

A Call for Unified Action: The Global Challenge of Ending Tuberculosis



Bashar Haruna Gulumbe^{1*}, Junaidu Abubakar²

¹ Department of Microbiology, Faculty of Science, Federal University Birnin Kebbi, PMB 1157, Kebbi State, Nigeria.

² Department of Biochemistry, Faculty of Science, Federal University Birnin Kebbi, PMB 1157, Kebbi State, Nigeria.

***Corresponding Author:** Bashar Haruna Gulumbe, Department of Microbiology, Faculty of Science, Federal University Birnin Kebbi, PMB 1157, Kebbi State, Nigeria. Email: bashar.haruna@fubk.edu.ng

Received 2023-03-25; Accepted 2023-04-26; Online Published 2023-06-01

Citation: Gulumbe BH, Abubakar J, A Call for Unified Action: The Global Challenge of Ending Tuberculosis . Int J Travel Med Glob Health, 2023;11(2):267-268. doi: 10.30491/IJTMGH.2023.390899.1354

Dear Editor,

Since the turn of the millennium, the world has witnessed significant progress in the fight against tuberculosis (TB)¹. In recognition of this year's World TB Day, the World Health Organization's Director-General highlighted that deaths from tuberculosis have declined by roughly 40%, and more than 74 million individuals have been provided with access to TB-related services. Despite these impressive strides, TB remains a major global health concern, claiming 1.6 million lives each year. On World Tuberculosis Day, it is essential to reflect on the challenges that lie ahead and call for increased accountability and action from the scientific community, policymakers, and the public to end TB.

First and foremost, enhancing accountability requires the establishment of transparent monitoring systems to track progress and evaluate the effectiveness of implemented strategies². By identifying gaps in the current approaches, ongoing efforts can be adjusted accordingly. These systems should include measurable targets and indicators and promote regular reporting to maintain an open dialogue between stakeholders. Investing in research and development is also critical for the discovery of novel diagnostic tools, treatments, and vaccines³. By fostering collaborations between academic institutions, private organizations, and governmental bodies, we can drive innovation and advance our understanding of this complex disease. Multi-disciplinary efforts will help to create a comprehensive picture of TB, enabling the development of targeted interventions that address the unique challenges posed by this global health threat.

Equitable access to TB services is a moral imperative⁴. To ensure that vulnerable and marginalized populations are not left behind, health systems must be strengthened, with a particular focus on reaching those most affected by this disease. Addressing the social determinants of health, such as poverty, inadequate housing, and limited access to healthcare, is crucial for breaking the cycle of illness and creating a more equitable world. Public awareness of tuberculosis and its devastating impact is vital for garnering support for TB control and elimination efforts. De-stigmatizing the disease, promoting understanding, and motivating individuals, communities, and governments to take decisive action are essential for rallying global support^{2, 5}. By engaging the public and fostering a sense of shared responsibility, we can generate the momentum needed to drive sustainable change.

In conclusion, the progress made thus far should not lull us into a false sense of security. Instead, it should serve as a reminder of the potential that lies within a unified, global effort. The time for decisive action is now, as millions of lives hang in the balance. By working together, we can overcome the challenges posed by tuberculosis and achieve a healthier, more equitable future for all. Together, we can end TB.

Authors' Contributions,

BHG conceived the idea. All authors wrote, revised and approved the manuscript.

Conflict of Interest Disclosures

None to declare.

Funding/Support and Ethical Approval Code

Not applicable

References

1. WHO, 'Global Tuberculosis Report 2022', 2022. <https://www.who.int/teams/global-tuberculosis-programme/tb-reports/global-tuberculosis-report-2022> (accessed Mar. 24, 2023).
2. WHO, 'The End TB Strategy', 2022. <https://www.who.int/teams/global-tuberculosis-programme/the-end-tb-strategy> (accessed Mar. 25, 2023).
3. E. Tacconelli et al., 'Discovery, research, and development of new antibiotics: the WHO priority list of antibiotic-resistant bacteria and tuberculosis', *Lancet Infect. Dis.*, vol. 18, no. 3, pp. 318–327, Mar. 2018, doi: [10.1016/S1473-3099\(17\)30753-3](https://doi.org/10.1016/S1473-3099(17)30753-3).
4. T. Roberts et al., 'Turning threats into opportunities: how to implement and advance quality TB services for people with HIV during the COVID-19 pandemic and beyond', *J. Int. AIDS Soc.*, vol. 24, no. 4, Apr. 2021, doi: [10.1002/jia2.25696](https://doi.org/10.1002/jia2.25696).
5. V. Bhatia et al., 'Ending TB in Southeast Asia: current resources are not enough', *BMJ Glob. Health*, vol. 5, no. 3, p. e002073, Mar. 2020, doi: <https://doi.org/10.1136/bmjgh-2019-002073>.