

Breaking the Barriers

The Breaking the Barriers (BTB) project, supported by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), has developed innovative and effective behaviour change models to combat tuberculosis among vulnerable populations across four states. Expanding its efforts, the project now aims to explore four new components in Karnataka and Assam. These include addressing the social determinants of TB, providing technical assistance to Government of Karnataka, packaging and disseminating behaviour change models, and demonstrating the development of TB-free wards. These components aim to expand the project's scope to encompass community and systems-strengthening initiatives at the grassroots, with a strong focus on knowledge codification and sharing.

Community Engagement

Strengthening community health planning: BTB team facilitates inclusion of 160 members in 24 Jan Arogya Samitis, assam



Members meeting to get inducted into Jan Arogya Samitis, Assam

The BTB Team successfully facilitated the inclusion of **160** community members across **24** Jan Arogya Samitis (JAS) in the Arogya Abhiyan Mission (AAM) during the quarter. This initiative has strengthened community ownership and participation in health planning by incorporating diverse perspectives, including Community Health Officers (CHOs), AAM teams, Village Community Development Committee (VCDC) functionaries, women, youth, and TB Champions.

The average composition of JAS increased from 8-10 members to around 16 members, enhancing the platform's inclusiveness and functionality. Several JAS are now inducting VCDC Chairpersons and members, ensuring a broader representation. The initiative has been met with widespread acceptance and appreciation, contributing to fully functional and active JAS. This change promotes seamless execution of

awareness activities, screenings, and referrals, and has led to greater public trust in health institutions. As a result, VCDCs are now integrating health and wellness components into their action plans.

Seven Urban Health and Social Networks Committees (UHSNC) formed in Mysuru, Karnataka

In the months of July and August, KHPT convened local stakeholders to establish Urban Health and Social Networks Committees (UHSNC) as part of the National Health System Resource Centre - Innovation and Learning Centre and BTB project.

The seven UHSNCs comprise a diverse mix of representatives including Mahila Arogya Samiti (MAS) members, Self-Help Group (SHG) leaders, corporation supervisors, Anganwadi teachers, NGO representatives, local community leaders, ASHA workers, and health officials. At the formation meetings, KHPT provided orientations highlighting the significance of the UHSNCs and their intended role in fostering leadership and collaboration for improved community health.



KHPT's Mysuru team with local stakeholders to form UHSNCs

BTB Assam introduces peer-led Health and Wellness Programmes in schools



BTB team with L.N Bezbarua higher secondary school students

KHPT has launched Adolescent Group Meetings in **11** schools to promote health-seeking behaviour and life skills among students. In these bi-weekly sessions, **20-30** students from Class VI and above are also trained to conduct symptomatic assessments for tuberculosis (TB), hypertension, and diabetes, while also addressing topics like substance abuse, child marriage, nutrition, and menstrual hygiene. The sessions are led by a teacher coordinator and encourage students to share their knowledge within their communities.

Since its inception in July, **220** students have been trained as Peer Leaders, and the response has been positive, prompting the Rashtriya Bal Swasthya Karyakram (RBSK) to join the initiative. The programme currently operates in **11** of the **25** targeted schools.

Government Engagement

KHPT contributes to an Institutional and Community Framework on health & nutrition in Udalguri, Assam

On September 5, KHPT was invited by the District Social Welfare Officer of Udalguri to support the development of an Institutional & Community Framework on Health & Nutrition for Assam.

During the meeting, valuable insights and experiential knowledge from the BTB initiative were shared to enhance the draft framework. The meeting was attended by the Honorable MCLA of the constituency, the Commissioner, the Assistant Deputy Commissioner, State Nutrition Consultant from UNICEF, BTR Fellow on Health, field team from CINI, CDPOs, and frontline workers.



KHPT team sharing insights from the BTB initiative in Udalgiri

KHPT showcases the impact of Grama Arogya during National Librarian Day hosted by RDPR, Karnataka

On August 12, the Grama Arogya team participated and showcased its impact during the National Librarian Day Celebrations hosted by the Rural Development and Panchayat Raj (RDPR) department in Palace Grounds, Bengaluru.



Librarians and state officials getting tested in KHPT's Grama Arogya Health camp

KHPT coordinated with Bangalore Urban Zilla Panchayat officers and the Bangalore Urban Primary healthcare Centre - NCD Clinic, Yelahanka to organise a health camp at the venue. Notable dignitaries such as Hon'ble Chief Minister Siddaramiah, Deputy Chief Minister D K Shivakumar were present at the event; Dr Arundathi Chandrashekar, Commissioner of Panchayati Raj, GoK engaged with our team and discussed the initiative's impact.

During the event, health indicators such as blood sugar, blood pressure, and haemoglobin levels were assessed; over **245** individuals were screened, including librarians, police personnel, and state officials. Additionally, **93** librarian delegates from various districts sought general medications for conditions such as headaches, fever, gastric issues, dehydration, calcium supplementation, and colds.

KHPT engages in a Review Meeting at Bodoland Territorial Region (BTR) Secretariat

On September 25, KHPT engaged in a review meeting with Joint Secretary Shri Rintu Boro and various stakeholders, including BTR Fellows and representatives from the Hans Foundation, at the BTR Secretariat in Baksa, Assam. During this meeting, KHPT's contributions to community engagement and health service demand generation were acknowledged, highlighting the alignment of its initiatives with the Village Council Development Committee (VCDC) objectives.

Further, the Joint Secretary invited KHPT to support the formation of a Steering Committee focused on health and well-being, along with conducting a community-level demand analysis for TB. Additionally, discussions took place regarding future collaborations with various government departments and community stakeholders to enhance community health and wellbeing outcomes in the BTR region.

KHPT showcases the Grama Arogya Initiative: 16th Finance Commission delegates visit Jalige Grama Panchayat

On August 30, KHPT hosted the Chairman and **13** members of the 16th Finance Commission at Jalige Grama Panchayat in Bengaluru Rural, where a Grama Arogya health camp was held. During their visit, delegates actively engaged with health stalls, where the Assistant Commissioner of Health Services (ACS) provided an insightful overview of the Grama Arogya programme and the decentralised health screening system.



Commission member, Mr Manoj Pandiyan getting his blood pressure checked by the health camp team

Commission members, including Mr Manoj Pandiyan and Mrs. Sudha, participated in health screenings and expressed their satisfaction with the program's accessibility and emphasis on preventive health. The event also featured attendance from key government officials, such as the Finance Secretary and Additional Secretary of the Government of Karnataka, along with local health representatives, underscoring the critical role of preventive health screenings within the community.

KHPT offers technical support by initiating the development of a health members training module, Karnataka

Following the recommendation of ACS Smt. Uma Mahadevan, a Health Members Training Module was initiated by KHPT for piloting in Bellari district. A group of **100** elected members have been identified to serve as nodal representatives at the Gram Panchayat (GP) level, focusing on GP-level health governance. Their responsibilities include budget allocation for health, conducting regular GP Task Force meetings, microplanning, and overseeing the implementation and review of health activities.

A two-day workshop was conducted on June 26 and 27 to develop the training module through a participative approach. The module was finalised in July and August and is currently under review by the Rural Development and Panchayati Raj (RDPR) Department, with discussions underway to refine it further before conducting training sessions for the selected members in Bellari.

Capacity Building

Strengthening Community Bonds: NHM and NTEP activities integrated into Perspective-Building Workshops, Assam

National Health Mission (NHM) and National Tuberculosis Elimination Programme (NTEP) activities were integrated into KHPT's one-day Perspective-Building Workshops (PBWs) in Assam. The inclusion of these health promotion and TB elimination activities within the PBWs brought together Village Community Development Committees (VCDCs), Community Health Officers (CHOs), Frontline Workers (FLWs), NTEP representatives, and community members, all committed to drive meaningful change. Nine PBWs were conducted, training a total of **259** individuals: **49** from VCDCs, **87** from community segments, **10** CHOs, **74** FLWs, and **39** others.



Members from Assam's VCDCs, CHWs, FLWs, NTEP staff and others at KHPT's perspective building workshop

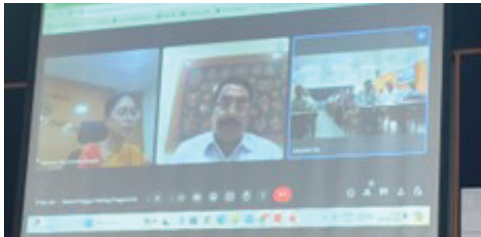
KHPT drives Capacity Building through Grama Panchayat Task Force (GPTF) training in Karnataka

KHPT organised state-level Training of Trainers (TOT) sessions for the Gram Panchayat Task Force (GPTF) at the State Institute of Rural Development (SIRD), Karnataka. The training took place in two batches on August 5-6 and August 8-9, engaging a total of **92** participants.

Following this, district-level TOT sessions were conducted in two phases throughout August and September, reaching **1,582** participants from various sectors, including Rural Development and Panchayat Raj (RDPR), Women and Child Development (WCD), Health and Family Welfare (H&FW), and district training coordinators from SIRD. This extensive capacity-building initiative aims to cascade training to cover 5,951 Gram Panchayats across Karnataka.



Bangalore Chief Executive Officer inaugurating district GPTF training



State-level inauguration of GPTF training at SIRD

KHPT strengthens TB Volunteer Capacity through training initiatives in Mysuru, Karnataka

In Mysuru, KHPT made strides in capacity building for TB Volunteers as part of the NHSRC-ILC and BTB projects. On July 30 and August 29, training sessions were held to equip TB volunteers with the skills necessary to support the comprehensive care of PwTB.

Through this initiative, KHPT identified **67** Volunteers, with **43** receiving focused training on critical topics such as TB awareness, infection control measures, and patient counselling. The programme also ensured that these volunteers benefit from ongoing supervision and support from healthcare professionals, enhancing their effectiveness in delivering care. The team plans to conduct refresher training sessions to reinforce the knowledge gained during the initial training.



Training session for TB volunteers to strengthen community response to TB in Mysuru

Hon. Speaker Shri Katiram Boro of BTR Govt. attends KHPT's Perspective Building Workshop

The Perspective Building Workshop (PBW) held on September 30th at the Adla VCDC office premises under Baganpara TU was notably attended by the Honorable Speaker of BTC LA, Shri Katiram Boro. His

participation was driven by the commendable work of KHPT, as highlighted by VCDC and TCLCC leaders. The primary objective of the PBW was to emphasize the importance of community engagement in TB control among the participants.

The workshop, attended by the TCLCC Vice President, **12** members from **4** VCDCs, and FLWs, totaling **43** participants, aimed to foster closer coordination and promote health-seeking behavior within communities. Shri Boro expressed his satisfaction with the program's activities and design, urging support for the TB Mukta Panchayats initiative and encouraging the adoption of PwTB as Nikshay Mitra. Participants committed to working closely on the agreed activities, with VCDC Chairpersons prioritizing the initiative. The TCLCC official assured continued support. Shri Boro also highlighted the alignment of BTB's activities with the BTR Government's 'Vibrant BTR' initiative and pledged his support. The concluding session, which included a health talk by the CHO and discussions on TB elimination tasks by NTEP, provided a platform to address challenges and pending issues of FLWs, which were effectively attended to by the NTEP official.



Honourable Speaker interacting with BTB and NTEP team during the PBW held Adia

Donor Engagement

Ms. Claret John, USAID's Agreement Officer's Representative visits KHPT: Team engagement and field visits

On August 23, Ms Claret John, USAID's Agreement Officer Representative (AoR), visited KHPT to engage with the Breaking the Barriers team. During her visit, KHPT organised discussions with TB volunteers and local health officials to understand the roles of Urban Health, Sanitation and Nutrition Committees (UHSNC) and the Mahila Arogya Samiti (MAS) in the fight against TB.

Ms John also participated in a MAS meeting, where she engaged with members to gain insights into the group's agenda, objectives, and challenges. Additionally, she met with TB volunteers to understand their motivations, responsibilities, and the activities they undertake to support TB initiatives. At the UHSNC meeting, she further explored the committee's goals and discussed future plans with its members.

To conclude her visit, Ms John met with Dr Shivashankar, the Medical Officer of Vishweshwaranagara. They



Ms Claret John, and KHPT team with TB volunteers in Mysuru to discuss TB community response in urban cities

discussed the Urban Primary Health Centre (UPHC), identified vulnerable populations, and examined public service utilisation, with Dr Shivashankar highlighting the difficulties in reaching non-vulnerable groups.

IMPACT India

The Integrated Measures for Prevention and Care in TB (IMPACT) India project, supported by The Global Fund, is a three-year project (April 2024 - March 2027) that aims to develop and scale a decentralised operational model to rapidly enhance TB case detection, notification, and treatment outcomes in India. To bolster the efforts of the Central TB Division (CTD), the project aims to implement TB Champion Engagement initiatives across **14** states and one Union Territory (UT), support TB Mukht Grama Panchayat activities across 13 states, and offer technical assistance to the CTD for Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT) and Pradhan Mantri TB Mukht Bharat Abhiyan (PMTBMBA) activities nationwide. Additionally, the project focuses on building the capacity of NTEP frontline staff to improve their ability to provide counselling support to persons with Drug-Resistant TB.

KHPT launches the IMPACT India Project, supported by The Global Fund in New Delhi

KHPT launched the IMPACT India with a successful grant orientation training in New Delhi, uniting key stakeholders from various organisations to strategise for significant advancements in India's goal to end TB. The event welcomed distinguished guests, including Dr. Raghuram Rao, Assistant Director General of the Central TB Division (CTD), Dr. Alok Mathur, Additional DDG - TB CTD, Shri Sanjay Kaul, Trustee of KHPT and Former IAS Officer, and Mr. Reuben Swamickan, Deputy Director at USAID.

The training highlighted a collaborative spirit among representatives from sub-recipient organisations such as World Health Partners, TB Alert India, Piramal Swasthya, and TISS. Key speakers emphasised the critical role of community engagement, patient-centred healthcare, and the necessity of collaboration among partners in achieving progress toward TB elimination.

With a robust foundation established during this event, the IMPACT India Project is set to support India's effort to end TB through enhanced community

and Panchayati Raj Institution (PRI) engagement, backing the Pradhan Mantri TB Mukht Bharat Abhiyaan (PMTBMBA) and Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT) initiatives, and training frontline TB staff.



KHPT team at the IMPACT India project launch, New Delhi

Technical Assistance to States

Celebrating two years of PMTBMBA: KHPT's assistance to NTEP to strengthen community support for PwTB

As part of the second anniversary celebrations of the Pradhan Mantri TB Mukht Bharat Abhiyaan (PMTBMBA), the National Tuberculosis Elimination Programme (NTEP) organised a series of impactful activities during the second week of September across Karnataka, Maharashtra, Jammu district, Gujarat, Delhi, and Rajasthan. These initiatives aimed to enhance TB elimination efforts and engage communities through the mobilisation of Nikshay Mitras, with KHPT offering technical support to the government's efforts.

In Karnataka, the NTEP recognised outstanding Nikshay Mitras and high-performing districts with e-certificates, launched a digital IEC campaign, and activated the state's social media platforms. The initiative also included sharing motivational videos and best practices to encourage district-level engagement. Additionally, the NTEP facilitated the distribution of **289** food baskets and registered **16** new Nikshay Mitras from September 9 to 11.

In Maharashtra, the team supported the CEO of Zilla Parishad Akola to become a Nikshay Mitra

and partnered with Athani Sugar Factory in Kolhapur to adopt **30** persons with TB (PwTB) and provide them with food baskets. Collaborating with the Child Help Foundation, the NTEP also assisted **50** PwTB under the Mira Bhayandar Municipal Corporation.



IECs for second year anniversary celebrations of PMTBMBA

In Gujarat, the NTEP teamed up with a faith-based organisation to distribute nutrition kits to 1,000 PwTB in Surat. In Delhi, it collaborated with the Municipal Corporation of Delhi to provide nutritional support to **65** PwTB and partnered with Pragati Power Corporation Ltd, which pledged to support **22,000** PwTB with nutrition baskets. In Jammu district and Rajasthan, the NTEP launched social media awareness campaigns and distributed food baskets to PwTB.

KHPT is honoured to have offered technical support to the NTEP for these efforts.

Strengthening Commitment for TB Care: NTEP Mobilises Nikshay Mitras to Support Approximately 8,000 PwTB Across India

NTEP successfully mobilised **500** potential Nikshay Mitras across India through **42** targeted advocacy meetings with key stakeholders,

including corporates, PSUs, educational institutions, and civil society organisations. As a result of these efforts, approximately **8,000** PwTB are set to receive nutritional or vocational support from these Nikshay Mitras.

Key achievements include the Shyama Prasad Port Trust in West Bengal pledging nutritional support for **300** PwTB, while Power Grid

Corporation in Jammu committed to supporting **3,500** PwTB, implementing a workplace TB policy, and conducting TB sensitisation activities. Similarly, IREL and Aditya Birla in Odisha are set to provide nutritional support to **1,000** PwTB, and Mahanadi Coal Field Ltd. will support **865** PwTB.

In addition, FICCI FLO in Jammu pledged to adopt **100** PwTB, and the faith-based organisation



PwTB receiving a nutrition kit by ONGC, Mehsana, Gujarat

Swaminarayan Gurukul Sansthan in Rajkot, Gujarat, will provide nutritional kits to **1,000**



PwTB receiving nutrition kit from State Tuberculosis Cell, Bengaluru

PwTB. Notable individual contributions include YouTuber and Instagram influencer Sandeepbhai Bhandari, who has committed to supporting **100** PwTB in Gujarat, and Guru Har Rai Sahib Healthcare Pvt. Ltd. in Chandigarh, which has adopted **10** PwTB. The SBI Foundation in Andhra Pradesh has taken up the adoption of **1,200** PwTB, while ONGC Mehsana in Gujarat will support **165** PwTB.

KHPT provided technical support throughout this initiative, enhancing the impact of these collaborative efforts.

Strengthening Collaboration: KHPT facilitated District Review Meetings for PMTBMBA Programme Across Eight States

KHPT successfully facilitated District Review Meetings across Karnataka, Delhi, Uttarakhand, Punjab, Kerala, Odisha, Maharashtra, and Chandigarh, with the participation of around **1,000** officials in person and virtually. Attendees included State TB Officers, State Nodal Officers for PMTBMBA, Governor's Office Nodal Officers, Senior Health Supervisors, District TB Officers, and District Nodal NTEP personnel.

The primary objectives of these meetings were to enhance engagement with Nikshay Mitras to ensure effective enrolment and support for



PMTBMBA state teams facilitating District Review Meetings across India

PwTB in all districts and to strengthen partnerships with corporations to secure their commitment to TB elimination efforts through resource allocation and volunteer initiatives. The review sessions also focused on improving oversight by strengthening inspection support systems that involve local health service providers for comprehensive TB care and promoting multi-sectoral collaboration to achieve the programme's goals.

To ensure effective communication and data monitoring, a state-level WhatsApp group was established, alongside dedicated spreadsheets to streamline data collection and track Nikshay Mitra activities.

KHPT strengthens NTEP districts' staff through capacity-building sessions on Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT) and Public Financial Management System (PFMS)

KHPT facilitated a series of capacity-building training sessions on Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT) and the Public Financial Management System (PFMS) for National Tuberculosis Elimination Programme (NTEP) staff across six states: Chandigarh, Andhra Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Meghalaya, Jharkhand, and Jammu & Kashmir.

The training sessions aimed to enhance the implementation of DBT schemes by equipping NTEP district staff with the necessary skills and knowledge to ensure timely and effective disbursement of incentives to PwTB. Topics covered included the flow of Programme Implementation Plan (PIP) proposals, processes under various DBT schemes, Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs), and fund flow mechanisms from the Ministry of Health & Family Welfare to state-level NTEP units. These sessions have improved the performance of DBT schemes across participating states, with many previously pending cases resolved in a timely manner.

KHPT facilitates district review meetings for PMTBMBA programme across eight states

The PMTBMBA state teams of KHPT successfully facilitated District Review Meetings across Karnataka, Delhi, Uttarakhand, Punjab, Kerala, Odisha, Maharashtra, and Chandigarh, engaging around **1,000** officials both in person and virtually. Participants included State TB Officers, State Nodal Officers for PMTBMBA, Governor's Office Nodal Officers, Senior Health Supervisors, District TB Officers, and District Nodal NTEP personnel.

The primary objectives of these meetings were to enhance engagement with Nikshay Mitras, ensuring effective enrolment and support for persons with TB (PwTB) in all districts. Additionally, the sessions

aimed to strengthen partnerships with corporations to secure their commitment to TB elimination efforts through resource allocation and volunteer initiatives. The review sessions also focused on improving oversight by enhancing inspection support systems that involve local health service providers for comprehensive TB care and promoting multi-sectoral collaboration to achieve the programme's goals.

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Training cum review of DBT performance, Ranchi



Training regarding DBT and query escalation, Chandigarh

Capacity Building

KHPT conducts capacity building training for TB Champions in Bihar and Karnataka

KHPT conducted capacity-building training for TB survivors, designating them as TB Champions



TB Champions capacity building training inauguration in Bengaluru Rural, Karnataka

in Sitamarhi and Darbhanga, Bihar, as well as in Bengaluru Rural, Karnataka, on 19 and 20 September. The objective of this training was twofold: to equip survivors with essential skills and knowledge about TB management, and the National Tuberculosis Elimination Programme (NTEP), while also reducing TB-



TB Champion capacity building training in Patna, Bihar

related stigma and promoting awareness in support of India's goal to ending TB.

KHPT organised the training sessions with resource personnel from the WHO Network and NTEP District units, ensuring that the content was both relevant and impactful. The session included role-plays and practical examples, and effectively engaged 85 participants, allowing them to grasp their vital role in ending TB. As a way forward, these trained TB Champions will be positioned at their respective Ayushman Arogya Mandirs. With support from the District Implementation Lead, they will develop micro plans to implement behavioural change activities at the community level, actively involving local self-governance and various village committees and groups.

Strengthening TB Care: Over 700 NTEP staff trained nationwide to boost patient support and counselling (SAKSHAM - TISS - SR to KHPT)

Saksham Pravaah, the TB vertical of Saksham, a project of the Tata Institute of Social Sciences to support the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare in its fight against HIV and TB, is enhancing the psycho-social support for TB patients through specialised counselling initiatives. With proven positive treatment outcomes, the NTEP has entrusted it with building counselling skills of frontline TB staff nationwide.

During the quarter, Saksham Pravaah made significant strides in its initiative to enhance counselling skills for TB care. A total of **712** NTEP staff members were trained across Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Gujarat, Jharkhand, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Karnataka, Kerala, Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Chhattisgarh, Goa, Himachal Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan, Uttarakhand, West Bengal, Chandigarh, and Andaman and Nicobar, laying a strong foundation for improved patient support and counselling nationwide.



NTEP staff attending training conducted by Saksham on counselling skills for Persons with TB

Case Story

From Reluctance to Advocacy: Pushpa's Journey to TB Awareness

In Mysuru, Pushpa (name changed to protect identity), a 35-year-old resident, had been coughing persistently for over a month. During a TB awareness session by the Mahila Arogya Samiti (MAS), she recognised her symptoms but was hesitant to pursue testing.

To address her concerns, MAS members brought in a community facilitator and a staff nurse to engage Pushpa in a thorough discussion about TB, highlighting the importance of early detection.

After compassionate counselling, Pushpa reconsidered and agreed to provide a sputum sample for testing. When the test results arrived, Pushpa was relieved to learn that she was negative for TB. More importantly, she felt empowered by the experience. Grateful for the support she received, she decided to take an active role in her community's health. She pledged to collaborate with MAS members to raise awareness about TB, ensuring that others could benefit from the knowledge and support she had received.



Pushpa in a conversation with MAS members, Mysuru

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