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USAID Ethiopia and USAID Eliminate TB Project visit Mekelle-Ayder Hospital, October 19, 2023. (Photo credit: Joney Woldegebreal)

USAID ELIMINATE TB PROJECT

QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

JANUARY 2024

The five-year US Agency for International Development (USAID) Eliminate TB Project builds on the contributions made by USAID to Ethiopia's TB control efforts over the past more than 20 years. Management Sciences for Health (MSH), in collaboration with longtime partner KNCV Tuberculosis Foundation and three local partners—Amhara Development Association (ADA), Oromia Development Association (ODA), and Renaissance through Research, Education, and Advocacy for Comprehensive Health Service Ethiopia (REACH Ethiopia)—implements the project to reduce TB incidence and mortality by engaging public- and private-sector players to improve the quality and sustainability of TB services in Ethiopia.

USAID's Assistant Administrator for Global Health, Dr. Atul Gawande, visits St. Peter Hospital

Dr. Atul Gawande, USAID's Assistant Administrator for Global Health, traveled to Ethiopia in September 2023 for the International Conference on Primary Health Care in Addis Ababa. Following the conference, the USAID Eliminate TB Project facilitated a site visit on September 8, 2023 to St. Peter Hospital—the country's leading TB and lung disease hospital—for Dr. Gawande; Dr. Lia Tadesse, H.E. Minister of Health; and Dr. Dereje Duguma, State Minister of Health. The site visit shone a light on the hospital's multidrug-resistant TB (MDR-TB) program and USAID's longstanding investment in TB prevention and control in the country.

During the visit, Dr. Gawande spoke with two people receiving treatment for MDR-TB as well as clinicians and hospital staff. Dr. Gawande expressed his appreciation for the staff's dedication and care and extended his gratitude to the Ministry of Health for its close support of the hospital's treatment and prevention program.

Ethiopia is committed to achieving global targets to end TB. For instance, of the key targets and commitments for 2022 established at the United Nations High-level Meeting on TB in

2018, the country has achieved 89% of the TB diagnosis and treatment target, 74% of the childhood TB target, and 60% of the drug-resistant TB (DR-TB) treatment target.



Dr. Atul Gawande (second from right) visits St. Peter Hospital, joined by Dr. Daniel Gemechu, Chief of Party, USAID Eliminate TB Project (left), Dr. Dereje Duguma, State Minister of Health (middle), and hospital staff. (Photo credit: Joney Woldegebreal)



USAID Eliminate TB Project partners with USAID and the Tigray Regional Health Bureau to re-establish TB services in the region

Equipment handover event in Mekelle. USAID Ethiopia donated 11 GeneXpert machines, 50 microscopes, and 20 motorbikes to the Tigray Regional Health Bureau on October 20, 2023. The USAID Eliminate TB Project facilitated the handover event and placement of the equipment. Mr. Jonathan Ross, USAID Ethiopia Health Office Director, handed over the equipment to Dr. Amanuel Haile, Head of the Tigray Regional Health Bureau, and reaffirmed USAID Ethiopia's intention to strengthen its existing collaboration with the people of Ethiopia. Dr. Amanuel Haile expressed his appreciation for the donation and the USAID Eliminate TB Project's effort towards TB prevention and treatment in the region. Dr. Daniel Gemechu, Chief of Party, USAID Eliminate TB Project, noted the project's commitment to continue helping the region on its path to recovery.



Dr. Amanuel Haile, Head of the Tigray Regional Health Bureau (right), and Mr. Jonathan Ross, USAID Ethiopia Health Office Director (left), at the handover ceremony in Mekelle, Tigray Region, Ethiopia (Photo credits: Joney Woldegebreal)

Regional Project TB Annual Review Meeting. The USAID Eliminate TB Project convened its annual TB program performance review meeting for the Tigray region in October 2023 at Mekelle. Mr. Aregai Gebre Medhin, Tigray Regional Health Bureau representative, Dr. Yewulsew Kassie from USAID Ethiopia, and Dr. Daniel Gemechu opened the meeting. The project has deployed 20 woreda cluster coordinators to resume basic TB services in the region. Mr. Aregai Gebre Medhin affirmed the Regional Health Bureau's plan to continue working with USAID and the Eliminate TB Project on the resumption of life-saving TB services in the region.



Regional Project TB Annual Review Meeting: Dr. Yewulsew Kassie, Senior Infectious Diseases Advisor, USAID (left); Dr. Daniel Gemechu (center left); Dr. Yohannes Molla, Regional Program Operations Director, USAID Eliminate TB Project (center right); Dr. Mebrahtu Abraha, Tigray Regional Manager, USAID Eliminate TB Project, and Mr. Aregai Gebre Medhin, Tigray Regional Health Bureau representative (right) (Photo credits: Joney Woldegebreal)

Visit to Mekelle-Ayder Hospital. On October 19, 2023, a team from USAID Ethiopia and the USAID Eliminate TB Project visited Mekelle-Ayder Hospital. The Hospital Chief Clinical Director, Dr. Abraha Gebreegziabher Hailu, described his facility's experience before, during, and after the conflict. Team members also visited health facilities outside Mekelle around nearby Adi Gudom.



USAID Ethiopia and USAID Eliminate TB Project visit Mekelle-Ayder Hospital, October 19, 2023 (Photo credit: Joney Woldegebreal)

USAID Eliminate TB Project on track to achieve its targets

By September 2023, the USAID TB Elimination Project was on track to achieve or surpass the life-of-project targets for 6 of 7 key indicators. These gains were made despite the ongoing shocks of COVID-19, conflict, and climate change (drought) faced by the country.

The GeneXpert utilization rate has almost **doubled** since the start of the project, achieving **91%** of its target.

91%

The project is **on track** to reach its TB preventive treatment (TPT) initiation target, achieving **60%** of its target.

The project has **exceeded** its target for contact investigation (CI) coverage at

120%.

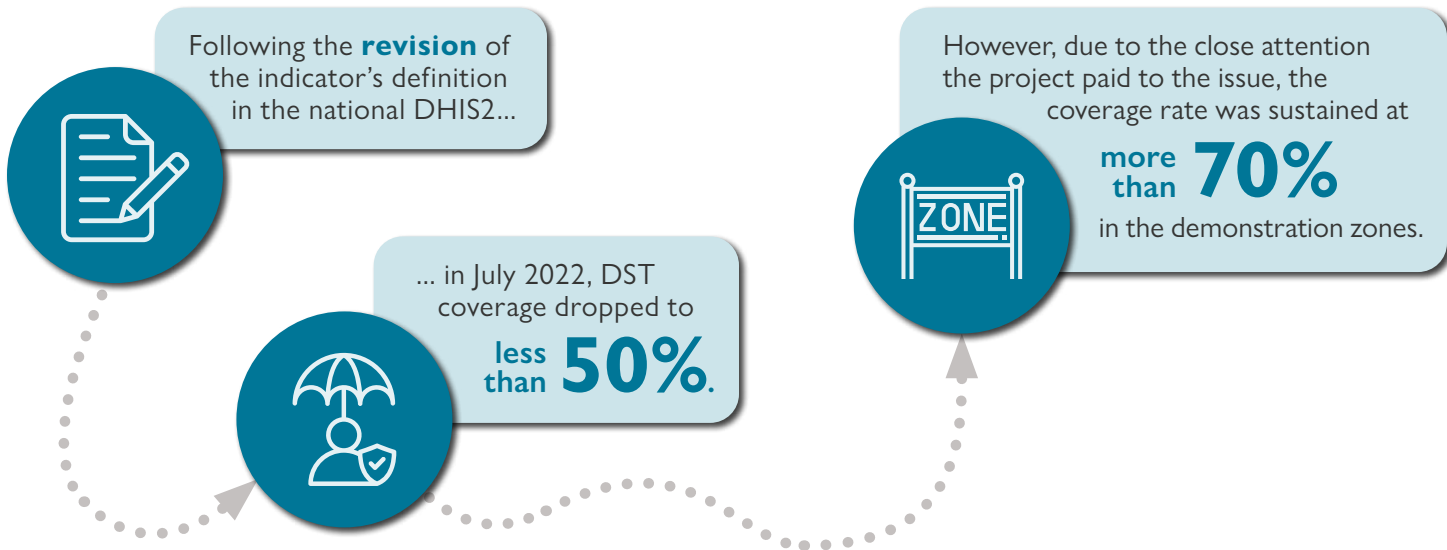
Nearly three-quarters (**73%**) of the drug-susceptible TB (DS-TB) case notification target has already been reached, and the project is likely to... **exceed its life-of-project (LOP) target one year early.**

Target treatment success rates (TSRs) for both DS-TB and DR-TB cases have been **achieved and sustained** at

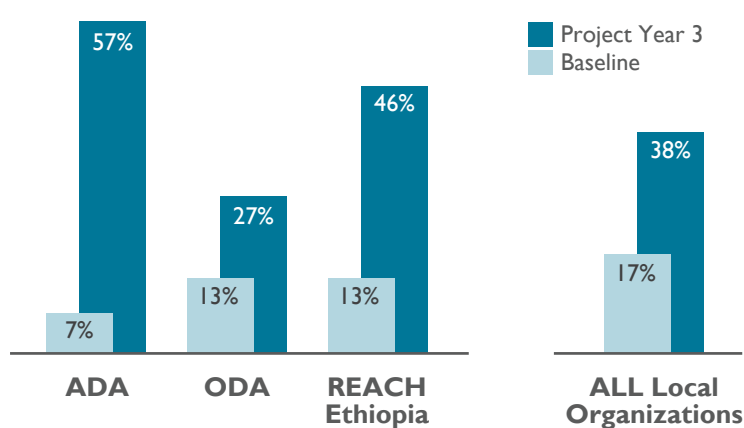
97% and **98%** of their targets, respectively.

(Photo credit: Jennifer Gardella, MSH)

Drug susceptibility testing (DST) coverage sustained at more than 70% in project demonstration zones. The project's strategic approach is centered on implementing innovative TB interventions in 23 demonstration zones and facilitating cross-learning and experience-sharing with non-demonstration zones in the same region. For instance, the project has been working closely with health facilities in the demonstration zones to improve DST service coverage and data quality. DST coverage dropped to less than 50% in July 2022, following the revision of the indicator's definition in the national DHIS2. However, due to the close attention the project paid to the issue, the coverage rate was sustained at more than 70% in the demonstration zones. The demonstration zones in turn have been working with the non-demonstration zones to share lessons learned and promote similar increases in those areas.



Local partners drive an increase in TB identification and care at the community level. The proportion of TB cases identified and notified at the community level compared to the total number of TB cases notified, also known as the community contribution, has not risen above 20% in the last several decades. Three local partners of the USAID Eliminate TB Project—ADA, ODA, and REACH Ethiopia—have been instrumental in driving those rates up using their strong connection with communities across 75 districts. These local organizations have established 78 TB patient survivor clubs that educate communities about TB, identify and refer persons with presumed TB for testing and treatment, and support people on anti-TB regimens to complete their prescribed course of treatment. By September 2023, the community contribution to TB case notification rates was more than double the national rate (38% compared to 17%) in the communities supported by these local organizations, with rates in the ADA-, ODA-, and REACH Ethiopia-supported districts reaching at 57%, 27%, and 46%, respectively.



By the end of Project Year 3, the % community contribution to TB case notification rates in ADA, ODA, and REACH Ethiopia **all surpassed their baselines.**

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