

# Community Power in TB Response

*Lessons from the Kansas Outbreak*

March 11, 2026

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## Accreditation Statement

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UAN Number: [UAN JA0000238-0000-26-076-L99-P](#)

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**For disclosure information regarding Mayo Clinic School of Continuous Professional Development accreditation review committee member(s) and staff, please go here to the course accreditation page.**

### Available Credit

- 1.50 ACPE
- 1.50 *AMA PRA Category 1 Credit™*
- 1.50 ANCC
- 1.50 Attendance
- 1.50 IPCE

# Disclosures

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NO RELEVANT FINANCIAL DISCLOSURES TO REPORT AND  
NO MENTION OF OFF-LABEL USE OF ANY MEDICATIONS  
OR PRODUCTS

# Learning Objectives

- Explain how community leadership and engagement influence trust-building, participation, and response effectiveness during TB outbreaks.
- Identify strategies for integrating state, local, and federal resources with community-led initiatives.
- Apply lessons learned from the Kansas TB outbreak to strengthen community-government partnerships.

# Dawn Tuckey

- Independent Public Health Consultant
- 40 years of experience at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention



# Lisa Edgerton- Johnston



- TB Controller
- Kansas Department of Health and Environment



# Tuberculosis and the 2024 KC Metro Outbreak

Lisa Edgerton-Johnston

Kansas Department of Health & Environment

TB Controller

# **2024-2025**

## **KC Metro Tuberculosis Outbreak Background**

- Started January 2024 and as of January 2026 is considered over.
- Over 600 contacts identified and in various stages of testing, diagnosing, and treating
- All cases have found to be drug susceptible
- Multiple locations impacted: four employers, two schools, and three churches
- Requested CDC assistance

# 2024-2025

## KC Metro Tuberculosis Outbreak Overview

- Active TB cases associated with the outbreak occurring in Kansas City Metro first reported in 2024.

Total of 68 **Active TB** cases reported in 2024-2025.

- Wyandotte County: 61
- Johnson County: 7

Total of 110 **Latent TB (LTBI)** cases reported in 2024-2025.

- Wyandotte County: 106
- Johnson County: 4

# 2024-2025

## KC Metro Tuberculosis Outbreak Testing Events

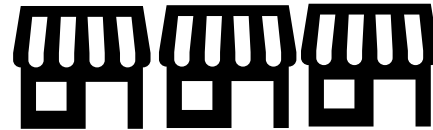
In response to the outbreak, the KDHE TB Program conducted multiple testing events.



2 high schools

had a total of 4 testing events.

- One in October 2024
- One in November 2024
- Two in January 2025



3 businesses

had a total of 6 testing events.

- Two in August 2024
- One in October 2024
- Two in November 2024
- One in March 2025



1 church

had a total of 3 testing events.

- One in July 2024
- One in August 2024
- One in September 2024

# TB & The 2024 KC Metro Outbreak Community



[Image Source](#)

- Language
  - Shortfalls of Language Line
  - Increase to 37 languages
- Cultural
  - Healthcare Literacy



# Outreach To Community For Support

- CHW that could relate to community : Neenei, Dayson, IS
- Engaged with Pastors
- Collaborated with HR and Occupational Health at Businesses
- Leveraged support from Nurse and School Principals

# Partnership with the CDC

- Timely Education
  - Staff trainings
  - Educational materials in multiple languages
- Additional Manpower
  - Prevention Health Associate Program (PHAPs) to assist with the contact investigation
- Financial Support



[Image Source](#)



# Dayson Marar

- Public Health Educator, Community and Clinical Linkages
- Bureau of Health Promotion, Kansas Department of Health and Environment





# Community Work: Tuberculosis Outbreak in Kansas 2024-2025



Dayson Marar

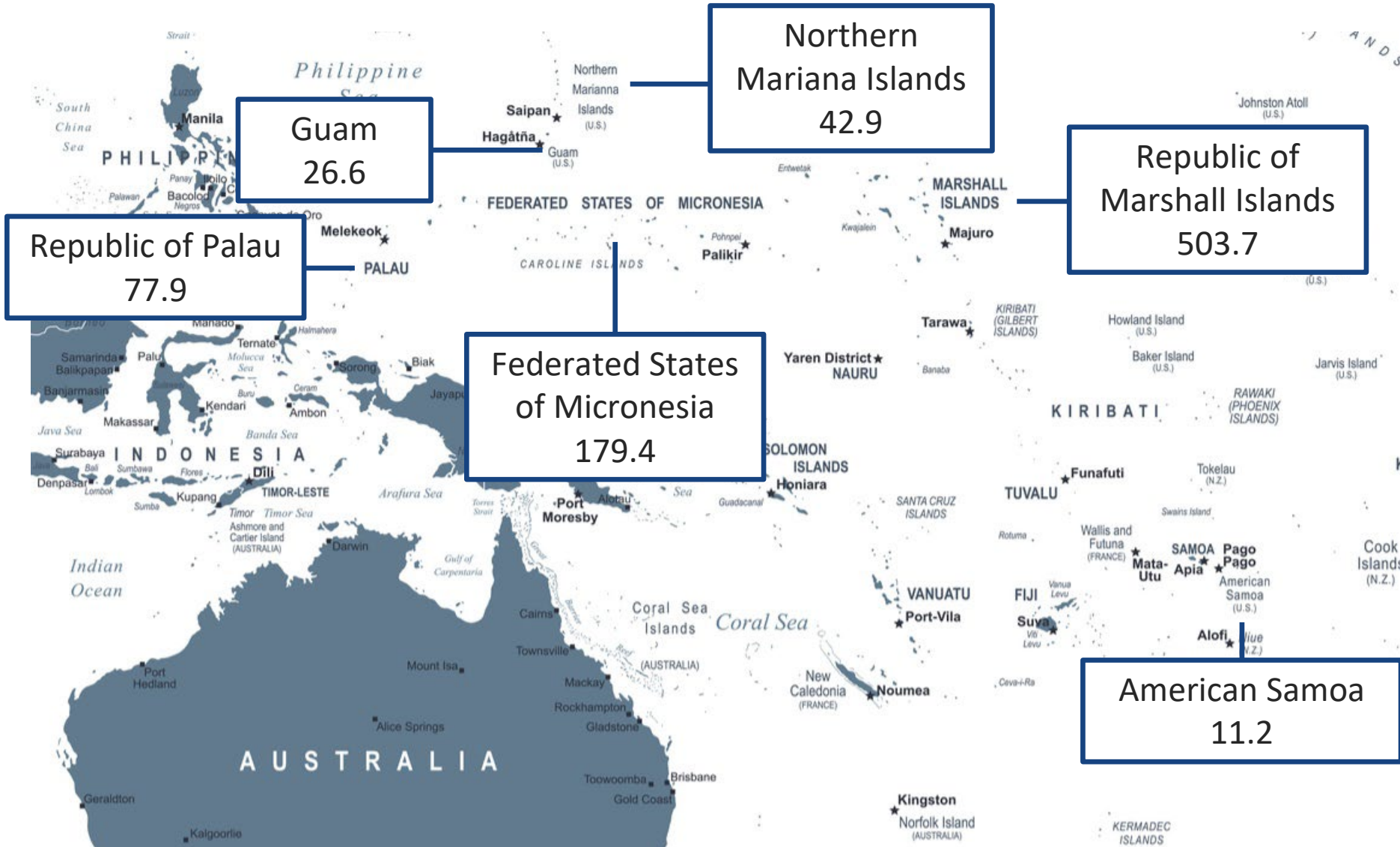
Kansas Department of Health & Environment

Public Health Educator, Community and Clinical Linkages

# Agenda

- Importance of community partnered
- Community Background
- Challenges
- Solutions

# TB Incidence Rates\* by U.S.-Affiliated Pacific Islands, 2023



\*Cases per 100,000 persons

# Community Background

## MICRONESIAN COMMUNITY VALUES

- **Family**
  - Extended families
  - Multi-generational households
- **Faith**
  - Christian beliefs
  - Large support system within community
  - Black Magic is still a practice
- **Culture**
  - Chiefs, or community leaders, have the most influence and decision-making over the community



# Challenges: Healthcare Access

- **Transportation**
  - No transportation
- **Low health literacy or TB education**
  - Underestimates the severity of their possible or current condition
  - Lack of trust in healthcare providers or system
- **External conflicts**
  - Unable to acquire daycare
  - Inability to take time off work
- **Financial**
  - No health insurance or inadequate coverage



# Main Challenges

- **Tuberculosis Stigma**
  - Tuberculosis (TB) stigma refers to the fear and negative social judgment surrounding the disease. TB stigma is often fueled by misconceptions, causing a significant barrier to effective TB diagnosis and care.
- **Tuberculosis (TB) Stigma Can Cause:**
  - Discrimination
  - Social Isolation
  - Shame
  - Delay or avoidance of treatment



# Cultural and Language Solutions

- Hire CHWs who speak the language and understand the culture
- Involve the national government, identify the community leaders and get them involved
- CDC, State public health, local public health and local churches



# Solutions to Combat TB Stigma

- Educational Awareness
- Testimonies of TB Survivors
- Utilize Community Leaders



# Healthcare Access Solutions

- Assistance with setting up Vibrant Health appointments
- Work with local agencies and governments to build relationships and establish networks of healthcare services and providers to connect patients and improve their overall health

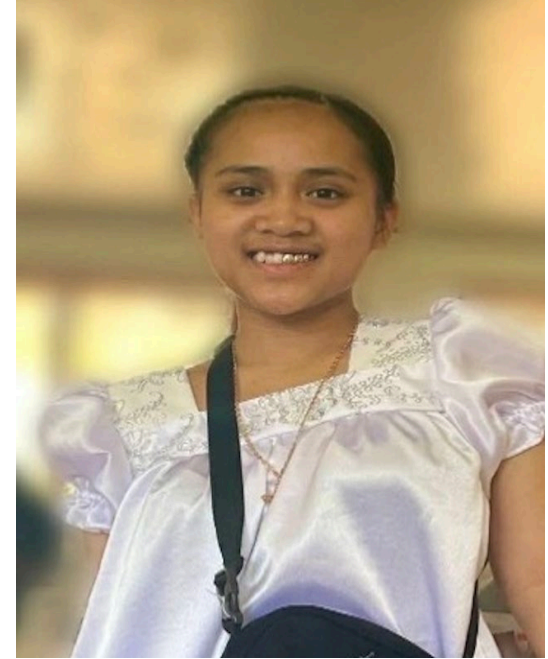




# Jyou's Story

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SURVIVOR STORY





# MY JOURNEY THROUGH TB



# AGENDA

Introduction

My story

Symptoms

Challenges

Q&A



My name is Jyou, and I am from Chuuk, Micronesia.

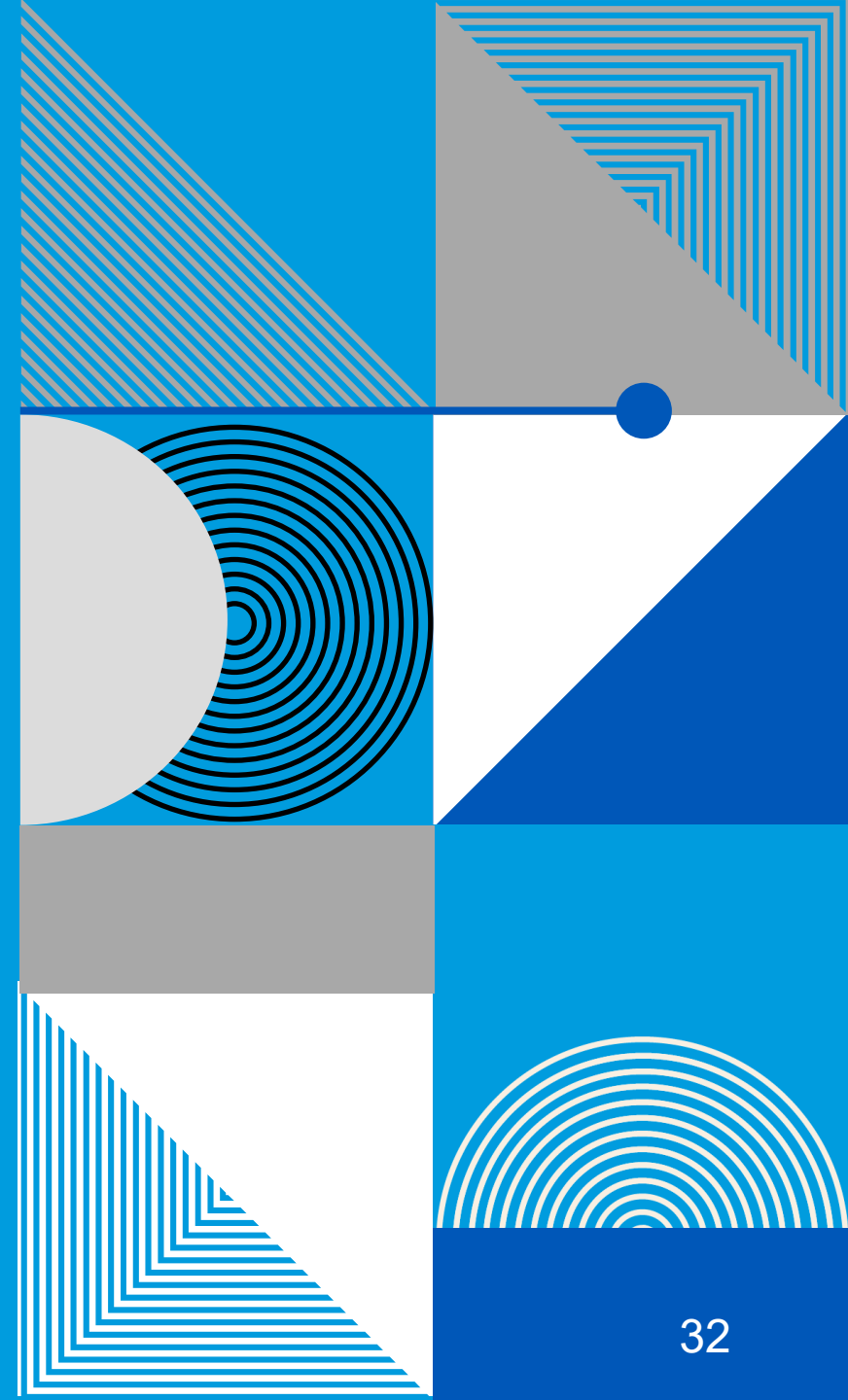
I am currently a senior student at Washington High School in Kansas.



# MY STORY BEFORE TB

# SYMPTOMS

- Cough
- Night sweats
- Loss of appetite
- Fatigue
- Unexplained weight loss





# CHALLENGES

**TB Stigma:** Causes discrimination, social isolation and shame.

**Black Magic:** It's rooted in our culture and I always believed TB was caused by black magic.



THANK YOU

# Chima Mbakwem, MSHS, PGCFE

- Program Manager
- Tuberculosis/Hansen Disease Control
- Bureau of Communicable Disease Control
- Guam Department of Public Health and Social Services



# Jennifer Curran, Ed.D.

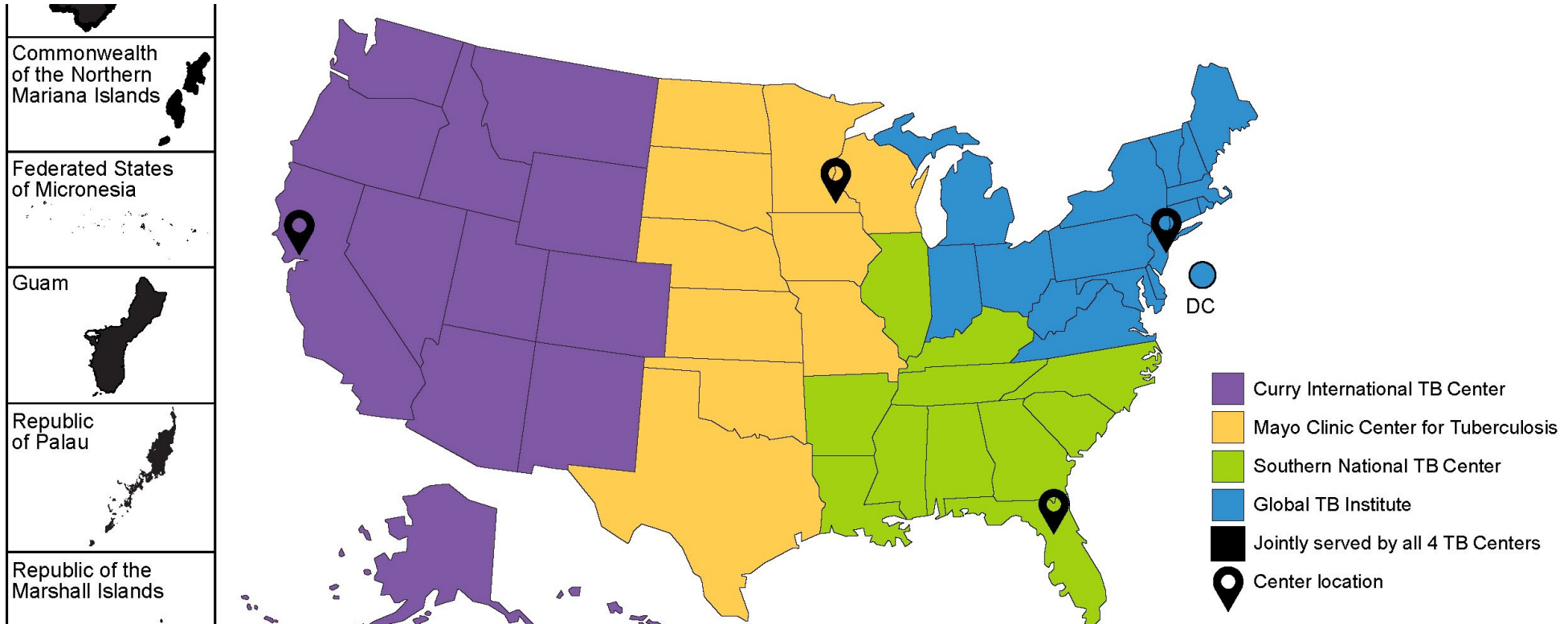
- Executive Director
- Mayo Clinic Center for Tuberculosis





# Collaborative Support: How State, National, and Federal Partners Enabled/Enable Community Leadership

# Tuberculosis Centers of Excellence for Training, Education, & Medical Consultation



# Activities

- Increasing knowledge, skills, and abilities for TB prevention and control through communication, education, and training activities
  - Nurse Case Management Training
  - TB 101
  - Just-in-time training webinars
  - Resources
- Improving sustainable evidence-based TB clinical practices and patient care through the provision of medical consultation.
  - Weekly medical consultation calls
  - Longitudinal case management

# What is Culture?

- “Culture refers to integrated patterns of human behavior that include the language, thoughts, communication, actions, customs, beliefs, values, and institutions of racial, ethnic, religious, or social groups.”  
Cross, T.L, et al
- Understanding cultural and social factors that influence health behavior & help-seeking is key to responding to a TB outbreak in a culturally competent manner.



# Culture and help-seeking behavior influences.....



Where To Seek Help



Patients Perceptions And Interpretations Of Symptoms



How Severe Do They Think The Illness Is And Where Do They Decide To Seek Help?

# The Challenge

- A rapid, coordinated response is critical for effectively managing tuberculosis outbreaks.
- Community trust is fundamental to the prevention, testing, and treatment of tuberculosis.
- Local leaders are often the initial point of contact during tuberculosis outbreaks.

# Why Community Leadership Matters

- Trusted messengers within communities
- Cultural and contextual understanding
- Ability to mobilize quickly and reduce stigma



# Trust-building as a community engagement approach

- Trust develops within communities where relationships are intentionally fostered, communication remains open and sincere, and actions consistently demonstrate respect, thereby establishing enduring credibility.
- Trust is established through attentive listening and respect for others. Involving community members in decision-making processes ensures individuals feel recognized, valued, and empowered.
- Upholding commitments is fundamental to building trust. Fulfilling promises signifies genuine engagement and facilitates positive change.

# The Role of National Partners During Tuberculosis Outbreaks

- National partners deliver evidence-based guidance and establish standardized protocols.
- They allocate funding, implement data management systems, and offer technical expertise.
- National partners support training initiatives and strengthen surge capacity.

# The Role of State Partners During Tuberculosis Outbreaks

- State partners coordinate surveillance activities and oversee case investigations.
- They ensure compliance with relevant policies and provide regulatory support.
- State partners facilitate the integration of national resources into local implementation initiatives.

# Empowerment of Community Leaders

- Provide training for community leaders in tuberculosis (TB) education and response
- Include community leaders in planning and decision-making processes
- Ensure community leaders have access to timely data and essential resources.

# Collaborative Model in Action

- A collaborative model is a structured framework where individuals or organizations combine knowledge, resources, and efforts to achieve common objectives. It emphasizes shared responsibility, effective communication, and integrated processes to achieve better outcomes.
- Community leaders are responsible for managing outreach and engagement initiatives.
- State partners coordinate activities and ensure comprehensive reporting.
- National partners contribute specialized expertise and supplementary resources.

# Outcomes of Collaborative Support

- Faster case detection and improved treatment adherence
- Reduced transmission and stigma
- Sustainable community capacity beyond the outbreak

# Summary of Key Points

- Community leadership is essential for effective outcomes.
- National and state support enhances the effectiveness of local initiatives.
- Collaboration strengthens the resilience of public health systems.
- The TB Centers of Excellence (COE) play a critical role in managing the tuberculosis outbreak by providing specialized medical consultation, developing individualized treatment regimens for complex cases, and training community and local health staff

# Question & Answer Panel Discussion





**Thank you!**