

RePORT International Newsletter

February, 2025

In This Issue

- Faces Behind the Scenes
- Submit Your Responses for World TB Day
- TB-RICC Leadership Meeting
- Announcement

FACES BEHIND THE SCENES

Making a Difference in Tuberculosis Research

At RePORT International, as we strive to fight against tuberculosis, dedicated professionals work tirelessly behind the scenes to advance research and improve patient care. This month, we spotlight some of our remarkable individuals from Brazil, India and Indonesia, whose contributions are helping to shape the future of TB research across continents.



Aline Benjamin: Bridging Science and Patient Care in Brazil

At the Instituto Nacional de Infectologia Evandro Chagas (INI/Fiocruz) in Rio de Janeiro, Aline Benjamin has found her calling in clinical research coordination. With advanced degrees including a Ph.D., her journey began in basic science and immunology before transitioning to clinical research—a move driven by her desire to see the direct impact of science on patients' lives.

As a member of the RePORT Brazil network, Aline has played a crucial role in bringing the consortium to life. Her work spans from study implementation to regulatory compliance, all while maintaining high standards in clinical studies. Beyond her research duties, she is passionate about building local research capacity through training and mentoring professionals in clinical trial management and Good Clinical Practice (GCP).

"What really matters is human collaboration and making sure these innovations reach the people who need them the most," Aline reflects on the future of TB research. As technology advances, she sees the field becoming increasingly interconnected, with

real-time data sharing and digital health tools playing vital roles in improving patient care and research outcomes. Over the years, she has witnessed the project grow and bear fruit, much like her own two children, born in 2014 and 2017. Seeing both the project and her family evolve in parallel has been a rewarding aspect of her journey.



Gustiani Salim: Advancing Laboratory Excellence in Indonesia

Since joining INA-RESPOND in 2016, Gustiani Salim has been at the forefront of laboratory research in Indonesia's fight against TB. With a master's degree in Immunology and extensive expertise in molecular examinations, she has been instrumental in the TRIPOD study—Indonesia's contribution to the RePORT TB Cohort A project.

Gustiani's role extends beyond traditional laboratory work. She trains staff across multiple sites in specimen collection and processing techniques, ensuring strict adherence to standard operating procedures. Her work in Sanger sequencing, targeting ten genes of TB bacteria associated with drug resistance, has been crucial in understanding mutation patterns.

Looking ahead, Gustiani is eager to explore new frontiers in TB research. "My goal is to become a highly skilled researcher capable of advancing TB research in Indonesia," she shares. Despite acknowledging the challenges faced by Indonesia in terms of laboratory facilities and trained personnel, she remains committed to contributing to innovative research initiatives and fostering international collaborations through the RePORT consortium. She concludes by saying, "At the end of the day, science only makes a difference if it's accessible to everyone."



Prakash Babu Narasimhan: Advancing Immunological Insights in India

At JIPMER, Dr. Prakash Babu Narasimhan brings extensive expertise in immunology and biochemistry to the fight against TB. With a Ph.D. in Biochemistry and prestigious postdoctoral training at the National Cancer Institute, NIAID, and the La Jolla Institute for Immunology, his research has significantly contributed to understanding host-immune responses in TB and autoimmune diseases.

As a basic immunologist and co-investigator in the (Department of Biotechnology) DBT, India -(National Institutes of Health) NIH, USA, sponsored RePORT India, Prakash focuses on crucial aspects of TB research, including factors influencing the progression from latent to active TB and TB-associated cachexia. His work integrates cutting-edge technologies such as high-throughput sequencing and single-cell analysis, enabling more precise insights into host-pathogen interactions.

"The future of TB research lies in understanding the immune system's dynamic role in TB progression," Prakash reflects. His vision encompasses interdisciplinary

collaboration, combining immunology with genomics, nutrition science, and systems biology to uncover new intervention pathways. As Co-Chair of the Basic Science Working Group in RePORT India, he continues to drive innovation in Indo-US TB research projects while fostering global research partnerships.

All these professionals embody the dedication and expertise needed to advance TB research. Their work, though often behind the scenes, is essential in building stronger research capabilities and improving patient outcomes across the globe. As technology and methodologies continue to evolve, these professionals remain committed to their ultimate goal: making scientific advances accessible to those who need them most.

Daphne Martin
Program Manager

WORLD TB DAY QUESTIONNAIRE

Deadline to submit: March 14, 2025

The theme of **World TB Day** on **March 24** this year is “Yes! We Can End TB: Commit, Invest, Deliver.”

We would like to hear from you on where RePORT International falls with regards to this theme. Please share your thoughts, and we may publish a quote from you for the March newsletter!

QUESTIONNAIRE

TB-RICC LEADERSHIP MEETING



Reflections on Successes and Plans for the Future

The RICC Leadership Group met virtually and in person for a productive operations meeting in Newark on February 13-14, 2025. The group looked at the past year's accomplishments, such as the launch of [RADAR](#) and the [Virtual Learning Room](#), numerous capacity-building opportunities for many levels of investigators/staff, and a [cross-consortium grant competition](#). Additionally, several important studies have been started (sub-clinical TB and long-term sequelae of TB); others are in line for published results this year. With wide representation from various people in RePORT International, new and revised guidelines for specimen valuation, country membership, and publications were also devised and discussed.

Finally, in looking ahead, RICC leadership is ready to bring research results to the next

level via other scientific network collaboration and the development of an external advisory committee to complement existing expertise. There also has been interest in how RePORT's research affects TB care practices, policies, and guidelines. As a result, efforts will be made to conduct more implementation science and start a community action board, both of which are already being pursued at the country level. RePORT International will have a prolific year ahead!

ANNOUNCEMENT

Union Meeting Conference Submissions

The Union is now accepting submissions for Abstracts, Symposia, Satellite Sessions, and Post-Graduate Courses and Workshops for the [World Conference on Lung Health 2025](#). The deadline is 9 April (except for Satellite Sessions where submissions end on 30 May).

[LEARN MORE](#)

WTBD Events & 16th Annual George W. Comstock Lecture

Monday, March 24, 2025 11:00 - 2:30 p.m. ET

Johns Hopkins University is hosting the 16th Annual George W. Comstock Lecture & World TB Day Presentation. RePORT International members **Beatriz Barreto-Duarte**, **Mandar Paradkar**, and **Felipe Ridolfi** will present.

Established in 2008 to honor Dr. George W. Comstock's lifetime of work in public health and tuberculosis control, this annual lecture given by distinguished leaders addresses important public health issues in global tuberculosis control.

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