

Generating Politically Influential Media Coverage On the Global TB Epidemic

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Practical Ideas, Tips And Strategies

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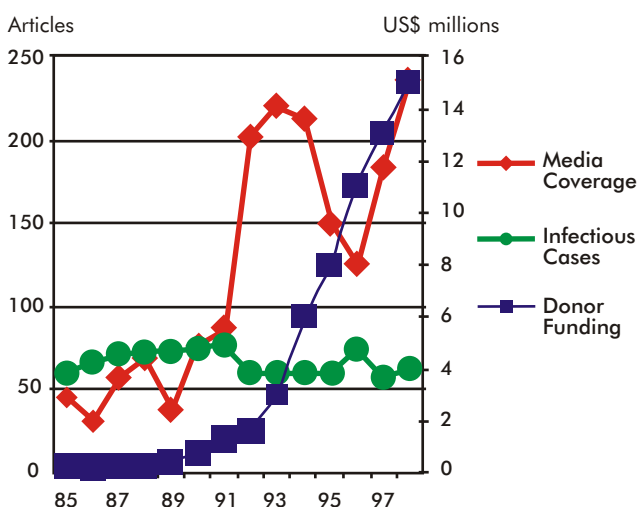
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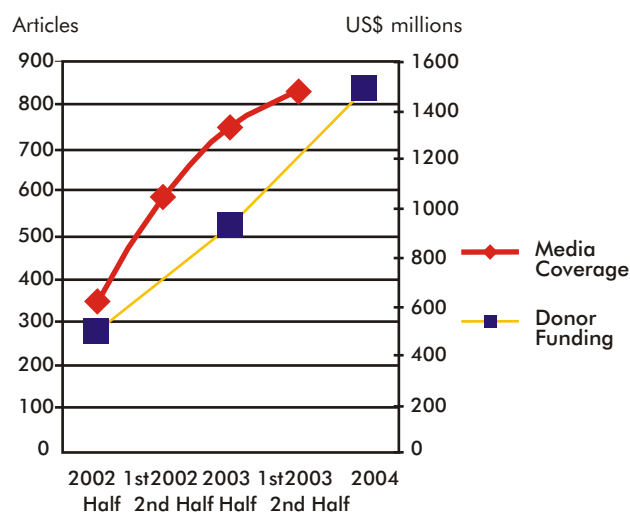
10 Fold Increases in Donor Support

Dramatic 10-fold increases in donor support to fight infectious diseases over a decade's time have often coincided with exponential increases in media coverage of these diseases. Indeed, the media is probably the most influential advocacy vehicle that we have to mobilize public support and set political agendas. As one journalist has observed, "If you don't exist in the media, for all practical purposes, you don't exist." The graphs below illustrate this in suggesting that funding for the control of infectious diseases frequently follows heightened media attention. (The converse is usually not the case; donor announcements rarely drive media attention on a disease). Certainly, many interrelated factors are involved in attracting donor support, though it is difficult to dispute that media coverage is frequently a major determinate.

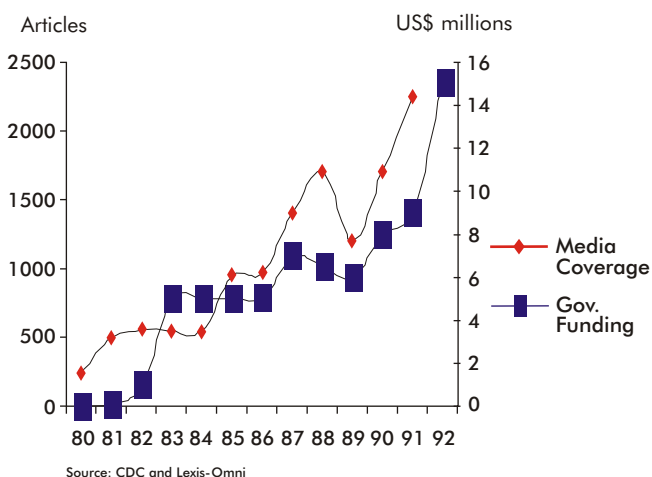
Media Coverage, TB Cases and the WHO Global TB Program Budget



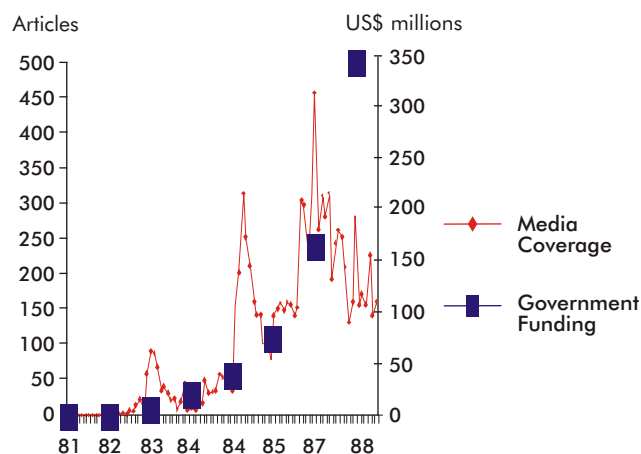
Media Coverage, TB Cases and the WHO Global TB Program Budget



Media Coverage, and TB Funding in the U.S.



Media Coverage, TB Cases and the WHO Global TB Program Budget



This guide highlights a number of practical tips, ideas and strategies that can increase your chances of gaining greater media coverage on the global TB epidemic, the Global Fund to Fight TB, the Global Drug Facility and other important health and development issues. If the global TB epidemic is to be reduced substantially in the next few years, it will be because advocates continue to help provoke eye-opening discoveries about the epidemic – not in the laboratories of research scientists – but in Parliaments, Diets and Congresses.

10 Ways of Engaging the Media

Be assured, anything mentioning your Congressional, Parliamentary or Diet representatives will be read the very same day by their senior staff – and likely by the Senators, Representatives, Parliamentarians and Diet members themselves. This is how sensitive elected officials have become to the views and opinions of their constituencies who have the power to reelect them or cast them out of office on Election Day. This means that those who understand the media and know how to work with editors and journalists potentially possess a great deal of political power. The following are some of the main ways for approaching and engaging the media.

1. Editorial Meetings. An editorial statement from your leading local newspaper, addressing the responsibilities of your Congressional delegation, is perhaps the most powerful forum of media advocacy. You should approach the editorial board members of your local paper and offer to provide them an editorial briefing on the global TB epidemic. If you can arrange an editorial board meeting, this will provide you with an excellent opportunity to gain the editorial support of a newspaper which, in turn, can be very influential in shaping political decisions. Begin by doing your homework prior to the meeting. Profile the kinds of editorials that appear in the paper and the position they tend to take, particularly in relation to international issues. Arrive armed with facts and figures that are relevant to the newspaper's audience. Make a persuasive argument that their readers should be concerned about the global TB epidemic. Make clear why specific elected officials from your area have influence on these matters. Be ready to answer any questions the editor might have. After the meeting, research and provide any further information requested.

2. Opinion Pieces. Most newspapers print opinion editorials (op-eds) or guest columns. An op-ed is an expression of opinion rather than a release of news. Although style varies according to different countries, an op-ed tends to be lively, provocative and sometimes controversial. They provide a very effective way to register concern about TB to policy makers and to inform communities about why they should care about controlling the disease. Op-eds are usually around 600 to 1,000 words. It is best to call the newspaper first and request their guidelines for submitting an op-ed. If possible, speak to the appropriate editor to alert them that you intend to submit an op-ed, briefly explain the importance of the issue.

3. Letters to the Editor. Newspapers and magazines have a "letters page" that gives readers the opportunity to express their view or correct previously published information they feel to be inaccurate or misleading. Letters are widely read and provide a good opportunity to promote your cause. Letters should be short and concise. Those over 500 words are unlikely to be published. Well-written letters of no more than 100 words can be very effective. A letter should aim to make one main point and to end on a challenging note, with a call to action. Letters can also be signed by a number of signatories, representing various organizations or interests, which may increase their impact. If a letter is responding to an article carried in a daily newspaper, it is important to email, fax or deliver it to the paper within a couple of days.

4. News Advisories. Advisories are used -- along with phone calls -- to alert journalists to a media event or news conference. An advisory should give all of the basic information on the purpose, date, time, location, and speakers at an event, often in a Who, What, When, Where, and Why format. A good advisory should also build some anticipation concerning the news that will be announced. A strong headline helps.

5. News Releases. Some journalists receive hundreds of news releases each week. For your release to get noticed, the headline and first paragraph must catch their attention. You should devote most of your time to getting this right compared to preparing the rest of the news release. You can either issue the release in advance and embargoed until the date of publication, or you can issue it on the day of a news event/conference.


Important!

To be most effective in all of your media advocacy activities, NAME NAMES!

First, specifically mention the name of the policy maker or responsible agency which should take action.

Second, be clear in specifying where increased TB control funding should be directed, such as the budget of your country's national TB control program or (if you live in a donor country), the Global Fund, the Global Drug Facility, or your country's bilateral development assistance initiative for TB.

By doing so, you will greatly increase the likelihood that these people or institutions will see this media coverage directly.



1. Calls to Journalists. Once you have sent an advisory or news release it is imperative to call journalists to make sure they have received it or that the right journalist has it. Sometimes, you will be asked to resend the release. Sometimes it will be to another journalist or bureau. When you call a busy journalist in a large city, you may have only 30 seconds to gain his or her interest in the story. To be successful, you must be direct to the point concerning the importance of your story or event. Keep it simple and do not overwhelm them with too much information. Consider practicing your "pitch" with a colleague or friend before making your first call. Try to avoid calling when journalists are facing deadlines. It will also be useful to know something about the publication or programme that you are calling. An editor can sense immediately if you have never read their publication or watched their programme and may not see you as a credible source of news.

2. Suggest a Feature Story. Feature stories are usually longer than news stories. They go into greater depth on how an issue affects people. In magazines, they can span several pages and be accompanied by pictures. On television, they can become five minute segments or programmes up to a half-hour in length. The best way to obtain a feature story is to describe your idea in a two or three-page story proposal. Be prepared to do a substantial amount of research on this before handing the story over to the journalist to follow up. Your proposal should provide an outline of the story and list interesting people who could be interviewed. The newer, more unusual, significant or dramatic the story, the better. For example, a journalist may be more interested in an unreported story about a TB outbreak in a school than just a general story about TB.

3. Press Briefings. If journalists -- who cover hundreds of different stories and may know next to nothing about TB -- are to produce informative and accurate stories, they need to be properly briefed. Consider organizing an informal press briefing that also serves to build good relations with journalists. For example, invite half a dozen select journalists to attend a briefing in advance of World TB Day, March 24th. Brief them on key developments and issues relating to TB and your group's relevant work on the issue. You may want to conduct this as a breakfast meeting and provide refreshments. It is a good idea to have clear briefing materials to distribute, such as fact sheets or advocacy publications. If you attend an important national or international conference, you may wish to brief journalists in your community about important developments upon your return.

4. News Conferences. A news conference can be a very effective way to announce a very newsworthy story to journalists. Speakers take the platform in a venue and make presentations after which journalists can ask questions. This is a tried and tested formula which can make life easy for journalists and for yourself. Be sure that your story warrants holding one, as news conferences can take a lot of time to organize and it can be disheartening if only a few reporters attend. In some cases, you may find you can achieve the same results by handling the story from your office. For this, you need to send journalists your news release and briefing materials under embargo until the date of publication, highlighting who is available for interview, and talking them through the story in person or on the phone.

5. Photo Opportunities. Television news and magazines need good pictures or visuals in order to report on a story. When you plan a media strategy, think about what images you need and how you will supply these. You may want to pay for a photographer to take pictures and then distribute them to selected publications. You may also want to prepare a video news release (VNR) for broadcasters to use. Or, arrange a "photo opportunity" for photographers and television news people to take pictures themselves. To announce the photo opportunity, send an advisory that gives the "Who, What, When, Where and Why" of the event to media.

10 Insights in Working with the Media

1. Start by assuming the best of journalists. Most journalists would like to do their part to help those living in poverty. Still, they must adhere to other expectations of their editors and/or publishers who ultimately approve or reject all of their story ideas, and who are often primarily focused on selling more papers, increasing advertising revenue and improving ratings.

2. Understand the pressures faced by most journalists. Most journalists are overworked and up against tight deadlines. Late afternoons are especially busy for most journalists as they approach deadlines. Don't take it personally if you call a journalist and they simply don't have the time to speak with you because of these pressures. In providing information to a journalist, you can make their job easier by having carefully thought through how it is relevant, interesting and newsworthy to their audience.

3. Expect some of your approaches to be rejected. Many newspapers receive dozens of letters to the editor for every one that is printed. Remember that your success in gaining media coverage will likely be related to the number of times you try. If your letter to the editor isn't printed, or your news release isn't picked up, don't be afraid to enquire why.

4. Don't be intimidated. It is very likely that you already know more about the global and/or your country's TB epidemic than anyone else in your immediate community. A professional and competent journalist will usually value establishing contact with well-informed community members.

5. Be passionate and persistent. The fact that you may have nothing personally to benefit from your appeal speaks loudly in editorial board meetings and news events. Much more loudly than the voices of people advocating issues clearly in their personal self-interest.

6. Make it local and keep it relevant. More often than not, small and medium size media outlets focus on issues of greatest concern to their community, state and region, rather than on international issues. To gain coverage of the global TB epidemic in these media, extra creativity is often required to make the connection between the interrelationship of Kinshasa, for example, and Kansas City (see sidebar).

7. Be creative. Much of what makes news these days falls under the category of "human interest." That is, it involves something extraordinary, personal, creative, humorous or even shocking. Consider novel approaches in attracting the attention of your local media to the global and/or your country's TB epidemic.

8. Yet it is appropriate to take the high ground in making your case. Sometimes, it is right to report on an issue not only because it affects the citizens of your community, but because million of lives globally hang in the balance.

9. Be opportunistic. Rapid response and timing can often determine whether or not journalists are receptive to your issue. Your perspective on news of a local outbreak of TB will be much more valued within a few days, than after a couple weeks, of its occurrence.

10. When in doubt, don't make anything up! If you are questioned on something about which you are uncertain of the answer, don't take a good guess at providing an answer! Rather, promise the journalist you will get back to them with the correct figures or information. And remember that anything you say can be printed. When you do want to provide some important background information, but not be quoted or have it attributed to you as a source, clearly state that the information is "off the record."

Localize Global Issues

- Put local TB outbreaks in the context of the global TB epidemic.
- Have a member of your organization interviewed on their visit to a TB project in a developing country.
- Invite a former TB patient to address a community forum in your locality.
- TB bacilli require no visas to cross international borders. As a third of the world's population is latently infected with the disease, there is no effective way to screen those who may eventually become sick from the disease from entering your country.
- There are likely people in your community who were hospitalized with TB or who lost family members to the disease many decades ago. Consider using their voices and experiences in your media activities.

10 Days When TB Should Be Especially Newsworthy

By planning your media outreach around significant dates and events, you can help focus people's attention and increase your chances of gaining coverage. Consider compiling a calendar of dates (local, national and international) which might provide you with a news "peg" or "hook." Some days and months you might consider include:

1. January 1st, New Years Day. During the week between Christmas and New Years Day, editors are particularly receptive to articles and opinion pieces that look back over the preceding year's major events. It is likely the fact that nearly 2 million people died from a preventable disease the past year has been overlooked by the media as a "major event." Your perspectives on this may be welcomed here!

2. February 24, anniversary of John Keats' death. The famous poet died from TB at age 25. Most TB deaths are still among ages 15-44. A list of over 150 famous people who have been sick or have died from TB can be found at <http://www.answers.com/topic/list-of-tuberculosis-victims> If any of these historic celebrities are of particular relevance to your community, the anniversary of their birthday may provide you with a unique angle for a letter to the editor or op-ed.

3. March 8th, International Women's Day. Around the world, International Women's Day marks a celebration of the economic, social, cultural and political achievements for women. Still, most women typically have less access to basic health services than men, which is one reason why TB remains one of the biggest infectious killers of women, claiming the lives of nearly one million women each year. Women are also more likely than men to infect their children. Further information on International Women's Day can be found at www.internationalwomensday.com

4. March 24th, World TB Day. When Dr Robert Koch announced his discovery of the TB bacillus on March 24th, 1882 in Berlin, TB was raging through Europe and the Americas, killing one in seven people. Koch's discovery paved the way for the potential elimination of this fearsome disease. But progress towards realizing that promise has come terribly slowly. One of the greatest killers of humans throughout history is still at work, in spite of the availability of effective medicines and tools to control it. World TB Day is a time to mobilize public support for an intensified effort to diagnose and cure TB on a global scale. A wealth of useful information on World TB Day can be found at www.stoptb.org/events/world_tb_day

5. April 7th, World Health Day. World Health Day is an annual event promoted by the World Health Organization. A new theme is selected each year to highlight public health issues of world-wide concern. Visit www.who.int/world-health-day for next year's theme and consider whether it might be relevant to the control of TB.

6. May, a critical time in the US appropriations process. This will of course differ from country to country. Be familiar with your government's legislative calendar. Plan your media relations activities sufficiently in advance of when key decisions are anticipated to be made, in order to influence these deliberations.

7. June or July, G8 Summit. Each summer, the heads of state of G8 countries (US, Canada, UK, France, Germany, Italy, Japan and Russia) meet to discuss issues of global importance. Often, health and development issues are addressed as priorities. In 2008, for example, the Summit will be hosted by Japan. When they previously hosted the G8 in 2000, AIDS, TB and malaria were high on the agenda.

8. September or October, World Bank and IMF annual meeting. Each autumn, the World Bank and International Monetary Fund hold their Annual Meetings to discuss a range of issues related to poverty reduction, international economic development and finance. The Annual Meetings traditionally are held in Washington D.C. two years out of three and every third year in a different member country. About 10,000 people attend the meetings, including nearly 1,000 representatives of the media. While the Bank has provided extensive support to help China, India and Russia begin controlling TB, it is doing remarkably little to help African countries.

9. November 2nd, Congressional elections. In the United States, for example, November is the month for elections. Leading up to elections in your country, consider raising the global TB crisis as an issue in the media. Inquire whether any of the candidates have a position on development assistance and/or national TB control efforts. Let them know what you believe to be the priority issues!

10. December 1st, World AIDS Day. The serious threat TB poses to people living with HIV/AIDS is often overlooked in World AIDS Day media coverage. This is surprising, as in Africa TB is the greatest opportunist infection to threaten the lives of people living with HIV/AIDS. Currently, across the African continent nearly a third of TB cases are HIV-infected, although, in several African countries, these rates are much higher. For example, HIV levels in patients with TB in Namibia, South Africa and Zambia all stand at around 60% and in Botswana, the rate is 80%. Information on World AIDS Day can be found at www.unaids.org

10 Tips for Preparing an Effective News Release

1. **Make sure the headline and first paragraph are powerful and newsworthy.** The most important information should be in the first paragraph. As a rule of thumb, you should spend more time ensuring that the headline and first paragraph are attention-getting and newsworthy as you spend in writing the rest of the news release.

2. **Put the most important information first.** Use the pyramid principle to order information, featuring the most important and newsworthy information at the top and placing more general background information toward the end.

3. **Make use of quotations.** Aim to use a direct quote within the first three paragraphs of the news release, and perhaps a couple additional quotes elsewhere in the release. Using memorable quotes can bring the issue to life and provides the best way to express strong opinions. Remember, a quote is the only part of a news release that is reported word for word.

4. **Keep it short.** Keep the release to no more than two pages. Rather than make the news release too long or cluttered, accompany it with a fact sheet or other background briefing material.

5. **Keep it concise.** Use short sentences of 25 to 30 words. Use paragraphs containing only two or three sentences. A good length for a news release is between 500 to a 1000 words.

6. **Use a simple, punchy news style.** Avoid jargon and technical abbreviations.

7. **Put the date and release details at the top of the page.** State if it is EMBARGOED FOR RELEASE at a specific time and date, or if it is FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE.

8. **Concluding the news release.** At the end of the news release put END or -30- or * * * to indicate the final page of the release. Follow this with contact names, emails and phone numbers where journalists can reach you immediately if they need more information.

9. **Proofread the release carefully!** Make sure all of your figures and statistics are accurate.

10. **Is it really news?** Re-read the news release with one thing in mind, namely the first question a journalist will ask when reading it, which will be, "What's the news?"

Is It News??

Journalists likely will look for the following in determining whether or not your story is newsworthy:

■ Is it local? If it is a national or global story, is there a local angle?

■ Is it something that many people already care about?

■ Is there important new information?
Is it timely and have a sense of immediacy?

■ Is there controversy or conflict?

■ Is it different or unusual?

■ Is it the first, the best or the biggest of something?

Is it tied to an important date or anniversary?

■ Does it involve a prominent person or organization?

■ Is there an interesting visual image associated with the story?

10 Ideas for TB Photo Opportunities

1. **TB clinics.** Take journalists to visit a local TB clinic.

2. **TB patients.** Arrange for a journalist to interview a new TB patient in your community and follow his or her progress throughout the entire course of treatment. Make sure the patient is willing.

3. **Lungs.** Show photographs of lungs "before" with TB, and "after" with DOTS.

4. **Celebrities.** Have a local celebrity or sports star supervise patients taking their medicines.

5. **Outbreaks.** TB outbreaks in schools, meeting places, or clubs often bring attention to TB.

6. **Historic sites.** Exhibit photos and medical equipment related to the control of TB in your country a hundred years ago, or hold a press briefing at the site of a former TB sanatorium in your region

7. **Balloons.** Pass out balloons labeled with the message "The Air We Breathe Can Be Fatal, If We Don't Control TB."

8. **Clocks.** Use a large visible clock that shows somebody becoming sick with TB nearly every 4 seconds.

9. **Publicity stunts.** Creative activities can draw media attention. For example, organize an event where people fall down every 18 seconds drawing attention to how frequently people are dying of TB worldwide.

10. **Photocalls.** Have a leading politician or public figure sign a petition and personally present it to an even higher public official in front of photographers.

10 Tips for Successful News Conferences

1. Consider whether it is appropriate to hold a news conference. You should consider organizing a news conference if you have a big, newsworthy story; featuring the participation of a high profile speaker; are launching a major new initiative; or releasing important new findings or research data.

2. Consider other options to a news conference. If your news story is only moderately newsworthy, consider other ways of disseminating it to journalists such as a “desk launch” (e-mailing or faxing your release to journalists and following up with a call); an informal press briefing over breakfast or lunch; one-on-one briefings with individual journalists; or providing the story to just one media outlet as an “exclusive.”

3. Get the timing right. With few exceptions, never schedule your news conference for evenings or the weekend. Check that you are not competing with other important news events the same day. Hold the event in the morning or around lunch time so reporters can meet deadlines.

4. Find a good location for the news conference. Use a central well-known location convenient for journalists and appropriate to the event. Avoid large rooms that give the appearance that few people attended. Make sure the noise level of the room is low.

5. Give attention to arrangement details. “Murphy’s Law” holds special jurisdiction at news conferences. So be sure to trouble shoot the following in planning your event:

- Reserve space at the back of the room for television cameras, possibly on a raised platform.
- Reserve a quiet room for radio interviews following the news conference.
- Ensure light and sound systems are in working order.
- If possible, have fax, phone and e-mail capability available.
- Consider displaying large visuals, such as graphs, logos or charts.
- Prepare a “sign-in” sheet for journalists.
- Be sure the switchboard of your organization knows where to direct follow-up calls from journalists.

6. Consider what other materials might be useful for the media. In addition to your news release, consider providing journalists with fact sheets, case studies, reports and easily-understood graphs. Speaker biographies and copies of speeches are also appreciated. Consider putting all of these printed materials together into one press kit. Television crews often appreciate receiving B-roll images (broadcast quality video background footage).

7. Invite journalists. A few things to plan for include:

- Keep an up-to-date mailing list or database of journalists that might cover this issue.
- Focus on ensuring that the most influential media attend.
- Place your event in journalists’ diaries seven to 10 days before the event.
- Always make a follow-up call to check that the right journalist has received the information.
- Build interest and anticipation for the event without giving out the real “news” of the story.
- Consider providing general, background briefings to important journalists prior to the event, without disclosing to them the details of your news story.
- Wait until the event to distribute your news release to create an element of suspense. If you decide to distribute it prior, use an embargo to prevent journalists from publishing before the event.

8. Prepare speakers. It is useful to go over the following with your speakers a few days prior to the news conference as well as the day of the event.

- Select a moderator who will introduce speakers and manage questions after the presentation.
- Select appropriate speakers who are charismatic, articulate and authoritative.
- Brief speakers on the event’s main message and prepare them on how to answer difficult questions.
- Ensure that each speaker should present for only three to five minutes.
- Have each speaker make different points, while still focusing on the main message.
- Keep speeches short and simple aimed at a general audience and avoid technical jargon.
- Be sure your speakers are available to stay on for questions following the event.

9. Conduct the news conference. Plan your news conference to last no more than 45 to 60 minutes. Start the event on time — avoid keeping journalists waiting. Encourage lots of questions. Answers should be kept short and reiterate main messages.

10. Follow-up. When the news conference is over, give attention to the following:

- When the event concludes, fax or deliver information to journalists who were unable to attend.
- Gather news clippings of the coverage that result from the news conference and distribute them to important coalition partners and policy makers.
- With a note or phone call, it is sometimes appropriate to thank those who provided good coverage.

10 Tips for Television Interviews

When publicizing a story, you will want to have one or two spokespeople available to interview who are familiar with both their material and the basic rules of interviewing. It is very important that they be prepared. If an interview has already been arranged, they should become familiar with that particular show, programme or publication. Profile the audience and have in mind a typical viewer, listener or reader. In the case of TV or radio, find out if anyone else is appearing, whether the show is live or pre-recorded, and if the audience will be calling in to ask questions.

1. SOCO (Single Overriding Communications Objective). Focus on getting one main message across in the interview. Come back to your main message again and again, expressing it in different ways.

2. Anticipate the questions you may be asked. Prepare a question and answer sheet prior to the interview and practice. Think of the questions you most dread being asked, and practice responding to them. Also be sure to have a “last line” ready. The reporter may end the interview by asking, “Is there anything else you would like to add?” This is a good place to again go back to your “SOCO” and reiterate your main point.

3. Be enthusiastic about the subject. People will often remember the level of your passion about your subject more than what you specifically say. Don't allow yourself to become defensive or angry, or to lecture the reporter or listeners. The best advice is to simply be yourself and rely on the strong points of your own character.

4. “Touch and Go!” Don't allow the interviewer to side-track you from your main message. Instead, turn around an irrelevant question by “touching” upon it and then going on to again address your main point. For example, you might handle a question about TB vaccinations by responding, “Yes, it is important for our children to be vaccinated for TB as this can protect them from the disease during childhood. But the only sure means of protecting them throughout their entire life is to reduce the reservoir of infectious TB cases worldwide.” Watch politicians when they are interviewed on television to learn the art of “touch and go!”

5. Answer questions in full sentences. If it is not a live interview, the final edited version may not include the voice of the interviewer, so avoid one-word answers. For example, answer the question “How many people die from TB each year globally?” not by just saying “Nearly two million,” but with a full sentence such as “Nearly two million people die from TB each year globally”.

6. Know where to look. Look at the interviewer – not the camera -- when talking to him or her. If there is an audience, look at them when appropriate. If you are seated during the interview, sit up straight and lean forward slightly.

7. Know what to wear. Ask the producer what you should wear. In general, your attire should be comfortable, neither too formal nor too casual, and without busy designs or patterns.

8. Keep your answers simple. Don't try to make too many complex points. And don't use jargon or highly technical medical language. Rather, use colorful words, analogies and even appropriate clichés.

9. Use powerful language. The challenge is to shape messages about TB that use compelling rhetoric and create a sense of urgency. There is no need for false alarm or sensation to draw attention to TB. The reality of this contagious air-borne, sometimes incurable, disease that slowly rots the lungs is frightening enough. This is why, in 1993, the World Health Organization declared a “Global TB Emergency” rather than warning of “A Worsening TB Problem in Many Places.”

10. Use memorable phrases. When you have only a few seconds in front of a microphone or in a meeting, you need to use memorable phrases — sound bites — that will stay with your audience long after you have left. The best sound bites get to the heart of the problem without lengthy qualified explanations. Broadcast producers can't resist them, and listeners and viewers remember them. The soundbite should capture and communicate the one key message you want to leave with the audience, if they remember nothing else.

TB Sound Bites

- There is nowhere to hide from TB. Anyone who breathes air is at risk.
- The world is growing smaller and the TB bacilli are growing stronger.
- Every country is at risk from the poor treatment practices of other countries.
- Some TB control efforts are succeeding only in creating stronger TB germs and weaker patients.
- Cure is the best prevention in TB control.
- Tuberculosis was last year's most overlooked tragedy. TB killed more people than all wars, earthquakes, floods, tsunamis, airline accidents, terrorist acts and murders worldwide this past year, and with much less fanfare.

10 Additional Tips for Pros

- 1. What is “old news” to us might still be “news” to others.** As noted before, when you assess your audience, consider what information will be news to them. And also consider that some information which is common knowledge among those of us who have been TB advocates for a while might be new and surprising to others. For example, many journalists are still surprised to learn of the devastating impact TB is having on people worldwide, or the dramatic role it plays in the HIV epidemic.
- 2. Put TB issues in a bigger political context.** In Europe, there has been extensive coverage of TB in the context of the European Union expanding to include additional Eastern European countries with high levels of MDR TB. If you live in Japan, consider for example that Japan is vying for a seat on the UN Security Council. Wouldn't its increased support of the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, TB and Malaria help signal to the world its leadership on critical global issues?
- 3. Use positive reinforcement.** Let your legislative offices know that you are always willing to use your contacts and influence with the media not only to call for action, but to also to praise politicians when they demonstrate leadership on important issues such as the control of TB and increasing financial support for the Global Fund.
- 4. Pick a fight.** Controversy can be good. In democracies, open debate of public policies can help move issues forward if you are on the right side of the debate. If someone in your community takes issue in the media with your call for greater funding to fight the global TB epidemic, this might actually be a blessing rather than a curse. Propose continuing this discussion further on other media outlets such as talk shows.
- 5. Encourage journalists to investigate a story.** Encourage reporters covering your World TB Day event to dig a little deeper. For example, you could suggest they contact your local elected official's office for a statement on what they have been doing to address the global and/or your country's TB epidemic, what their position is on providing greater financial support toward controlling TB, etc.
- 6. Put a human face on your issue.** One person's experience being sick with TB will be more interesting to many journalists than a lot of facts and figures. Thousands of people still become sick with TB not only in endemic countries, but in wealthy countries as well. Explore with your local health department if there is somebody in your community who might wish to speak publicly about their experience with the disease.
- 7. Organize a media tour.** Bring a TB expert or former TB patient to your region for a few days, holding press briefings and organizing interviews in two or three different major metro areas. You might also use this person at a local fund raising event to help cover their travel costs.
- 8. Become a resource to journalists.** If you are particularly well-versed on other issues of health and international development, make your areas of expertise known to key journalists. Let them know you'd be glad to help track down information, contacts and spokespeople on these issues, even if it is not directly related to TB. If ever such help is requested by a journalist, enquire as to what deadline they are up against and be sure to respond promptly.
- 9. Build your reputation as an asset to the media.** When speaking with journalists, be respectful of their time limitations. Cultivate a reputation that you will encourage them to cover a story only when you know it is newsworthy. When you have useful background information or updates to provide them, share this with them for their information, but clearly communicate that you don't expect a story from it. Develop a sense of what kinds of stories various journalists and media outlets like to cover. For example, some health reporters specialize on medical and scientific topics, while others are more inclined to report on the social and political aspects of health.
- 10. Develop “champion journalists”** An ultimate achievement is to help create “champion journalists” committed to reversing the global TB epidemic. Many journalists around the world already consider it to be “their cause” to fight TB and to increase financial support to the Global Fund. Take a long-term view in cultivating and adding other caring journalists from your community to this roster!

10 Dollars . . . What Can It Buy?

In some countries and cities, for example, US\$10 can purchase:

1. Two hours of parking.
2. Three cups of Starbucks Grande Latte.
3. A week (or less) of cable television.
4. One delivery pepperoni pizza (with coupon), not including tip.
5. A bottle of inexpensive, yet relatively good, wine.
6. An automatic car wash.
7. The rental of two or three movies.
8. A cab fare to take you 3.75 miles in New York City.
9. A bag of large popcorn and a soft drink at your local cinema.
10. The life and survival of one human being. In most cases, a six month course of anti-TB medications usually costs just over \$10. Among most people living with TB, these medicines are essential to prevent their premature death or a life chronically disabled by the disease (during which time they could possibly infect hundreds of others). In the case of people who are also co-infected with HIV, the availability of these relatively inexpensive medicines will most likely prevent their death within a month's time.