.

4. Striving to recruit all other interested companies, large or small

If more companies subscribe to the Alliance, more progress can be made in eradicating TB. Any company, large or small, can take the appropriate measures to manage TB. This Alliance will strive to attract others to join and will welcome all members who can and are willing to join this effort.

A shared work- plan for the Alliance includes:

1. **Championing a broad-based education and awareness campaign**

Using private sector expertise in developing and distributing marketing messages and links to the media and entertainment industries, the Alliance will develop messaging, recruit celebrities, produce multimedia materials (print, radio, television and film) and ensure distribution to target audiences.

2. **Ensuring the uptake of standard TB policies by Indian companies**

Drawing on the guidelines established by the RNTCP, WHO and the ILO, the Alliance will promote good workplace practices internally and with business contacts and partners.

3. **Enhancing standards of TB care by related healthcare professionals including the private practitioners who work with members of the Alliance**

Promoting the RNTCP's DOTS framework and protocols, the Alliance will ensure compliance by health services in their workplace and surrounding communities.

4. **Seeking programmes for collaboration with the RNTCP to expand TB detection and treatment through the DOTS strategy**

Identifying geographies where public-private co-investment (sharing of resources, co-developing programmes and reporting results) could enhance TB activities.

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