

Title: - Community-based monitoring: Engaging university students in tracking progress toward ending Tuberculosis (TB) in Himachal Pradesh, India

Background: The study highlights the collaborative efforts of the Department of Social Work, Central University of Himachal Pradesh, India, and State TB Cell, Himachal Pradesh engaging youth in TB free gram panchayat (GP) initiative, which was launched by the Honourable Prime Minister of India on World TB Day 2023, leading to the successful submission by 192 GP for TB free status in which 165 GP Declared TB Free. This initiative aimed to empower local communities and PRI members, leveraging the influence of youth, through a comprehensive strategy aligned with NTEP guidelines.

Intervention: The intervention study was carried out in the Kangra District of Himachal Pradesh from April 2023 to December 2023. The fifty students from Central University engaged in the communities and identified a minimum of two youths at every panchayat by capacity building of the youths on TB-free gram panchayat initiatives i.e., ACF/ICF activity by engaging village key persons and progress tracking reports were submitted regularly to Panchayat members and TB forum members along with concerned district NTEP stakeholders about the progress of the key driving force for a positive change.

Results: A total of 232 patients have received successful vocational support, for treatment adherence and 4495 presumptive TB cases were referred for testing. Additionally, 1250 youths were dedicatedly engaged and appointed at the panchayat level to be responsible for tracking panchayat TB-free progress. The outcome of the initiative was that a total of 192 Gram panchayats were claimed as TB-free of which, 165 GPs fulfilled the criteria for being declared TB-free in the year 2023.

Conclusion: Periodic tracking of important indicators and sharing them with relevant stakeholders engaging educated youth could lead to a significant awareness within communities which can create a collective demand for the delivery of quality-of-care services for TB elimination.

Summary: To achieve the target of a TB-free milestone by 2025 in India. It is extremely important to engage youth within the communities. In our study, a community-based approach by engaging youth played a vital role in this intervention and demonstrating the effectiveness of community engagement at the ground level.



Mass Movement by Youth for Ending TB in Himachal Pradesh

