



Tuberculosis Multimorbidity Network Newsletter

May 2021

Introduction

Dear Global TB Multimorbidity colleagues and friends:

Much has happened since our last newsletter, including World TB Day. Several policy forums and webinars have been or are being organised, over a dozen of our members have joined The Union and we will be setting up a TBMM working group in this organization. On the research front we finally have some preliminary analyses and results and have started working on a survey to better understand how TB service programs address TB multimorbidity.

Best wishes, the Newsletter Working Group.

News and updates

Workstream 1: Synthesis of the evidence

Meta-Review of the prevalence and associated burden of TB + 1 comorbidity

While most of the identified systematic reviews have already been extracted by one reviewer (which has allowed us to present at least preliminary results), we are currently working on having a second reviewer extract the data and solving any discrepancies.

Systematic Review of the prevalence and associated burden of TB + 2 comorbidities

Regarding the systematic review, most of the included studies have now been extracted in duplicate and the quality of their data has been assessed. Although we have not completely finished the data extraction, we were able to do most of the meta-analyses already.

Secondary data analyses

There are already some preliminary analyses for the **KMU** data, although a detailed analysis plan is still to be specified. Similarly, the team at **EpiLab** has been making progress on the data analysis plan. In a previous newsletter we informed about the possibility of using the dataset of Challenge TB, a 5-year multinational project. Unfortunately, we were told that they only had data at the aggregate level, making it inappropriate for the type of analysis we had in mind.

Workstream 2

Re-defining Workstream 2

The preliminary results of WS1 point at HIV, DM, Depression, Hepatitis, and anxiety disorders among the most prevalent TB comorbidities. Focusing on these conditions, a quick literature search found that there are already systematic reviews assessing interventions for most of these in people with TB. Initially we had decided to focus on interventions for anxiety, but a systematic review was published this month [May] covering this topic, so we were forced to redefine our goals.

During the May 12th management meeting, it was decided that instead of a review, we would aim to conduct a survey among TB service providers to better understand how they address TB Multimorbidity and if they administer any screening, prevention and/or treatment of the different comorbidities. This survey will be organised through a TBMM working group in The Union that we will apply for.

Network

New members: Dr. Khan and Dr. Ugarte-Gil

We want to welcome **Dr. Amer Hayat Khan**, **Dr. Cesar Ugarte-Gil** and **Dr. Bushra Jamil**. Dr. Amer Hayat Khan is a lecturer and researcher at the Universiti Sains Malaysia with experience in TB, Diabetes, HIV/AIDS, and Chronic Kidney Diseases. Dr. Cesar Ugarte-Gil is a researcher and assistant professor at the Institute of Tropical Medicine Alexander von Humboldt at Cayetano Heredia University in Lima (Peru). He has experience in TB, Diabetes, Mental health, and HIV/AIDS, and has been working in TB-DM since 2013 and TB-Depression since 2010. Dr Bushra Jamil is infectious disease expert and leading the unit from AKU.

Upcoming TBMM Network webinar: TB & Adolescence

A webinar focused on TB in adolescence will take place on the 14th of June, chaired by Razia and with Patricia Moscibrodzki (LSHTM) and Uzoh as speakers. In this webinar we will share current research on TB multimorbidity among adolescents and discuss how TB programmes can better meet the needs of young people. Here are the links to the [registration page](#) and [Zoom](#).

Upcoming TBMM Network webinar: TB & Nutrition

A webinar focused on TB and Nutrition is planned for early September, although it is still in development...

The Union Membership

The International Union against TB and Lung Disease (<https://theunion.org/>) agreed to offer a limited number of memberships at a discounted rate to the TBMM network members. This offer was open to anyone in our network and was circulated through our wider email list, resulting in 13 of our members joining The Union.

TBMM working group in The Union

In order to work closer with The Union, we (lead by Kamran Siddiqi) will make a proposal to establish a working group in The Union focused on TB Multimorbidity. This would be a great platform to launch the survey for WS2 and to continue our work in this area in general.

Policy Forum in Tanzania

The Policy Forum in Tanzania will take place on 24th June. Helen Elsey will do a 10 minute presentation on the TBMM network, which will include aims, members, activities etc., and it was discussed that Alexander could present the review results.

Policy Forum in Pakistan

The Policy Forum in Pakistan was held on 30th March. The agenda of the workshop was to bring together important stakeholders, researchers, patients, clinicians, practitioners to discuss Tuberculosis-Multimorbidity and raise awareness, to identify the TBMM clusters in Pakistan and to agree the way forward for policy, research and practice. The workshop was open for discussion to all the participants, who shared opinions, thoughts and suggestions for consideration. Several areas were identified by the participants for research purposes. Participants insisted that some of the research questions can be answered by exploring the already existing data, while some questions needed long term research projects. In summary, this workshop provided an invaluable platform to discuss these obstacles further, and identify ways in which they may be overcome. Furthermore, as a result of this workshop, a range of key government officials who actively participated in the workshop have signaled their intention to work collaboratively to advance the multimorbidity research field.

Building capacity

The Leadership Learning set is continuing their meetings as planned and making good progress in developing their research proposals on TBMM.

Member highlight



National Institute for Medical Research - NIMR

The National Institute for Medical Research (NIMR) is a parastatal organization under the Ministry of Health, Community Development, Gender, Elderly, and Children (MoHCDGEC). NIMR was established by the Parliament Act No. 23 of 1979 and became operational in 1980, with among other mandates to monitor, control and coordinate medical research and to promote and carry out basic, applied, and operational research designated to provide effective measures for the control of diseases endemic in co-operation with the Government or any person or body of persons in Tanzania.

The National Institute for Medical Research (NIMR) through its Mbeya Medical Research Centre, NIMR-MMRC, has been an epicentre for conducting several clinical trials with local and international collaborators. The centre had conducted several studies in the fields of HIV/AIDS, Tuberculosis, Malaria, Non communicable diseases and other priority diseases for over 20 years. In addition, the centre carries studies to evaluate new interventions for these diseases utilizing vaccines, drugs and diagnostics focusing on basic research, clinical trials, epidemiological research, operational research and social sciences. The site has an established track record in conducting TB, HIV and other clinical trials to an international standard demonstrated by good performance in previous studies like REMox TB trial, NC002, PanACEA MAMS TB 01, NC005, NC006 several HIV vaccine trials (RV172, RV262, TAMoVacc I, TAMoVacc II, HVTN111, HVTN703, HVTN120) and EBOLA RV456. Other ongoing studies include Addressing TBMM project, PrepVacc, PROTID, NC008, POR trial, TB Sequel, TB-CAPT, Dynamic and ERASE-TB.

Project focus

World TB Day at Epi-Lab

This year the World TB day ceremony was different: the EPI-LAB in collaboration with University of Bahari- College of veterinary medicine organized a zoonotic TB symposium on 25th of March 2021. This symposium was convened to draw attention to the importance of zoonotic and bovine tuberculosis to end TB by 2030. Three presentations were given, the first one was the zoonotic tuberculosis and presented by EPI-LAB, the second was addressed at the diagnosis of TB with focus on MDR-TB and presented by the University of Bahari, and the last one was presented by the ministry of animal resources and covered the extension on zoonotic and bovine tuberculosis. Also, the Epi-Lab presentation highlighted the importance of the TB multi-morbidity project. The conclusion of this symposium brings the importance of one health concept in controlling zoonotic TB and other diseases as well.

Funding opportunities

This project was funded by Seed funding, which will run out shortly. We do need funding to expand. There may be other opportunities for International funds. Please share with us any funding opportunities you come across and we will share them in this new section for the whole network's benefit.

Global Fund support for co-infections and co-morbidities

Asma mentioned Global Fund support for co-infections and co-morbidities. Please see <https://www.theglobalfund.org/> and [this document](#).

WHO grants

Uzoh shared details for WHO Grants: <https://tdr.who.int/grants>

NIHR Global Health Policy and Systems

NIHR Global Health Policy and Systems: [link](#)

Upcoming events...

Mark the date!

TBMM Network webinar

The TB & Adolescence network webinar will take place on the **14th of June**.

Policy forum

The Policy Forum in Tanzania will take place on **24th June**.

Next Management meeting

The next TBMM Management meeting will be on **Wednesday 9th of June at 11am (UK time)**.

52nd Union World Conference On Lung Health

The 52nd Union World Conference on Lung Health (*Lung Health for All: Solutions for a New Era*) will take place virtually from **19-22 October 2021**.

Acknowledgements...

This work was supported by the Medical Research Council MRC Grant Reference MC_PC_MR/T037806/1.