



XDR-TB: extensively drug-resistant tuberculosis

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Stop TB Department www.who.int/tb

BREAKING THE BOTTLENECKS TO TREATMENT SCALE UP

With a massive push in place to streamline, strengthen and scale up multidrug-resistant TB (MDR-TB) management programmes, MDR-TB Working Group members have drawn up recommendations to break the current barriers and bottlenecks to expanding treatment. At their [meeting in Georgia](#), members identified as a pressing concern, the crisis in the procurement and supply of second-line anti-TB drugs to countries. In response, a drug management action plan has been drafted. Repeated calls were also heard for MDR-TB and XDR-TB policies to be supported at the highest government levels, and the need for community-based MDR-TB care to be incorporated into TB control programmes. There was also an assessment of the performance of new diagnostic kits which can reduce the time needed for accurate MDR-TB diagnosis, and an acknowledgement that more groundwork is needed to improve and standardize the impact measurements around infection control.

TB "health security threat" for Europe

Ministers from across Europe are to attend a [high-level forum](#), hosted by the German Government and organized by WHO Europe, to address the re-emergence of TB as a health security threat. In addressing the challenges to effective TB control in Europe, drug resistance remains a critical area of work - countries in the WHO European Region have the highest MDR-TB rates in the world. Ministers or representatives from 48 governments will participate in the one day meeting (22 October) in Berlin, which is expected to conclude with a 'Berlin Declaration on Tuberculosis' listing actions required by governments and TB partners to properly address the TB situation across Europe

Four new countries confirm cases of XDR-TB

Australia, India, Mozambique and Viet Nam are the latest countries to confirm the presence of XDR-TB, bringing the total to [41 countries worldwide](#). Meanwhile, WHO Stop TB is working with countries to prepare the fourth Global TB Drug Resistance Report, which for the first time will include XDR-TB data, and the latest MDR-TB trends. The report will be launched in early 2008.

Funding vote on USA Stop TB Now Act

In a briefing to the United States congress, the [UN Secretary-General's Special Envoy to Stop TB](#), Dr Jorge Sampaio, underlined the impact that extra US funding can have on combating TB globally and in particular on preventing HIV-associated TB deaths. During the briefing he referred to the ongoing XDR-TB emergency in high HIV-prevalent countries, and how TB prevention and control can strengthen current US-funded HIV country projects. Congress is currently deliberating the 2008 foreign aid funding bill and considering increasing total bilateral TB appropriations for 2008 to \$200 million. If approved, the 2008 funding level will be double what the US appropriated last year, and would be the single largest commitment in the fight against TB.

WHO Geneva - New Framework for TB Infection Control

Recent fears over the transmission of infectious XDR-TB strains have highlighted the urgent need to standardize TB infection control measures. In response, WHO Stop TB is to host a consultation in Geneva (22-23 October) to define the framework needed for countries to implement effective TB infection control measures. [WHO guidelines](#) have recently been updated, which incorporate the additional activities required in high HIV prevalence settings. Following the Geneva meeting, recommendations will be incorporated into draft programmatic guidelines, to be issued at the end of 2007.

XDR-TB symposium at the 38th Union World Conference on Lung Health

A WHO Stop TB symposium with latest information and analysis on XDR-TB and TB/HIV will be held on the opening day of the [38th Union World Conference on Lung Health \(8-12 November\)](#), which is being held for the first time in South Africa. A series of news announcements and briefings, including daily press conferences, will be held during the conference. Journalists wishing to attend can [register](#) via the website of the organizers, IUATLD. There will also be live webcasts from the conference floor.