



SUCCESS STORY

A Great Leap Forward in TB Detection in Katana Health Zone of South Kivu

*It is possible
to change for the better.*
-- Dr. Gilbert Mungugu



Leprosy and Tuberculosis Supervisor, Dr. Gilbert Mungugu, of Katana Health Zone

Tuberculosis detection shortfalls in South Kivu Province have been resolved thanks to financial support from USAID through the AXxes project, implemented by World vision.

South Kivu province has some of the lowest TB detection rates in DR Congo. Katana health zone (HZ), located 52 kms north of Bukavu, is one of 34 health zones comprising South Kivu. It covers 400 km² and serves 162,000 inhabitants. Katana is also one of Congo's oldest HZs, and helped to establish the system of decentralized health zones. Katana has three Detection and Treatment Health Center (CSDT) but with weak uptake of clients (detection rate of 30% in quarter 1, 2008).

The National Tuberculosis Coordination Program along with Katana HZ and World Vision took the opportunity of TB International day (April 24, 2008) to address this problem. Three assemblies were held in the health zone inviting key figures, including village chiefs, health and religious leaders, and youth, for the purpose of creating an awareness of TB and how people can best prevent it, be screened, and get treated.

Participants were encouraged and enabled to be channels of information to their communities. Some of them used church services to talk about TB, others local meetings, and others through peer to peer interactions. This strategy coupled with other actions supported by Project AXxes such as training of staff, equipping with microscopes and reagents as well as supervision has resulted in a notable improvement in TB detection rates!

One year later, the health zone is reporting a significant increase in the TB detection rate from 30% to 87%. This translates to 212 new cases of Pulmonary Tuberculosis identified by positive check through microscopy out of an estimated 244 patients expected in 2008.

This improved performance is indicative of collaborative efforts of actors in the field backed up with concerned members of the health zone, TB National Program and Provincial Health Inspection all building on support from USAID.

Katana health zone is indebted for the assistance from Project AXxes and USAID to strengthen healthcare in Katana and in the entire province. Positive lessons learned from these achievements are now being replicated in other health zones.