



The TB REACH mobile diagnostic van. © IOM 2013

Intensification of Tuberculosis Detection in the Western Region of Ghana

IOM implemented a TB REACH project in Ghana aimed to increase tuberculosis detection among refugees and host communities, miners and mining communities, border communities and urban vulnerable communities through a mobile diagnostic van using GeneXpert technology. The project aimed to reach at least 317,000 individuals in the Western Region of Ghana in one year. Ghana's National TB Control Programme was an active partner and provided necessary follow-up treatment for detected cases.

About the Project

The IOM Medical Health Division in Ghana launched a tuberculosis (TB) detection project in the Western Region of Ghana on 29 May 2013

In 2012, IOM was selected as one of 37 participants in the global TB REACH programme that is spearheaded by the Stop TB Partnership and funded by the Canadian International Development Agency. The stated objective of TB REACH is to "achieve early and increased TB case detection using innovative approaches in populations that are poor and vulnerable and have limited access to care."

In 2011, the incidence and prevalence rates of TB in Ghana were estimated at 79 and 92 per 100,000 population respectively. National detection rate of all



Above: IOM Migration Health Officers Dr. Guliye (right) and

forms of TB was 78% and 23% of the patients had TB/HIV co-infection. (Source: WHO)

IOM partnered with Ghana's national, regional and district TB control programmes in five implementation sites (Sekondi-Takoradi Metropolitan, Tarkwa-Nsuaem Municipal, Prestea-Huni Valley Municipal, Ellembelle District and Jomoro District). Western region was selected because it is considered multi-cultural, hosts two refugee camps, borders Ivory Coast and has an inflow of migrants from within Ghana and the region for employment in the mining and petroleum sectors. IOM hoped to reach at least 317,000 individuals as part of detection efforts.



Above: A community health volunteer records information from

Specific project components included; (1) coordination and monitoring among stakeholders; (2) community mobilization and cough screening; (3) TB screening utilising a mobile TB diagnostic van with GeneXpert machine; and (4) capacity building of selected TB diagnostic centres.

Project Results

Over a period of 224 working days in the field, 190 communities were mobilized and a total of 354,654 individuals were reached by volunteers through door-to-door visits corresponding to 11.7% more than the target (n=317,495). Of the total reached, 6,108 individuals aged 15 years or more who had TB symptoms were referred to the mobile TB diagnostic van for further TB screening. The mobile medical team registered and screened a total of 4,358 individuals for TB. Among those screened, 3,060 met the national TB case definition and were tested for TB by collecting a on the spot sputum sample. Of the total tested, 231 were positive for TB and referred for treatment. The mean time-to-treatment measured in days from the referral date was 11 days with a median of 4 days.

GeneXpert Technology

The World Health Organization (WHO) endorsed the use of automated diagnostic systems that produce rapid results for tests such as TB using GeneXpert technology. This machine provides molecular analysis of sputum samples in about two hours and is a portable system suitable for a mobile clinic. The picture below shows the GeneXpert machine being loaded with a cartridge containing patient sample for analysis.



About IOM Ghana's Migration Health Division (MHD)

IOM established the Migration Health Division (MHD) in Ghana in 2001 and has grown its operations to include a Migration Health Assessment Centre (MHAC) in Accra, and serves as the hub overseeing all health assessment activities in West and Central Africa. MHD has more than ten years of experience in providing migration health assessments and travel health assistance; health promotion and assistance for migrants; health assistance for crisis-affected population. IOM has extensive experience in TB screening and referrals in Ghana, and currently manages a TB screening programme for long term United Kingdom (UK) visa applicants in partnership with the Government of UK.



Above: A community health volunteer speaks with a woman about



Above: IOM staff and community volunteers in Western Ghana. © IOM 2013 (Photo: Francis Dagbah)

