

AFRO- rGLC update

May, 2014

Geneva

Case notification

- A total of 83,574 MDR-TB cases have been notified from 44 of the 47 countries in the region between 2004 and 2012.
- The number reported by year has increased from 3,501 in 2004 to 18,129 in 2012.
- Total of 3,487 XDR-TB cases have been notified between 2007 and 2012 from eleven countries, increasing from 627 in 2007 to 1,603 in 2012.
Botswana, Burkina Faso, DRC, Kenya, Mozambique, Namibia, Niger, Nigeria, South Africa, Swaziland and United Republic of Tanzania.

Case notification

- Significant increases have been observed since rapid molecular tests were endorsed by WHO in 2010. To date, 42 of 44 countries that have ever reported cases of MDR or XDR-TB have been supported to establish drug resistant TB treatment programmes.

Case notification

- Country support for MDR-TB includes monitoring missions, remote support for access to second line medicines through the GDF and also support for programme implementation by advising during regular programme reviews. This has been undertaken either by WHO inter-country (IST) support teams or by the Regional office staff.

Human Resource Capacity Strengthening

- The rGLC has promoted human capacity strengthening for MDR-TB by supporting the conduction of 6 week training courses in Ouidah – Benin and KEMRI-Kenya.
- 2 training courses took place in 2013 training 46 participants from 18 countries in TB, TB/HIV and MDR-TB.

Access for 2nd Line medicines

- In 2013 the rGLC secretariat received at least 20 requests from the Global TB drug facility (GDF) to review country's orders of 2nd line medicines.
- This has been a very important and sometimes difficult task as the requests are urgent or emergency in nature and need repeated correspondence with countries in several cases.

Laboratory support

- Development of regional Global Lab initiative (rGLI) for the African Region, called GLI-AFR. This is aimed at bringing closer to member states oversight functions, including quality assurance mechanisms and operational models.
- Development of a framework document for TB Lab strengthening to act as a template for member states to utilise in developing focused TB Lab strategic plans and policy.

Laboratory support

- Development of formal relationship with ASLM as an extension of the collaborative process to accelerate the accreditation for TB National Reference Labs and the laboratory network.
- increasing the numbers of TB Supranational Reference Labs, training lab personnel, ensuring the availability biosafety measures and infection control policies, provision of technical support and assistance in developing national TB Lab policies.
- Implementation of an External Quality assurance programme (EQAP) for TB Microscopy for the 9 TB HBC in Africa. First round completed January 2014.

Country Missions

- In 2013 a total of 18 technical and monitoring missions were undertaken to countries with the aim of country support for DR_TB and DRS.

rGLC Meeting

- The rGLC was appointed in February 2013.
- The first face to face was in Brazzaville in July 2013. A second meeting took place during the UNION conference in Paris in November.
- They have been reviewing the reports from country missions and providing advice in addition to taking part in some of the missions that have taken place in the countries.
- The next rGLC face to face meeting is planned for July 2014.

Challenges

- Inadequate supply of consultants for MDR-TB in the African Region.
- Language barrier which limits the performance of some of the consultants in some countries.
- staffing compliment in the WHO offices for coordination of the activities.

Way Forward

- Annual EQAP for TB Microscopy, Culture and 1st Line DST, initially for 9TB HBCs and then EQAP for microscopy for 38 member states, to establish baseline capacities, in response to the requirements from GFATM for joint concept note development by TB and HIV/AIDS Programmes
- Operationalize the regional framework for TB Lab strengthening
- Support the review of TB lab services during Joint NTP reviews including strengthening the reporting and recording frameworks.
- Support the accreditation of National TB Reference Labs in the Africa Region
- Strengthen Human resource and sample referral pathways within TB HBCs
- Harmonization of regulatory mechanisms for TB equipment and suppliers
- recruiting a staff member to be based in the Regional office for coordination of rGLC activities.