

Breaking the Barriers

The Breaking the Barriers (BTB) project, supported by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), has developed innovative and effective behaviour change models to combat tuberculosis among vulnerable populations across four states. Expanding its efforts, the project now aims to explore four new components in Karnataka and Assam. These include addressing the social determinants of TB, providing technical assistance to Government of Karnataka, packaging and disseminating behaviour change models, and demonstrating the development of TB-free wards. These components aim to expand the project's scope to encompass community and systems-strengthening initiatives at the grassroots, with a strong focus on knowledge codification and sharing.

Community Engagement

By the Youth, for the Youth: Cambridge School and Om Shakti Self Help Group conduct awareness activities for Bengaluru students



Students of Cambridge school conducting an awareness session on TB

On April 4, a collaborative TB awareness activity was conducted between the Om Shakti Self-Help Group (SHG) and Cambridge School at Laggere in Bengaluru Urban, Karnataka. Employing a peer-led approach, high school students from Cambridge School spread awareness among Anganwadi middle school students and Cambridge middle school students on TB, making the session engaging and relatable. The orientation session covered crucial topics such as maintaining personal hygiene, understanding TB, its symptoms, and the mode of disease transmission. Additionally, the students also covered preventative measures and the importance of completing TB treatment.

IEC Resources Utilised by SHGs and TB Champions to lead TB Awareness in Abbigere, Bengaluru

Sahana SHG and Snehasri SHG - capacitated by KHPT - collaborated to enhance TB awareness and intervention efforts on June 12 and June 21, in Abbigere Tuberculosis Unit (TU), Bengaluru. Twenty members from both SHGs attended and aimed to expand their network for TB awareness activities. They discussed insights and strategies used by Sahana SHG, potential collaboration opportunities, and the use of BTB IEC materials for effective communication. They agreed to work together on future TB



Collaboration and Orientation meeting with Sahana and Snehasri SHG

awareness activities and form a joint action plan to leverage the strengths of both SHGs.



TB awareness session by TB Champion Nirmala

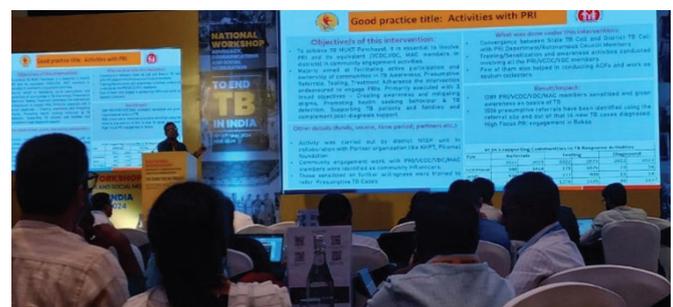
On June 30, TB Champion Nirmala conducted a TB awareness session during a Satsang Mandali, an informal spiritual association, at an apartment in Mahalakshmi Layout, Bangalore. Thirty members attended the session. TBC Nirmala also conducted a verbal screening for TB symptoms among the participants, none of whom exhibited symptoms. This session helped increase awareness among the Satsang Mandali members about TB and demonstrated the effectiveness of using community gatherings for disseminating health information.

Government Engagement

BTB Activities in Assam Showcased as Best Practices at National Workshop

The Assam State National Tuberculosis Elimination Programme (NTEP) showcased KHPT's Virtual Patient Support Group Meetings and PRI Engagement Activities, conducted during BTB operations in Assam, as Best Practices at the National Advocacy, Communications, and Social Mobilisation (ACSM) Workshop. At the workshop, convened in New Delhi from May 15 to May 17, the effectiveness of virtual meetings in reaching over 600 persons with tuberculosis (PwTB) and caregivers at no cost was highlighted at the event. The engagement of Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs)/Village Council Development Committee (VCDC) was discussed, emphasising their role in ensuring ownership, and accountability in TB-Mukt Panchayat initiatives. Further, the Assam state NTEP team also plans to expand the Virtual Support

Group meetings across all districts, starting with Multi-drug-resistant TB cases and other categories of PwTB.



Best Practices showcase in the ACSM workshop

KHPT team pilots VCDC-centred intervention on comprehensive health and wellness in Baksa, Assam

KHPT conducted a pilot intervention on comprehensive health and wellness for Autonomous Councils in Baksa, Assam, which govern tribal welfare initiatives. This initiative was led by the PRI/ VCDC and the community, in active collaboration with health institutions.



The intervention focused on creating awareness about general health conditions and diseases and promoted positive behavioural changes. Further, VCDCs led a session on promotive and preventative health with the community.

VCDC-led meeting on comprehensive health and wellness in Baksa, Assam

participation of **51** Health and Wellness Centers (HWCs), **66** VCDCs, and **80** Community Structures (CSs). Further, the team advocated inducting TB champions and community structure members in Jan Arogya Samitis. This helped optimise their strengths, ensuring diverse participation from all sections, including Traditional Birth Attendants (TBCs), and others.

Additionally, as technical assistance under this initiative, KHPT is translating the TB Mukht Gram Panchayat training module into Assamese.

KHPT and State Tuberculosis Office, Karnataka Strengthen Community Engagement through TB Champion Engagement Workshop for all District NTEP

KHPT, in collaboration with the State Tuberculosis Office, Karnataka, launched a comprehensive virtual training series in February. The series aims to equip the NTEP team and district members such as Senior Treatment Staff (STS) and TB Health Visitors (TBHV) with the knowledge and skills for effective TB Champion (TBC) engagement.



In three sessions this quarter, participants from all districts in Karnataka were trained on the roles and responsibilities of TBCs, emphasising the importance of survivor empowerment, community engagement, and communication skills to offer support to persons with TB (PwTB). In the two subsequent sessions, participants were introduced to the Arogya Saathi App for digital reporting and monitoring. They also discussed various engagement strategies, including active and passive case finding, educational workshops, health fairs, home visits, and public awareness campaigns. Further, the series emphasised the identification and training of TB Champions within each district, ensuring they are well-prepared to take on their roles and effectively engage in community outreach activities.

KHPT and STO conduct virtual ToT Training for all NTEP District teams in Karnataka

IMPACT India

The Integrated Measures for Prevention and Care in TB (IMPACT) India project, supported by The Global Fund, is a three-year project (April 2024 - March 2027) that aims to develop and scale a decentralised operational model to rapidly enhance TB case detection, notification, and treatment outcomes in India. To bolster the efforts of the Central TB Division (CTD), the project aims to implement TB Champion Engagement initiatives across **14** states and one Union Territory (UT), support TB Mukht Grama Panchayat activities across 13 states, and offer technical assistance to the CTD for Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT) and Pradhan Mantri TB Mukht Bharat Abhiyan (PMTBMBA) activities nationwide. Additionally, the project focuses on building the capacity of NTEP frontline staff to improve their ability to provide counselling support to persons with Drug-Resistant TB.

KHPT showcases IMPACT India project at CTD National Review Meeting

Dr. Rehana Begum, Project Director of the IMPACT India Project, delivered a presentation at the National Review Meeting conducted by the CTD to review the state-level progress of the NTEP. KHPT, along with other recipients of the Global Fund Grant Cycle 7, were given the opportunity to present the IMPACT India project to all the state representatives. Held in New Delhi from June 26 to 28, the meeting focused on discussion around ACSM and community engagement, multisectoral collaboration, private sector engagement, airborne infection control, and other NTEP indicators.



Dr Rehana Begum presents the IMPACT India project at the National Review Meeting, CTD

KHPT's presents IMPACT India project progress at the ICCM Workshop

KHPT presented the IMPACT India project implementation, progress, and coverage indicators at The Global Fund Grant Cycle 7 (GC7) workshop held from April 24-25. During this event, the team also engaged with Oversight Committee, a sub-committee responsible for overseeing the implementation and performance of grants.

Case Story

Democratising Healthcare Planning: KHPT Advocates for the induction of TB Champions and Community Structures in Jan Arogya Samitis, Assam

KHPT has successfully advocated for the induction of TBCs and CS members into Jan Arogya Samitis (JAS) through sensitisation efforts by the BTB Team. During a mapping exercise in Baksa and Goreshwar, the team identified that the existing JAS were not optimally structured. This led to strong advocacy for the inclusion of representatives such as TBCs and CS members into the committee. As a result, approximately **35%** of JAS in the project implementation district have started expanding their team size, to enhance diversity and democratise healthcare planning at the grassroots level.



TBCs and CS members in JAS, Assam

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