

NIGERIA

100% Policy Alignment

• **58,000** children estimated to have fallen ill with TB in 2022ⁱ

• **65%** of children with TB estimated to have missed out on diagnosis and treatmentⁱⁱ

INTRODUCTION

As part of the Test, Avoid, Cure TB in Children (TACTiC) project, Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) has conducted a survey of paediatric TB policies across 14 countries.

Nigeria has a high burden of TB, multidrug-resistant TB (MDR-TB) and TB/HIV co-infection. MSF assists people affected by violence and displacement, and responds to multiple health issues, such as severe malnutrition and recurrent disease outbreaks. This includes an ongoing project to improve the diagnosis, prevention and treatment of TB in children.

This factsheet compares current paediatric TB policy and implementation in Nigeria with the most recent World Health Organization (WHO) guidelines, celebrating progress and highlighting areas for improvement. The national TB programme (NTP), ministries and partners should use these findings to develop national paediatric TB roadmaps that set out a clear strategy for ending TB in children.

DIAGNOSIS



Nigeria's guidelines on the diagnosis of TB in children are currently in line with WHO recommendations. This includes allowing children who are likely to have TB to be enrolled on treatment without bacteriological confirmation, the inclusion of WHO-recommended treatment decision algorithms and stool sample testing. However, with over half of children with TB missing out on diagnosis and treatment, urgent action is needed to ensure more children can benefit from the recommended standard of care.

PREVENTION



Nigeria's guidelines on TB prevention in children are currently in line with WHO recommendations. This includes the provision of shorter TB preventive treatment (TPT) regimens for children under the age of 5 and children living with HIV, as well as allowing these vulnerable children to be offered TPT without a positive TST or IGRA test. Nigeria is also procuring the necessary medicines in paediatric formulations, though it is unclear how regularly they are prescribed.

TREATMENT OF DS-TB



Nigeria's guidelines on the management of drug-susceptible TB (DS-TB) in children are currently in line with WHO's recommendations. This includes the recommendation of a shorter 4-month regimen for children with non-severe forms of TB. The NTP also reports that they procure paediatric formulations of all the medicines needed to treat DS-TB.

TREATMENT OF DR-TB



Nigeria's guidelines on the management of drug-resistant TB (DR-TB) in children are fully in line with WHO recommendations. This includes the provision of the newer, all-oral DR-TB treatment regimens using bedaquiline and delamanid for all children, regardless of age. The Nigerian NTP also procures most of the necessary paediatric formulations.

GLOBAL CALL TO ACTION: TEST, AVOID, CURE TB IN CHILDREN

WHO estimates that 1.25 million children under the age of 14 fall ill with TB each year around the world. Only 51% of these children are diagnosed and reported to NTPs, including just 40% of children under the age of 5 and 20% of children with drug-resistant TB. As a result, a child dies from TB every 3 minutes despite the disease being curable.

Nigeria's policies on the management of TB in children are fully in line with WHO's most recent recommendations. However, with more than half of children with TB still missing out on diagnosis

and treatment, it is clear that the country has major implementation barriers to overcome. Last year, world leaders pledged to accelerate the global fight against TB. Governments, with support from national and international partners, must act now to ensure they don't leave children with TB behind.

To find out more about the policy survey and what steps governments, as well as funders and global health actors, can take to test, avoid and cure TB in all children, visit <https://msfaccess.org/tactic-test-avoid-cure-tb-children>.

ⁱ WHO TB incidence estimates disaggregated by age group, sex and risk factor. CSV file. Available at: <https://www.who.int/teams/global-tuberculosis-programme/data>

ⁱⁱ WHO Global TB Report 2023. Available at: <https://www.who.int/teams/global-tuberculosis-programme/tb-reports/global-tuberculosis-report-2023>