



NATIONAL DIALOGUE ON THE 2023 UNHLM ON TB MEETING REPORT

DATE: Friday, 25th August, 2023
VENUE: Crystal Palm Hotel, Tesano



PARTICIPANTS:

The meeting involved 25 participants representing various organizations including;

- Stop TB Partnership
- TB Voice Network
- Hope for Future Generations (HFFG)
- Ghana Health Service (GHS)
- World Health Organization (WHO)
- Country Coordinating Mechanism
- Ministry of Foreign Affairs
- Media representatives from TV3 and GTV
- Parliamentary TB Caucus

INTRODUCTION

The National Dialogue on the 2023 UN High-Level Meeting (UNHLM) on TB was convened at Crystal Palm, Tesano, with the objective of bringing together stakeholders to deliberate on pressing issues surrounding TB and to formulate strategies for the upcoming UNHLM in November. Dr. Franklin Asiedu-Bekoe, the Director of Public Health and a distinguished expert in the field, extended his gratitude for the gathering, emphasizing its pivotal role in creating a platform for discussions, collaboration, and joint action.



REMARKS

Dr. Mark Nawaane, a representative of the Parliamentary TB Caucus, set the tone for the dialogue by sharing insights into the Caucus' inception in 2018



and its continued engagement with TB-related matters. Dr. Nawaane stressed the collective responsibility of the attendees to bridge existing gaps and drive transformative changes within the TB landscape. He underlined the significance of the

event as a preparatory initiative aimed at addressing the "Deadly Divide" and formulating informed decisions ahead of the UNHLM.

PRESENTATIONS

James Malar delivered a comprehensive presentation on the concept of the "Deadly Divide". He shed light on the stark disparities in access to quality TB care and control, underscoring the urgency to bridge these gaps to achieve equitable health outcomes for all segments of society.

Dr. Yaw Adusi-Poku, the Program Manager for NTP, delivered a presentation focusing on the critical gaps demanding immediate attention from high-level officials. He commenced by providing a brief overview of key TB facts, including prevalence rates among different demographics. The presentation delved into the profound socio-economic implications of TB and elucidated the multifaceted challenges associated with diagnosis, treatment, and prevention. Of particular note was the call for the acquisition of portable x-ray machines to facilitate more efficient and timely diagnoses. He also emphasized the importance of addressing the needs of vulnerable populations such as children, prisoners, miners, and slum dwellers.



DISCUSSION AND PROPOSALS:

The dialogue, moderated by the Director of Public Health, facilitated an engaging exchange of ideas, proposals, and perspectives among the attendees. Key highlights from the discussions include:

Mr. Nawaane's assertion was that the Parliamentary TB Caucus was committed to maintaining the current funding levels dedicated to TB initiatives. He encouraged the Ministry of Health to devise a comprehensive budget, which the Caucus would diligently endeavor to uphold, albeit without the possibility of increasing funding.

Mr. Jerry Amoah-Larbi of TB Voice Network (TBVN) outlined their strategic approach to securing funding through proposal writing aligned with the national TB strategic plan. The importance of collaboration with the National TB Program (NTP) was underscored, with TBVN also exploring innovative funding avenues to acquire essential equipment and resources.



Emmanuella Kwamee of HFFG shared their impactful community engagement efforts, spotlighting the innovative initiative TBImpactGH. This initiative was designed to empower and support individuals affected by TB, fostering a sense of agency and resilience within these communities.

Chairman Afreh of Stop TB Partnership seized the opportunity to emphasize the unique significance of the forthcoming UNHLM. He urged the Ghana Health Service (GHS) to extend its support to individuals facing challenges in obtaining visas for the UNHLM, as their participation and contributions were vital.

The dialogue participants deliberated on effective strategies to mobilize funds through CSOs. Strategies included engaging with NTP, collaborating with chiefs to rally financial support, and securing a strong presidential commitment. The role of celebrities in advocacy efforts was also discussed.

The WHO reiterated the importance of utilizing available funding efficiently and crafting tailored communication that resonates with diverse stakeholders, including the President. WHO representatives proposed leveraging expert involvement to enhance the visibility of TB-related efforts.

Participants emphasized the need for comprehensive collaboration, involving not only health sectors but also cultural institutions, chieftaincies, and private enterprises. Press conferences and media advocacy were identified as powerful tools to raise awareness among both the public and high-level officials.

KEY POINTS

As the dialogue drew to a close, several key action points were highlighted:

The formation of a committee, chaired by Dr. Adusi-Poku, tasked with drafting a comprehensive statement for the president to present at the upcoming UNHLM. This statement would be prioritized to effectively communicate critical concerns.

Recognizing the pivotal role of the media, Dr. Asiedu-Bekoe urged the media representatives to set agendas and disseminate crucial information to the public. The suggestion of involving individuals directly affected by TB at the UNHLM was endorsed as a means of amplifying the voices of those most impacted.



The importance of private sector involvement, especially mining companies, was emphasized. Advocacy efforts were discussed as essential to humanizing the TB issue and garnering broader support.

Richard Bright Addo from TV3 suggested that holding a press conference could effectively direct the desired information to the public and potentially catalyze presidential attention toward addressing TB at the UNHLM.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the National Dialogue on the 2023 UNHLM on TB facilitated a profound exchange of insights, proposals, and strategies, poised to elevate TB awareness, advocacy, and control efforts in the lead-up to the UNHLM.