



Combating Tuberculosis in Children

QUICK FACTS

- At least half a million children* become ill with tuberculosis (TB) each year.
- Up to 70 000* children die of TB every year.
- 70-80% of children with TB, have the disease in their lungs (pulmonary TB). The rest are affected by TB disease in other parts of the body (extrapulmonary TB).
- There were over ten million orphans due to parental TB deaths in 2010.

FACTORS THAT PUT CHILDREN AT RISK

- Any child living in a setting where there are people with infectious TB can become ill with TB, even if they are vaccinated.
- TB illness in children is often missed or overlooked due to non-specific symptoms and difficulties in diagnosis, such as obtaining sputum from young children.
- Children with vulnerable immune systems, such as the very young, HIV-infected or severely malnourished, are most at risk for falling ill or dying from TB.
- Infants and young children are at increased risk of developing severe disseminated disease associated with high mortality, such as TB meningitis or miliary TB.
- Adolescents are at particular risk of developing adult-type disease, i.e. often sputum smear-positive and highly infectious.
- Children with TB are often poor and live in vulnerable communities where there may be a lack of access to health care.
- Newborn children of women with TB are at increased risk of contracting TB. Risks are very high for HIV-infected mothers and children.

Type of TB	Sex	DOTs	
Pulmonary Smear Positive	Male	4	
	Female	10	
Pulmonary Smear Negative	Male	2	4
	Female children	2	10
Extrapulmonary	Male	4	3
	Female children	3	6
Total	Male	2	3
	Female children	12	12
Total Grant		2	2
		33	

KEY CHALLENGES

- Attention to child TB activities rarely included in strategic plans and budgets of ministries of health.
- Need for better diagnostics that can detect TB in children.
- Lack of appropriate child-friendly fixed-dose combination drugs for treatment.
- Recommendations for provision of isoniazid preventive therapy (IPT) for children under 5 years of age rarely implemented.
- Systematic screening for TB not undertaken among children living in households affected by TB.
- Insufficient knowledge of health workers on child TB diagnosis and management issues.
- Current TB vaccine protects young children against the most severe forms of TB, such as meningitis and disseminated TB disease, but does not prevent transmission from an infectious contact.
- Need for increased collaboration between actors in TB and maternal and child health.
- Lack of community knowledge and advocacy.

* The World Health Organization is preparing new estimates that will be released later in 2012.

RESPONSE



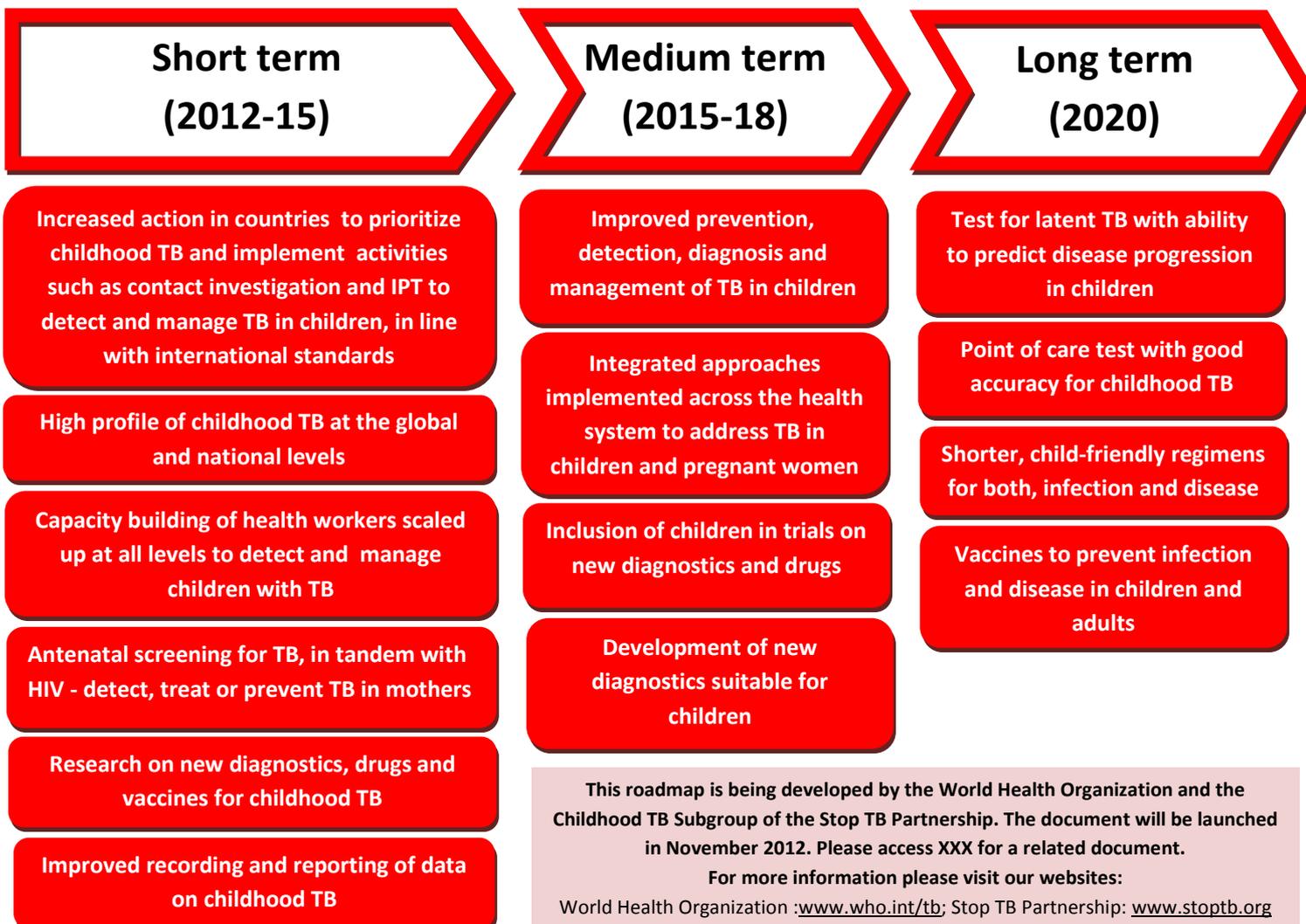
REACHING THE MDGs

Millennium Development Goals 4 and 5 aim to reduce deaths among children and pregnant women, while MDG 6 focuses on turning around the TB, HIV and malaria epidemics. These goals cannot be achieved without additional efforts on TB diagnosis and treatment in children as well as pregnant

WHAT CAN BE DONE

- Mobilize **commitment** at global and national levels to address childhood TB.
- Promote **strategic partnerships** and **synergies** across the health system, especially between **TB, maternal and child health, and immunization** programmes and relevant stakeholders, to **prioritize** and **facilitate early detection** and management of children with TB.
- Advocate for increased **research** and **development** of **new diagnostics, drugs and vaccines** for childhood TB.
- Implement **contact investigation** and provide **IPT** to children under 5 years, through **training** and **awareness building** of health workers and the community on childhood TB.
- Advocate for **family-based approaches** to be integrated into TB and HIV activities.

ROADMAP: KEY ACTIONS TO ADDRESS CHILDHOOD TB



This roadmap is being developed by the World Health Organization and the Childhood TB Subgroup of the Stop TB Partnership. The document will be launched in November 2012. Please access XXX for a related document.

For more information please visit our websites:

World Health Organization : www.who.int/tb; Stop TB Partnership: www.stoptb.org