



SUCCESS STORY

A Missed Opportunity No More: Finding Missing TB Cases in a Kampala Taxi Park

Background

In July 2018, Rachael Kabamooli, a TB supervisor working in Rubaga Division in Kampala Capital City Authority (KCCA) in Uganda, shared her experience with the emerging risk of TB in the community and opportunities for finding missing TB cases. According to Rachael, she encountered two cases of TB while travelling in taxis in Kampala. After analyzing TB records at health facilities, she discovered that at two health centres (HCs) in Kampala, Kisenyi HC IV and Kitebi HC III, several confirmed TB cases were taxi drivers and conductors (those who collect money from passengers), and that most of these drivers and conductors either interrupted their TB treatment or passed away soon after diagnosis due to late diagnosis.

The USAID Defeat TB Project in collaboration with KCCA, contacted the leadership of the taxi parks, the Uganda Taxi Operators and Drivers Association (UTODA) to conduct targeted TB screening outreach at the New Taxi Park. The park is a large, enclosed staging area where passengers can access taxis. It is heavily populated during the day with taxi drivers and conductors as well as hawkers, vendors, passengers, and many other small business owners and workers. The risk of exposure to TB from an index TB case is high due to the congestion and poor air quality from vehicle emissions and the dusty driveways. The taxi park was chosen as the intervention site because the drivers who were TB patients at Kisenyi and Kitebi HCs were stationed there.

Collaboration is Key: Partners Involved in Taxi Park TB Screening

1. KCCA
2. Health workers from Kisenyi HC IV and Kitebi HC III (facilities supported by KCCA)
3. Leaders of the New Taxi Park Operators Association
4. TASO and Defeat TB staff
5. AIDS Information Centre (civil society organization supported by Defeat TB)
6. VHTs from the New Taxi Park
7. CLFs supported by TASO

Preparing for TB screening outreach

USAID Defeat TB collaborated with several partners to organize the screening outreach in the taxi park, including the KCCA health department, UTODA, and community teams from The AIDS Support Organization (TASO) and AIDS Information Centre (AIC). Preparatory meetings with the taxi park leadership, chaired by KCCA health officials, were held. The TB screening exercise was conducted for four days, from September 25-28, 2018. The taxi park leadership and community linkage facilitators (CLFs) carried out mobilization activities in the taxi park over the weekend, to generate demand for screening.

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The screening team included nursing officers from Kisenyi HC IV and Kitebi HC III, a laboratory technician from Kisenyi HC IV, two HIV counsellors from AIC, six CLFs from Defeat TB, a TB/HIV focal person from KCCA and the Defeat TB project team.

Activities conducted during the outreach

1. Health education messages on the signs and symptoms of TB presented by one of the CLFs in the local language. Clients could ask questions and get clarity on all issues not understood.
2. Screening of all individuals who came for assessment. Those identified as presumptive TB cases were documented in the TB presumptive register and those who presented with other health issues were linked to health centers for further evaluation.
3. All presumed TB cases identified were asked to provide a sputum sample that was sent to Kisenyi HC IV for evaluation using the GeneXpert machine. A chest X-ray was done for clients who were presumed to have TB but were not able to produce a sputum sample.
4. Provider Initiated Testing and Counselling (PITC) for HIV was conducted for all presumed TB cases and other eligible clients who had an unknown HIV status. AIC provided all HIV-related services.

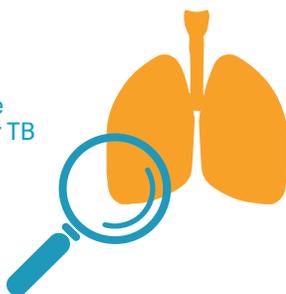
Results from TB screening outreach

366 people screened for TB

130 presumptive TB cases were identified and evaluated for TB

22 TB cases diagnosed (6% of those screened for TB)

22 started on treatment



The results show a high yield of TB (six percent) from screening for TB in the taxi park, giving credence to the need to find additional TB cases through targeted outreach for high-risk populations. The additional TB cases found in the taxi park could have potentially continued to transmit TB infection in the community. To control TB, routine

screening among target populations in urban settings and linkage to early treatment initiation for those diagnosed with TB is critical.

Key observations and lessons learned

- ▶ Given the high TB burden and poor health-seeking behavior among the taxi operators, it was important to involve the taxi park leadership (UTODA) and KCCA that licenses/regulates operations of the taxi park for successful entry into the community. The taxi operators attended in large numbers for TB screening and the taxi park officials provided their office space for X-ray screening.
- ▶ Designating a GeneXpert machine to run samples collected during community screening activities reduces the turnaround time for sputum results.
- ▶ Planning and coordination is key for effective collaboration among a wide range of partners; each partner plays a different role and contributes to the activity's success.
- ▶ There was a positive response from the community due to the integrated TB screening and HIV testing. Eight new HIV positive cases were found. Three were TB/HIV co-infected and were enrolled in care.
- ▶ Displaying information, education, and communication materials near the screening area and deploying a CLF eloquent in the local language to provide health education encouraged people to come for the screening service.
- ▶ Megaphones, loud speakers, and other audio-visual tools should be utilized to support demand creation.

There is a possibility of similar findings if TB screening is conducted in other taxi parks across the country. Due to the nature of their work, which often includes long hours from 6:00 a.m. to midnight, there is poor health-seeking behavior among taxi drivers and conductors coupled with high risk for TB transmission, posing a public health challenge in Kampala City. USAID Defeat TB will continue to carry out TB screening outreach in the taxi parks at least once a quarter and use the lessons learned to conduct targeted TB screening among other key populations in congested settings.