

IMPACT REPORT



CALL TO ACTION FOR A TB-FREE CHHATTISGARH

**Catalysing a multi-sectoral, community-led
and collaborative response to TB**



The TB Call to Action Project is a four-year initiative by REACH, supported by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and implemented in partnership with the Revised National TB Control Programme (RNTCP) at the national, state and district levels. Chhattisgarh is a priority state for the project.



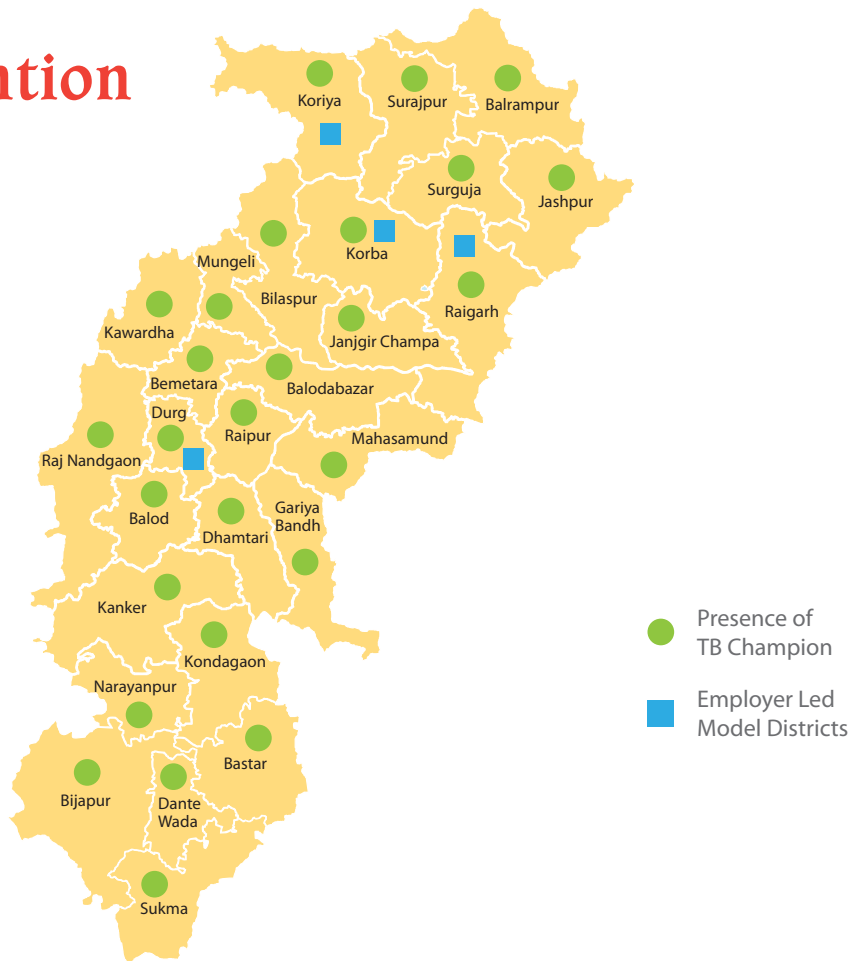
The Chhattisgarh Context

- Chhattisgarh is one of India's youngest states and rich in resources.
- Rural households account for nearly 80% of the state's population and 70% of them suffer high levels of deprivation.
- Scheduled Tribes and Schedule Castes together constitute 43.44% of the State's population; most of these households are impoverished.
- Undernutrition is prevalent; over one in four women (27%) and one in four men (24%) are undernourished.
- Two out of every five children under the age of five years suffer chronic and/or acute undernutrition.
- Miners and their families and populations residing near open mines suffer higher rates of acute respiratory infections and are at higher risk of TB.

In 2018, Chhattisgarh notified 30,119 and 12,912 people with TB from the public and private sectors respectively, with the total notifications at 43,031. The overall treatment success rate was 89%. The treatment success rate overall was 89%. Pediatric TB notifications were 2396. The National Family Health Survey 4 of 2016 notes that that 157 persons per 100,000 are estimated to have self-reported medically treated tuberculosis, with the prevalence higher among men (205) than among women (110) and higher in rural (168) than in urban areas (121). Most people have heard of TB and are aware that it can be cured, but only 63% of women and 73% of men know that it is spread through the air by coughing or sneezing. Fifty-seven percent of women and more than two-thirds (67%) of men have misconceptions about how TB is spread. Only about 10% say that if a family member had TB, they would want to keep it a secret.

(Data sources: Census 2011, NFHS 4, India TB Report 2018)

The Intervention



To support and strengthen the community response to TB

1. From TB Survivors to TB Champions

In continuation of efforts to increase the meaningful participation of TB-affected communities in the response to TB, two capacity-building workshops for TB survivors – the first such in the state – were held in Raipur in November and December 2018. The residential workshops, designed to be as inclusive and interactive as possible, helped TB survivors share their personal experiences and bond as a group, and sensitised them on their potential role in educating their communities and advocating for resources for



TB elimination. The trainings also built their confidence and enthusiasm to play a leading role in TB prevention and care efforts in their respective districts. 54 survivors from all 27 districts of the state were trained as TB Champions, making it the first state under the project to have trained TB Champions in every district.

Since then, TB Champions have had multiple opportunities to make their voices heard – some Champions are members of State and District TB Elimination Taskforces; others spoke at various conferences and meetings including at the 50th World Lung Conference held in Hyderabad in October 2019; and selected Champions participated in a Training of Trainers workshop organised by the Central TB Division in October 2019.



2. TB Champions Mentorship Programme



33 trained TB Champions enrolled in a six-month mentorship programme to work in their communities and support people with TB. Each TB Champion was mandated to support at least 60 people with TB over a six-month period; sensitise their local communities about TB and connect them to services; and advocate with social influencers and the health system to improve their involvement in the TB response. The 33 Champions were supported by six mentors. The Champions were given a range of educational materials on TB, including badges, leaflets, banners, door stickers and community signage.





Over the six months, their progress was periodically reviewed, through field visits and meetings at the state-level, to help them achieve their goals. The TB Champions were motivated and guided by not only their mentors, but also senior health officials, who participated in the review meetings. By the end of the six months, the TB Champions reached nearly 2000 people with TB. The State TB Cell issued official guidance to all District TB Cells, asking them to support, guide and involve TB Champions in community mobilisation activities.



Anti-stigma campaign

In partnership with the State and District TB Cells, 31 TB Champions simultaneously participated in a variety of district and block-level anti-stigma activities on World TB Day. The enthusiastic support of the TB officials ensured that the campaign featured powerful contributions from 16 Champions at the district level, 13 at the block level and one at the PHC level. During the week-long campaign, the TB Champions reached more than 500 different stakeholders, sensitising communities, school and college students and teachers, among others. The TB Champions at Raipur, along with State TB Cell officials, met the Mission Director, National Health Mission and briefed her about the anti-stigma campaigns initiated by their counterparts across the state.



The TB Champions went on to organise a second anti-stigma campaign in the week of the World Population Day, around 11 July 2019. They rallied to sensitise people at the panchayat level and also those in urban areas, including the Zilla Parishad heads and Ward Members. The campaigns were held with self-help groups and in schools or in Anganwadi Centres. Several of the TB Champions met Elected Representatives from their constituencies to garner their commitment to support and lead TB prevention and care activities.



टीबी बीमारी से बचने उपचार पर दिया जोर



आपका प्रतिनिधि के द्वारा विगत टीबी दिवस के अवसर पर जागरूकता कार्यक्रम का आयोजन शहर के स्थान बसती अटल अग्रवाल में रविवार को सामुदायिक भवन में किया गया। कार्यक्रम के मुख्य अतिथि संदीप पन्नाकर कार्यक्रम प्रबंधक तथा धर्म निवेशन स्वास्थ्य विभाग, विभिन्न डॉक्टर, चिकीत्सक एवं टीबी राम कश्यप अध्यक्ष एवं लोकपाल की प्रतिनिधि उपस्थिति में हुआ। कार्यक्रम के मुख्य अतिथि ने महिलाओं, बच्चों युवाओं को संबोधित करते हुए कहा कि टीबी बीमारी से बचना संभव है बस उसे नियंत्रित करना पड़ेगा। उन्होंने टीबी बीमारी के बारे में सभ्य फैलने के कारण, टीबी बीमारी के रोकथाम और बचाव, टीबी को जल्दबाजी में निवारण करना, टीबी राम कश्यप ने टीबी बीमारी के स्वास्थ्यिक दुष्प्रभाव एवं अतिथि पर बताया कि हमें टीबी बीमारी के घरेलू से बचाव नहीं करना चाहिए, हम सभी को टीबी बीमारी मुक्त राष्ट्र निर्माण के लिए मिलजुलकर प्रयास करना

चाहिए। टीबी बीमारी के प्रति समाज में जागरूकता रखना है। रविकुमार पन्नाकर के द्वारा अपने अनुभवों को साझा करते हुए टीबी बीमारी के इलाज और उसके प्रभाव को बताया गया। राधेश कुमार गोयल के द्वारा उच्च जेडिम्स समूह की महिलाओं में टीबी बीमारी के संक्रमण का खतरा एवं भ्रूणवैद्यी को बताया गया। चन्द्रकान्त यादव ने बलाघ की मरीज परिवारों को ज्यादा समस्या का सामना करना पड़ता है इसलिए टीबी को रोकने की बीमारी कहा जाता है। पोषण स्तर में गिरावट होता है जो की कुपोषण को बढ़ाता है। बीमारी का कुछ पूरे परिवार को तकड़लित है, अतिथि चमकेश्वरी बाहु जाती है इसलिए समाज को बचपन की जाँच सरकारी अस्पताल में निःशुल्क करना है। कार्यक्रम में टीबी मरीजों से बेदबाव नहीं करने का संकल्प लिया गया इस अवसर पर टीबी बीमारी के मुक्ति के लिए किये जा रहे जागरूकता प्रयास और सभ्य रवने के लिए ऑनलाइन भारत सरकार स्वास्थ्य एवं परिवार कल्याण विभाग की ओर से जरी प्रयास पर का विवरण किया गया।

3. Formation of survivor-led networks

The 54 participants of the capacity-building workshops resolved to come together to form Chhattisgarh's first TB survivors network in 2018. Named TB Mukht Chhattisgarh, the network's membership has swelled to 146 today, thanks to the untiring efforts of the TB Champions to reach out to other TB survivors in their districts. The network members have since elected a governing body, formulated the network's objectives and helped chart their future course of action. Steps are underway to legally register TB Mukht Chhattisgarh.

TB-Free Bhilai Campaign

In May 2019, the Durg District TB Cell launched a campaign to make the district capital of Bhilai free of TB and TB-related stigma. The campaign was a culmination of the efforts of the local TB Champion Himani Verma, who advocated with the District Collector on World TB Day for efforts to reduce the stigma associated with TB. The interaction paved the way for a series of consultations between the District administration, State and District NHM, State and District TB Cells, leading to the launch in Bhilai. The campaign was inaugurated by the District Collector and brought together representatives from the Police Department, Nagar Nigam, District Industry Officer and organizations like the Lions Clubs, National Service Scheme, the Nehru Yuvak Kendra, Bhilai Steel Plant, NTPC etc. Nearly 100 TB Survivors and community representatives also participated in the launch.



“With a vision to have a TB-free Chhattisgarh by the end of 2023, we widely acknowledge the fact that apart from medically managing TB, meaningful engagement of community would help us in achieving our goal. In our commitment to enhance the inclusion of community engagement, partnerships and patient-centred approaches, we partnered with REACH and the TB Call to Action Project and built Chhattisgarh’s first cadre of motivated and committed TB Champions. Being TB survivors themselves, these Champions are working to improve awareness in their communities, reduce stigma and support people on treatment for TB. I am hopeful that empowering and engaging communities will help us win the battle against TB.”

— *Dr. Priyanka Shukla IAS, MD-NHM, Department of Health & Family Welfare, Govt. of Chhattisgarh*



To advocate for increased financial, intellectual and other resources for TB

1. Employer Led Model for TB Care and Prevention

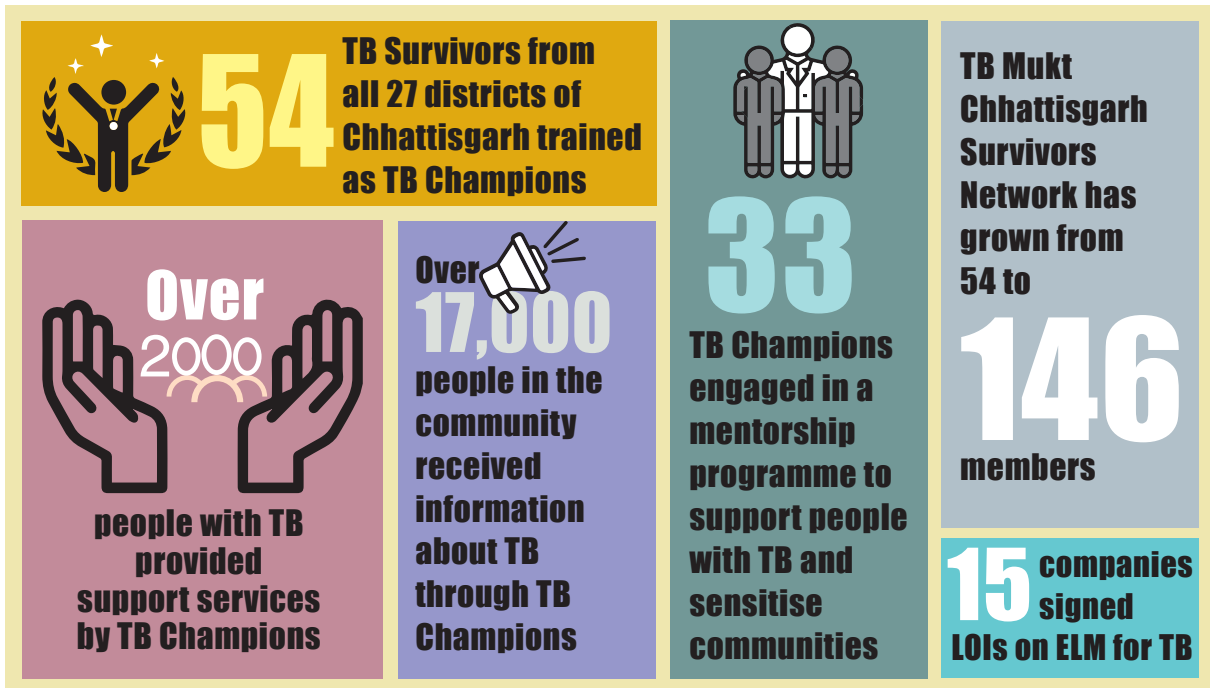
The ELM for TB is designed to motivate business and industry owners to institute TB related policies and interventions at the workplace for the benefit of the employees. A consultative meeting was organised in June 2019, chaired by the Mission Director of the National Health Mission and co-chaired by the State TB Officer. The meeting brought together representatives from mining companies across the state, to discuss a roadmap for improving the health and well-being of their employees who are vulnerable to TB. The participants also had the opportunity to interact with TB Champions. Following the issuance of a letter from the Director Industries and Director Mines, 15 companies signed Letters of Intent with their respective District Health Societies, including ten from Korba district. Some of them have begun TB interventions in their establishments in coordination with their District TB Cells.



“Through REACH’s efforts, an army of TB Champions has been created and are working closely with the RNTCP at the district and sub-district level, to ensure that people with TB symptoms are able to access services, and if diagnosed, receive the highest quality of care possible. In addition, we are working to introduce the Employer Led Model, with a special focus on mining districts.”

— *Dr. Y. K. Sharma, State TB Officer, Chhattisgarh*

Key Results



“We are glad to join together with the Department of Health in Chhattisgarh, the district administration of Durg and REACH through the ELM. Through this partnership, we are confident that we will improve knowledge of TB among our employees and ensure that they can access diagnosis and care services if required.”

— *Mr. Kamlesh Pawar, AGM, Topworth Steels and Power Pvt. Ltd, Durg*

“There is an urgent need to create awareness on symptoms, early diagnosis and treatment adherence in hard-to-reach areas of Dantewada. It is very important that everyone who has battled TB comes together to make sure that we help others who are facing problems during their treatment.”

— *Ravindra Karma, TB Champion, Dantewada*

“I am happy that as a TB Champion I got the opportunity to learn about TB and to exercise my potential as an ambassador for TB at the community level. Creating awareness on TB with an emphasis on stigma reduction is the only way we can protect ourselves and our families in the future.”

— *Kalyani Nishad, TB Champion, Narayanpur*

Key Learnings

The TB Call to Action project has demonstrated the importance of bringing together a range of stakeholders for collective action. Through the different activities, processes of engaging previously unengaged stakeholders have been tested, demonstrated and documented, and have the potential for scale-up and expansion across India. The following are some key learnings from the project:

- ❑ Trained TB Champions are highly motivated to work with and among their communities and must be supported with monetary incentives and continued trainings.
- ❑ The fear of stigma or discrimination does not deter a TB survivor from working as a Champion. TB Champions are increasingly recognized as leaders within their communities and gradually become the go-to persons for all health issues, extending beyond TB.
- ❑ Being a TB Champion and working with the health system for the benefit of other people with TB is an empowering experience for a TB survivor. Most TB Champions reported advancement in their knowledge, skills and overall social standing.
- ❑ RNTCP values the contribution of the TB Champions to all its activities and is willing to support the TB Champions to work jointly towards the goal of TB elimination at all levels.
- ❑ Survivor-led networks can harness the power of communities and provide a framework to synergise individual efforts, optimise cross-learning, and channel the collective voice of the members. Being a network member reduces the loneliness of having TB or life after TB.
- ❑ Companies in the public and private sector see the value of investing in the health of their employees and are keen to implement the Employer Led Model. Integrating TB into existing health activities, such as camps or regular screenings, is a simple starting point. Adoption of ELM on a larger scale needs a sustained inter-sectoral effort involving the department of health, mines, industries, RNTCP and the administrative structure at the district level.
- ❑ A biomedical response to TB is inadequate. Multiple stakeholders – survivors, elected representatives, industry leaders, the media, celebrities etc. – have a distinct role to play in eliminating TB and different strategies must be adopted to sensitise and involve them effectively. Engaging these players can amplify the TB response and accelerate elimination efforts across the country.

Chhattigarh's TB Champions





About REACH

Resource Group for Education and Advocacy for Community Health (REACH) is a Chennai-based non-profit organisation established in 1999 in response to the roll out of the Revised National TB Control Programme (RNTCP) in Tamil Nadu. Through an unrelenting focus on TB for two decades, REACH has engaged various stakeholders for a multi-sectoral and comprehensive response to TB, including the Central TB Division, State and District TB Cells, private health care providers, business leaders, celebrities, the media, people with TB and affected communities. REACH has consistently supported the RNTCP in its efforts to prevent, detect and treat TB, by providing holistic care and support along the care cascade to people affected by TB.

With support from USAID, REACH has implemented the Tuberculosis Call to Action Project since 2016 in six priority states – Assam, Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Odisha, Uttar Pradesh. Through this project, REACH has created a cadre of TB survivors and Champions who are actively engaged in the TB response, advocated for the participation of industries through the Employer Led Model, engaged elected representatives for greater attention to TB, facilitated inter-sectoral coordination between various departments (beyond health) and piloted TB Mitra, a unique mobile-based application for use by communities.

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