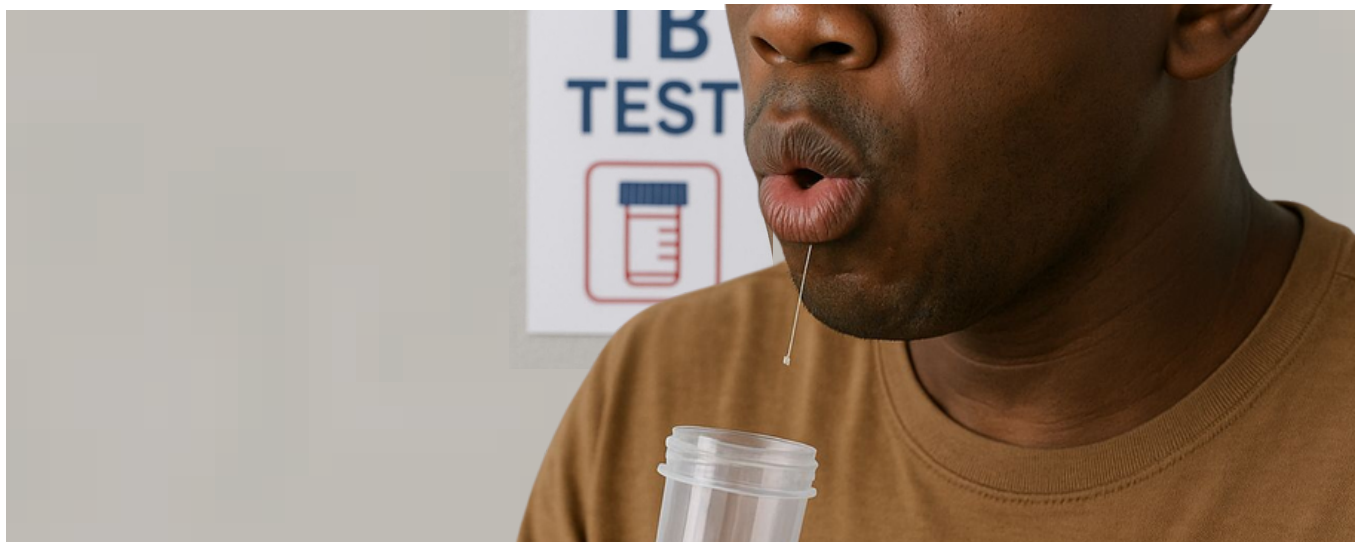




2025 TB Recovery Plan launched

Version 4.0 of the plan focuses on increasing testing targets

The National Department of Health officially launched its blueprint to tackle TB in South Africa for the year. The TB Recovery Plan 4.0 outlines urgent priorities to recover lost ground in South Africa's TB response and accelerate progress towards ending the epidemic. The focus remains on testing 5 million people for TB between April 2025 and March 2026 through its End TB Campaign.

Also in this edition:

- Meet our TB champions for this quarter.
- Tackling TB and nutrition
- A health worker shares her TB preventative treatment story
- TBAC presents to the Standing Committee on Appropriations
- Sitshele campaign goes into other languages

The campaign is being run in collaboration with the HIV Close the Gap Campaign, which aims to reinstate 1.1 million people on Antiretroviral Therapy (ART) and ensure all are tested for TB. It also prioritises strengthening early detection and improving treatment outcomes, especially in high-burden districts.

The Recovery Plan introduces the expanded use of shorter TB regimens, including the six-month BPAL-L course for drug-resistant TB and a four-month TB regimen for children.

The plan also calls for improved oversight through a public-facing TB dashboard to track monthly testing, diagnosis, and mortality data, alongside measures to strengthen patient follow-up and treatment adherence.

The plan further outlines the importance of community and civil society engagement, social mobilisation and cross-sector collaboration to strengthen the TB response.

DOWNLOAD THE REPORT HERE

Meet the people helping to end TB in communities

The real work of tackling TB happens in homes, streets, clinics and community gatherings where people are traced, supported and reminded that TB is treatable and preventable. It is in these everyday spaces that TB champions/survivors continue to push for better access to care, treatment and awareness. We reached out to dedicated TB champions from the Eastern Cape and Western Cape to find out about their efforts to mobilise people, address key challenges and help link patients to care.

Eastern Cape TB champion



Melikhaya Lusiti, Co-Chairperson for AIDS Council Civil Society Forum in the Eastern Cape

Melikhaya Lusiti, co-chairperson of the AIDS Council Civil Society Forum in the Eastern Cape and a TB ambassador for three years, shares with us the complex realities facing the province's TB response.

Patient movement between districts, provinces and across the Lesotho border continues to complicate efforts to trace and reinstate people on treatment.

The province is also working to trace former mineworkers who were never properly linked to care after returning home.

Added to this are recent medicine stockouts and the ongoing need to strengthen community communication to raise awareness, reduce stigma and remind people that TB is treatable.

Western Cape TB champion

Neliswa Nkwali, chairperson of the SANAC Civil Society Forum in the Western Cape and a TB ambassador, shares her insights on the province's biggest challenges in the TB response. Treatment disengagement, food insecurity and poor linkages between hospitals and clinics remain major concerns. While community visits and outreach activities are helping to trace patients and link them back to care, resource shortages and safety issues continue to hold back progress. She believes improved resource allocation is key to strengthening the TB response in the province.



Neliswa Nkwali, chairperson of SANAC Civil Society Forum in the Western Cape

READ BOTH STORIES HERE

WHO spotlights the link between TB and nutrition

In South Africa, where poverty and food insecurity often stand in the way of successful TB treatment, new global guidelines are finally placing nutrition at the heart of the country's TB response. In April 2025, the World Health Organization released updated TB treatment guidelines with a stronger focus on patient support services, including nutritional care. Following this, the TB Think Tank hosted a webinar unpacking the urgent link between undernutrition and TB and why addressing this issue is important for improving treatment outcomes.

Read more on this [here](#).



TB's preventative treatment regimen: a health worker shares her story

Dr. Tabitha Mathose is a healthcare professional in the Western Cape, working in a district in the Winelands. She shares her experience of being on TB Preventative Therapy.

When TPT was first adopted in the country in 2002, it was reserved for those at high risk of getting TB disease after being exposed.

These were mainly children under the age of five and



Dr. Tabitha Mathose, a Family Physician in the Western Cape

people living with HIV.

But in 2021 this all changed. A new and shorter treatment regimen was introduced. It meant there were only three tablets which needed to be taken for a shorter period. This change has made TB prevention simpler and more accessible for many more people.

There was other help that Mathose also had.

Read the full story of Mathose's journey with TPT on our [site](#).

TBAC gives parliamentarians the dismal TB death reality



Since the first budget was tabled 105 days ago, an estimated 15,873 people have died from TB. This was one of the messages that TB shared with members of the National Council of Provinces and the Standing Committee on Appropriations during parliamentary submissions on the budget. You can read the story on our [site](#).

[ACCESS THE PRESENTATION HERE](#)

SITSHELE expands into other languages

In 2024 TBAC launched its national #SITSHELE campaign asking people to tell us their TB stories by sharing how TB has affected them and their families.

The aim of the campaign was to collate enough stories to share them with the government to show how many people TB actually has an impact on.

Additionally, it hoped to show the government why TB needs to be considered a national health emergency. After getting all your TB stories, this year we continue the Sitshele campaign again. But there's a new development — you can now tell us your story in your own language.

We have translated the campaign into two more languages: #Thetha for isiXhosa and #Speig for Afrikaans. This is to better reach provinces that are heavily burdened by TB and ensure more people can engage with the campaign in their own languages. This year we are encouraging people to tell us their stories on how they were tested for TB and what happened during the experience – or why they've avoided being tested and why.

The good news stories will help to de-stigmatise TB, and get the groups of people who have a high risk of



TB survivor from the Eastern Cape, Simnikiwe Mme, shared her TB story on Thetha

contracting TB to get tested and get on treatment. The stories where people experience challenges will help us zone in on the problem areas and help us keep government to account. Research shows that testing leads to early detection and treatment which results in lower levels of transmission.

So, share your TB testing story on our TB wall, including the success and challenges you faced.

Share your TB story, by scanning this QR code and telling us your TB experience.



Reach out to us - share your thoughts

At TBAC, we would love to hear from you. Tell us what you thought of our 2025 State of TB in SA report or share your ideas on TB initiatives that we should cover.

Continue the conversation by visiting our social media platforms or dropping us an email.

And if you want this newsletter again, sign up by sending us an email to info@tbac.org.za

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