

RePORT International Newsletter

March 2024

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REFLECTIONS ON WORLD TB DAY: Voices from the Global Fight Against TB



Image Courtesy: <https://www.cdc.gov/tb/worldtbdays/default.htm>

Each year, on March 24, we recognize World TB Day. This annual event commemorates the date in 1882 when Robert Koch announced his discovery of *Mycobacterium tuberculosis*. World TB Day is also a time to educate the public and healthcare partners about the impact of TB around the world.

RePORT International is part of the effort to eliminate TB. But we still have a long way to go. We asked members of our network to reflect on where we are in the fight against TB and to share their thoughts on the role of RePORT International in TB prevention and care worldwide and in the fight to [ENDTB](#).

Despite recent progress, immense challenges remain in achieving the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goal of ending the TB epidemic by 2030. "We still have a very long way to go to reach the END TB targets," said Tom Scriba, investigator from RePORT South Africa, stressing the need for greater commitment across all stakeholders.

Sonali Sarkar, co-chair of the TB RePORT International Coordinating Center (RICC) Executive and Principal Investigator for the India site, said that, "Global efforts at TB elimination, bank on India's success in controlling TB. However, despite commendable efforts, India is likely to miss the ambitious target date set by the government for eliminating TB, which is just a year away. Challenges remain in all areas of TB management, namely prevention and treatment of infection, early and prompt diagnosis of all forms of TB, and shorter and more effective treatment to ensure complete cure."

The COVID-19 pandemic has further disrupted TB services in many regions. "We are struggling to recover from these setbacks," noted Adhella Menur Naysilla from RePORT Indonesia. "We hope we can come back stronger."

At the same time, the global TB community has made remarkable strides. "The development in rapid TB diagnostic testing and MDR-TB oral regimens is impressive," Naysilla reflected. However, major gaps persist across the TB care cascade – from prevention to detection, diagnosis, and treatment completion. "It is crucial that we renew the essentials of TB preventive measures," emphasized Deepa Shankar, RePORT India. This includes advancing new vaccines, biomarkers for latent TB infection, infection control measures, and prioritizing education and awareness.

Bob Bollinger, co-chair of the TBRICC Capacity Strengthening Working Group (CSWG) feels, "There are new, shorter, easier, and better tolerated medication regimens for both prevention and treatment of TB. There are also some promising new diagnostic assays for TB in development. Many of these new medications and diagnostics are too expensive and unavailable for patients that need them. The major challenge to achieving the END TB targets is to ensure that these new medications and diagnostics are accessible and affordable for communities and patients facing the greatest TB burden."

RePORT International plays a vital role in driving progress through its global research network and collaborative studies. "RePORT International is excellent to build a research network to promote multinational collaboration," said one of our investigators from RePORT Korea, Taehyun Kim. As Evan Johnson, a US investigator noted, "RePORT will play an important role in generating samples and resources that will be larger sample size than other efforts."

Sonali Sarkar believed that "RePORT International brings together some of the best TB researchers in the world known for their contributions to advances in vaccines and biomarker discovery and it is poised to conduct path-breaking TB research by fostering collaboration among high-burden countries with institutions having state-of-the-art laboratory facilities and the commitment to invest in TB research."

By facilitating data sharing, exchange of expertise, and multi-country TB biomarker studies, RePORT supports a "whole-of-society approach where everybody works together," a path that John C. Malabad from RePORT

Philippines described as essential for achieving the END TB targets. Still, more work is needed to ensure research informed policies and interventions reach those most vulnerable to TB. "We need greater interaction with policymakers," urged David Hom, from the RePORT International Coordination Center. Valeria Rolla, investigator from RePORT Brazil, called for "clearer prevention strategies including better standards of care and infection prevention."

As the global TB community renews its commitment on World TB Day 2024, a spirit of optimism and determination shines through. "I'm excited for the prospects for the future!" shared Evan Johnson. "Better diagnostics, treatments, vaccines, as well as reducing world poverty are all needed. From the latest scientific breakthroughs to robust advocacy and policies, all facets of the response must be accelerated to finally overcome TB. On this World TB Day, we reflect on the progress made and rededicate ourselves to the unfinished work ahead."

Jerrold Ellner, Director, TB RICC, believes that "RePORT International addresses two of the current priorities in TB research: how to identify persons with TB that have no symptoms - a necessary first step in interrupting transmission to others- and determining the long-term consequences of TB such as cardiopulmonary and other sequelae. These will provide additional impetus to prevention measures. RePORT has the capacity to assess these issues across populations and continents."

RePORT International is on the forefront of helping the world reach its TB elimination targets and has the hope of brilliant investigators and staff engaged in the fight.

Contributed by Daphne Martin, Program Manager, TB RICC

RePORT International Coordinating Center (RICC) leadership gathers to move forward on RePORT International's mission

The leadership of RICC met in New Jersey, US on February 22 to review the first year of the third RePORT cohort and plans for the future. Dr. Jerry Ellner, RICC's Director, reviewed the year's successes including the development of an RFA on subclinical TB, the creation of consortium by-laws, and the revision of the Common Protocol. Additionally, ideas were shared for enhanced marketing of the work RePORT staff do, bettering not just TB science but policy and guidelines. New initiatives were shared such as opportunities for building the capacity of early- and mid-stage investigators, as well as the need for additional studies and inventory of the incredible worldwide biorepositories of specimens. The meeting ended with a strategy to continue building on the accomplishments of the consortium into the future.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

RePORT International has a Youtube Channel!

Give us a follow and stay tuned for more relevant videos.



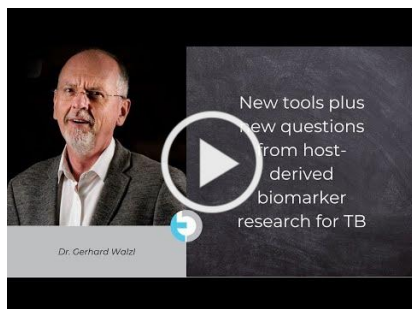
RePORT International Lab Training Program

RePORT's Lab Fellows continue their hands-on training journey. Here is a picture of Ruby King (Philippines) and Gustiani Salim (Indonesia) with Bruno Andrade's team at Fiocruz, Salvador after their training.



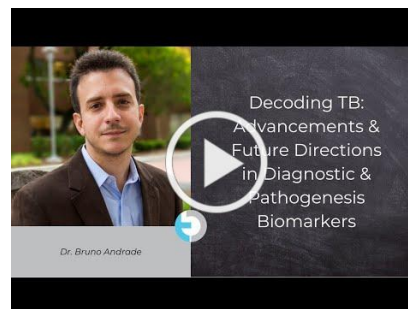
LECTURES & WEBINARS

Special Lectures



"Where should we pitch host-based diagnostic markers for TB in the diagnostic portfolio?"

By Gerhard Walzl, M.D., Distinguished Professor of Biomedical Sciences, Executive Head, Department of



"Decoding Tuberculosis: Advancements and Future Directions in Diagnostic and Pathogenesis Biomarkers"

By Bruno Bezerril Andrade, M.D., Ph.D., Principal Investigator and

Biomedical Sciences Head
Division of Immunology; and Director,
Stellenbosch University Immunology
Research Group (SUN-IRG) South
Africa, RePORT International
Investigator

Department Head at the Laboratory of
Clinical and Translational Research,
Goncalo Moniz Institute, part of the
Oswaldo Cruz Foundation in Salvador,
Bahia, Brazil, RePORT International
Investigator

World TB Day Webinars

Special Lecture by **Dr. Jennifer Furin** titled, "*Is Tuberculosis Care Humanistic? What the Latest Evidence Reveals*"

March 19, 2024
8:00 – 9:00 am ET

Dr. Furin is a medical anthropologist and infectious diseases physician who has dedicated her career over the span of three decades to improving access to care for all people living with drug-resistant TB, with a focus on vulnerable populations including children, pregnant people, incarcerated individuals, and migrants. This lecture will be a reminder of why the work of RePORT is integral to improving the lives of the world's most at-risk individuals.

Zoom Meeting ID: 2624 773 5446
Password: aZ5aJkf93CZ

[ZOOM LINK](#)

Special Lecture by **Dr. Farai Mavhunga** on: **The Social Determinants of Health and Tuberculosis**

March 25, 2024
8:00 – 9:00 am ET

Dr. Mavhunga is the Unit Head for the Vulnerable Populations, Communities and Comorbidities (VCC) unit at the WHO Global Tuberculosis Programme, based in Geneva and is a medical doctor with specialization in HIV/AIDS (MPhil and public health (MPH).

Join by SIP
97406662981@zoomcrc.com

Zoom Meeting ID: 974 0666 2981
Password: 12345

[ZOOM LINK](#)


RESOURCES

LM,ME,RI,CC_Resources > Pages Immersive Reader

View All Pages Front Page Published Edit ⋮

Getting Started - RICC Tuberculosis Research Resources

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- Collaborations
- Outcomes
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Thank you for engaging with our TB Research Resources Community! A few tips to help with navigation:

- All content is found in the [Modules](#) (on the course menu to the left) <----
- All resources are noted with the date added to the site at the end (for example, Dec 18 2023). This is not the due date or announcement date for grants, just the date this information was added to this site. **Please visit the site and note the dates (if applicable).**
- When in Modules, you can [Collapse All folders](#) ☰, which makes it easier to see all of the folders with less scrolling.
- CNTRL F (find) is a helpful way to search this site.
- You can navigate around the site using the 'Next' and 'Previous' buttons at the bottom of each page.
- New information is both posted to the site in the modules and sent in the weekly announcements.
 - You can opt out of announcements, although we do not recommend this. Announcements will be sent once weekly if there is new information. To opt out, the first step is to **open your Canvas Dashboard, and click Account. Click Notifications. Scroll to Announcement, and Click Notifications toggle button. Click Notifications off.**

RICC Tuberculosis Research Resources

The Capacity Building Team has been busy curating resources for TB researchers and is ready to enroll participants on its Canvas site! Many of our colleagues have recommended resources and continue to do so. The resources range from funding to training opportunities and are primarily targeted to Early-Stage Investigators, although everyone can benefit from the range of options. The site will be regularly updated and vetted.

Here is a [one-minute video](#) which explains the benefits of using and sharing this site.

If you would like to be enrolled, or perhaps have colleagues who might benefit from this site, please write to **Mary Talalay (mtalalay@jhu.edu)** with a **list of emails** for enrollment. Everyone will receive system-generated instructions on how to access the site once enrolled.



Tuberculosis Activism

TB elimination is not possible without the work of advocates and survivors like **Paulina Siniatkina**, Paulina is an artist and activist who works with a form of autobiographical reflective research. Her socially-oriented practice is driven by her personal experience of **surviving tuberculosis** in 2015 and is dedicated to fighting **stigma and rethinking what is considered "normal."** Paulina's work delves into collective trauma and social taboos through various art mediums, including painting, sculpture, installation, performance, and film. Her works can be found in the collections of such organizations as Stop TB Partnership in Geneva, the Bill & Melinda Gates Medical Research Institute in Boston, and Oxford Immunotec in London Visit her

TB PPM Hosted Training Webinar

"Quality of Tuberculosis Care: How to conduct and interpret standardized patient studies?"

OUR GUESTS

Ben Daniels Borry Wilern Lestari

Angelina Sassi Ada Kwan

Lauren Rosapep

QUALITY OF TUBERCULOSIS CARE: HOW TO CONDUCT AND INTERPRET STANDARDIZED PATIENT STUDIES?

In this webinar, we summarize results and reflections from standardized patient (SP) studies, particularly linked to recent COVET studies.

TBPPM Webinar
07 February 2024

TBPPM LEARNING NETWORK tbppm.org

GVIRF Webinar Session

"New TB Vaccines for Adults and Adolescents, Progress, Prospects, and Perspectives." Please find below the multiple language links to the material of this session.



In English.

PRESENTATION



En español.

MORE GVIRF CONTENT



En français.



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