



**CAMPAIGN FOR EDUCATION,  
PREVENTION AND TREATMENT  
OF TB (CEPT) | 2007 - 2018**



# Background



India has the highest number of tuberculosis (TB) cases in the world. People in Virudhunagar District in the Southern State of Tamil Nadu are vulnerable to TB due to high levels of poverty, poor working conditions and limited access to health information and facilities.

Loss of income due to ill health can push whole families into poverty. Many refer to personal healers or private facilities that will not meet their existing medical needs and financial resources. They will often spend large amounts of money trying to heal themselves, falling into a downward spiral of poverty and sickness which is difficult to overcome alone.

In rural areas, the stigmatisation and social exclusion of TB patients are very strong. Therefore, people who test positive often hide it from their neighbours and families, too afraid of exclusion. This is an important issue, because it means that they remain symptomatic and continue to spreading TB among the community.



# Project Summary



The Campaign for the Education, Prevention and Treatment of TB Project (CEPT) was a 12 year project implemented by Blossom Trust in all 11 blocks of Virudhunagar District and 6 blocks of Kanchipuram District. Phase I of the project was initiated in 2007 and ran until 2012. During this time partnerships were built between Blossom Trust and Target TB, TB Alert UK and the UK Big Lottery Fund. Due to the success of the first phase of the project, Phase II was initiated in 2013 and ran until 2018. Our partner organization Rainbow TB Forum was created out of Phase I of CEPT, and served as an implementing partner during Phase II.

## Project Objectives

Blossom began implementing CEPT in 2007, with the intention of improving TB treatment and monitoring, and increasing awareness of TB in the community.

The project aims to improve the health of women, children and people living with HIV (PLHIV) by strengthening the community response to TB, working with communities affected by TB and improving access to existing services.

## Expected Outcomes

**Outcome 1:** Improved knowledge of TB and how to access local TB diagnostic and treatment services among 18,360 direct beneficiaries (women, children and PLHIV), and indirectly to the total population of Virudhunagar District and 6 blocks of Kanchipuram District.

**Outcome 2:** 28,620 people have increased access to TB diagnosis and treatment at government health facilities contributing to improved health.

**Outcome 3:** Improved capacity of TB associations contributes to greater and more sustainable community participation in TB management in Virudhunagar and Kanchipuram Districts.

# PHASE I | 2007 - 2012



Improving knowledge regarding symptoms and treatment is at the heart of this project. Throughout this campaign around 4,000 volunteers and staff members were trained to identify and support TB patients. They reached out to the community members to raise awareness regarding TB and the access to treatment. The project also worked toward an improvement of the treatment by tackling the issues of nutrition, thus reducing side effects such as dizziness and nausea. During the implementation of CEPT, Blossom collected data on the gender and age specific obstacles faced by women and children in South Indian communities.

Stigma and discrimination is a major hurdle in addressing the TB prevalence in India. Our project team engaged not only with TB patients, but also with their families and communities to increase the knowledge of the disease. Our EduClowns team (pictured) provided engaging and entertaining shows to increase awareness. During Phase I Blossom also organized broadcast shows on the local television, aimed at providing more information about the symptoms and treatment.

# PHASE II | 2013 - 2018



Many activities from CEPT Phase I were continued during Phase II, such as awareness campaigns, referral activities and health camps. One of the main elements of Phase II was the Goats for Gains project.

TB patients often experience a loss of livelihoods due to their TB status. In many cases the patients become too ill to work, and stigma and discrimination also contribute to the difficulties to make a living. TB survivors, many who were struggling to make a living, received goats under the Goats for Gains scheme. To encourage the sustainability of the project, beneficiaries were asked to breed their goats for reproduction. The project could then be expanded without the need of additional funding.

The Goats for Gains segment of CEPT has made remarkable impact in improving the livelihoods of vulnerable people by generating income, with some hundred goats returned to the project team to provide support the a next group of beneficiaries.



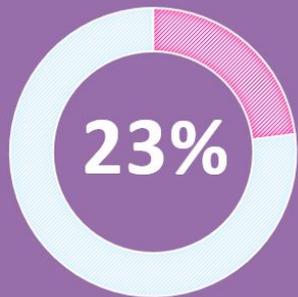
# Rainbow TB Forum



During CEPT Phase I several beneficiaries experienced stigma and discrimination while going to public hospitals in Virudhunagar for testing. They decided to stand for their rights and become a voice to the voiceless. Thus the Rainbow TB Forum was born, an organization fighting the stigma and discrimination of TB in the community as well as create awareness on the state level.

The Rainbow TB Forum takes initiative to promote the well-being of patients and families affected by TB. Leaders of the RBTF are responsible for identifying the primary healthcare centres and government hospitals in the block. With the help of RTBF members, they identify TB symptomatic members in the community. They then refer them to the hospital and healthcare centres. The RTBF members, as well as leaders, place notices about diagnosing and treating TB in public places, villages offices and municipal offices.

# Results



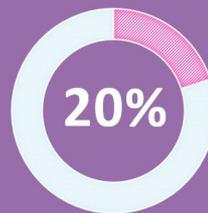
**Increase in TB testing in Virudhunagar**



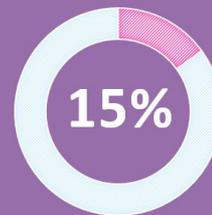
**66%** of the TB patients registered with government hospitals in Virudhunagar were provided with treatment adherence support through the CEPT programme

More than **100,000** people were reached by the completion of the project cycle. People were reached through close to **2,000** educational meetings, **24** cable TV programmes and EduClowns performances

During CEPT, **30,000** people were referred for treatment and a total of **15,000** patients have been tested thanks to CEPT interventions. More than **30,000** people saw their treatment improve as a result of the project. With support through Goats for Gains, more than **100** households improved their livelihoods and food security. The results of CEPT exceed the set objectives by far, making CEPT one of the most successful projects of Blossom Trust and Rainbow TB Forum.



**Increase in patient contact**



**Increase in TB registration**



# The Impact of Stigma and Discrimination



**Rubiniroja** (16) and her mother **Muruwigina** were interviewed by CEPT project members. After the plenary session, they were taken apart to discuss their individual issues. Rubiniroja was severely underweight, a result of loss of appetite combined with a lacking nutritional diet. Her physical capacity prevented her from attending school. This led to her peers excluding her from any community activity. Her behavior was very docile, with no eye contact or responses to some open-answer questions.

In this case, the issue of gender was quite apparent. Whereas Rubiniroja was unable to attend school, her younger brother, who also suffers from TB, is able to go to school. The mother seemed unable to deal with the situation, and was willing to send her to a care center.

These are the harsh realities for children suffering from TB. With no guidance on the accompanying aspects of the recovering process besides the medicine intake, many of the patients default, causing a heavy burden on themselves and their peers.



# The Impact of Stigma and Discrimination



**Asyurya** is a 16 year-old who has been cured from TB after following the government treatment. When she showed signs of TB her father took her to the government hospital. Her father had been a TB patient himself, therefore her family was supportive with regard to Asyurya's treatment. She has joined the Rainbow TB Forum and will be offered training to become a Positive Speaker.

There is a significant difference between Asyurya's and Rubiniroja's cases. While Rubiniroja was underweight, apathetic, very shy and visibly suffered from stigma from her family and community, Asyurya was cured and open to talk about her TB experience. While Rubiniroja did not go to school, Asyurya had been going to school during the treatment. Factors to which we can attribute this difference is the previous contact with TB in the family and the supportive community in the village.

Social factors play a very important role in the successful treatment of TB. Asyurya was encouraged to take her treatment throughout the six-month period and had the example of her father, who was cured. Rubiniroja, on the other hand, did not have the support of her family. This is why the existence of Rainbow TB Forum and programmes like CEPT are so important to raise awareness about TB and advocating for community and family support.



## Registration Details

Registration Number: 85/93

FCRA Approved & Indian Tax Exempt

Date of Registration: 7 June, 1993

Act: Indian Trust Act 1882

## Head Office

Blossom Trust

77 Sekkilar Street Virudhunagar

626001 Tamil Nadu, India

## Chennai Office

A/22 Alagesan Nagar

Chengalpattu Kanchipuram District Tamil Nadu, India



[Click here to visit our website:](#)

