BREATH FOR LIFE

ADVANCING CHILDHOOD TUBERCULOSIS CONTROL IN VIETNAM

CHILDHOOD TB IN VIETNAM - Gaps in detection and prevention

- 1,300 new childhood cases of TB detected in 2011
- Up to 90 percent of new childhood TB cases are currently undetected
- Limited childhood TB diagnosis and management capacity at primary and secondary healthcare levels
- Low Izoniazid preventive therapy uptake (less than 50 percent) among eligible children at risk of TB
- Inadequate recording and reporting of TB cases in children

LINKING PUBLIC AND PRIVATE PARTNERS TO REDUCE TB BURDEN AMONG CHILDREN

Tuberculosis (TB) is a leading cause of illness worldwide and the number one cause of death in people living with HIV. The World Health Organization ranks Vietnam as the 12th highest TB-burdened country in the world. In 2014, over 100,000 new cases of TB were identified in Vietnam, of which more than 7,000 were repeat cases requiring re-treatment. Approximately 17,000 people died of TB that year.

Since 2008, PATH has been working with national and international partners to improve TB case detection and treatment in Vietnam. PATH's strategy focuses on harnessing the power of a mix of partners to identify and treat people with TB, forming linkages across the system. This partner mix includes the National TB Program, provincial health departments, and public- and private-sector providers. By 2015, over 12,000 cases of TB have been detected through this successful approach.

Now PATH has joined with Johnson & Johnson to address the high TB burden among children in Vietnam. Recent data indicates that up to 90 percent of new childhood TB cases are undetected in Vietnam. TB progresses more rapidly in children, but can be much harder to detect than in adults. The significant gap in diagnosis means that tens of thousands of children are suffering unnecessarily, and infection is left to spread.

BREATH FOR LIFE

PATH and Johnson & Johnson Vietnam initiated Breath for Life in recognition that cross-sector collaboration can play a powerful role in reducing childhood mortality and morbidity caused by the disease. Breath for Life will be piloted in Nghe An, a province highly burdened with tuberculosis and HIV.

THE PROJECT AIMS TO:

- Link and engage a new mix of partners to strengthen the detection, treatment and management of TB in children
- Increase access to and use of preventative therapy among children in close contact with pulmonary TB patients
- Improve systems for recording and reporting TB in children

The National TB Control Program and the Nghe An Provincial Health Department are committed to working with PATH and Johnson & Johnson Vietnam to implement and evaluate the pilot, which will inform recommendations for application across other provinces of Vietnam.

Implemented by PATH, Breath for Life is supported by Janssen Pharmaceutica NV, one of the Janssen Pharmaceutical Companies of Johnson & Johnson.

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