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of the Global Fund

Close up with

Ida Savadogo

TB Femmes

The fight against tuberculosis must take gender into account. Interview with Ida Savadogo

Background and importance of the TB Women Movement:

1. Can you briefly introduce yourself and tell us about your role as coordinator of the TB Women Movement for the French-speaking region?

I'm Ida Savadogo, Coordinator of the TB Women Movement for French-speaking Africa. I also work as a Program Officer for [Réseau Accès aux Médicaments Essentiels \(RAME\)](#), the Access Network for Essential Medicines, an NGO based in Burkina Faso, and I am the Coordinator of the Global Fund's Regional Learning Hub on Community, Rights and Gender (CRG) for Francophone Africa, hosted by RAME.

TB Women is a global movement that includes a steering committee with representation from all regions. As coordinator for French-speaking Africa, I am responsible for coordinating TB Women activities in this region.

TB Women brings together women tuberculosis advocates and survivors who want to unite their efforts, ideas, skills, passions and determination to create a world free of TB.

2. What is the main mission of the TB Women Movement and why was it important to launch this movement at the regional meeting in Yaoundé?

The core mission of TB Women is to empower communities by promoting gender equality and human rights in the fight against TB, advocating policies and amplifying the voices of women affected by the disease in favor of universal access.

It was crucial to launch this movement at the regional meeting in Yaoundé, in order to give visibility to the stakeholders involved in the fight against tuberculosis in French-speaking Africa, while encouraging all the women present to join this initiative.

3. You've read a statement marking the launch of the movement. Why such a statement? How does it drive engagement?

The declaration marking the launch of TB Women Movement for French-speaking Africa represents a historic moment for the regional chapter of TB Women. The launch was marked by a solemn declaration, followed by signatures by the women survivors and affected by TB present at the meeting. The declaration recognizes the importance of gender in the fight against TB, emphasizing that women and men have distinct roles to play in this fight. It also highlights the crucial need to strengthen women's capacities.

The declaration makes a firm commitment: by signing, women pledge to respect the principles of integrity, responsibility and transparency. It encourages solidarity through collaboration and partnerships, while promoting gender equality, mutual respect and confidentiality, so that no one is left alone in the face of tuberculosis.

4. Can you explain how TB Women Movement fits into the broader framework of efforts to combat tuberculosis in French-speaking Africa?

TB Women Movement for French-speaking Africa aims to create a platform where women from this region can exchange experiences and build their capacities in the fight against tuberculosis, with particular emphasis on community, rights and gender dimensions. The initiative aims to educate women on the early detection of signs of the disease within their families and communities, as well as on the various treatments available, in order to promote rapid diagnosis of tuberculosis.

5. What role did the Challenge Facility for Civil Society and, more broadly, STOP TB Partnership play in the emergence of the movement?

TB Women is a global movement affiliated to TB People. Its launch was supported by the Stop TB Partnership through the Challenge Facility for Civil Society (CFCS). This program facilitated the participation of TB Women survivors at the meeting, encouraging them to join the TB Women Movement in French-speaking Africa.

6. How does the TB Women Movement fit in with DRAF TB's strategies and objectives?

TB Women Movement collaborates with Dynamique de la Réponse d'Afrique Francophone sur la TB ([DRAF TB](#)) – Dynamics of the French-speaking African Response to TB); to promote a world without tuberculosis by fully integrating the gender perspective. This approach aims to strengthen women's involvement in the fight against the disease and ensure greater recognition of their rights.

TB Women in French-speaking Africa: Strategic Objectives

7. What are the strategic objectives of TB Women for the French-speaking region in the short and long term?

TB Women Movement in French-speaking Africa short-term and long-term strategic objectives are the same as those of TB Women worldwide, which can be summarized as follows:

1. Promote the national, regional and global gender equality and TB empowerment awareness program to inform policies and programs.
2. Strengthen the ability of women (in all their diversity) to participate in national, regional and global platforms and initiatives.
3. Knowledge creation through the promotion of gender-disaggregated data, operational research and evidence-based decision-making.
4. Promote better maternal health in the fight against tuberculosis among children.
5. Strengthen TB Women to function as a global network.

8. What strategies will the TB Women Movement put in place to achieve these goals?

To achieve these objectives, the TB Women Movement intends to carry out activities such as:

- Capacity-building workshops for women in the fight against tuberculosis (TB case detection);
- Studies to collect disaggregated data on TB and gender;
- Advocate for increased resources for TB control;

- Advocate for increased clinical and biomedical care;
- Empower women to ensure that their country's national TB strategic plans are gender-sensitive;
- Assessing gender equality in the fight against TB ;
- Empower women to set up gender-sensitive tuberculosis associations;
- Encourage the implementation of activities and advocacy efforts aimed at empowering women to document and lead monitoring initiatives at the community level;
- Encourage women to raise awareness in their communities about the fight against TB;
- Promote women's empowerment and gender equality in the TB research agenda.

Gender-based approach:

9. Why is it crucial to integrate a gender perspective into the fight against tuberculosis, and how does the TB Women Movement intend to address this dimension?

It's true that tuberculosis has a predominantly male face, with more men than women affected. However, socio-cultural barriers limit the full participation of women in this fight. This is why the TB Women Movement promotes gender equality, respect and confidentiality, so that no one is isolated in the face of tuberculosis. Overcoming these gender-related obstacles is crucial to eradicating tuberculosis.

10. Can you give us some concrete examples of how gender-sensitive responses can improve tuberculosis outcomes?

For example, certain socio-cultural constraints prevent women from acting on their own, such as simply visiting a health center. Tuberculosis is often referred to as the disease of the poor, and women, with their often limited financial capacities, are particularly likely to be affected. What's more, they often face stigmatization; many are driven from their homes or confined to their houses when they are diagnosed with TB. These women are often victims of violence.

That's why TB Women want the voices of women – in this case Francophone women – to be heard, so that they can participate in decision-making, influence policy and take whatever action is necessary to end tuberculosis.

Community Involvement and Rights:

11.

How does the TB Women Movement plan to strengthen community involvement in the fight against tuberculosis?

Improving women's knowledge will enable them to raise awareness in their communities.

12. What initiatives are planned to ensure that the rights of women and vulnerable populations are respected and protected in tuberculosis control programs?

TB Women is committed to promoting the implementation of mechanisms such as Community-led Monitoring (CLM), including the [OneImpact](#) digital platform to gather evidence on violations of the rights of women and vulnerable populations. These initiatives aim to systematically document the challenges faced by women with TB and other marginalized groups. By collecting this data, TB Women seeks to raise awareness, advocate for policy change and strengthen the necessary protections for these communities.

Challenges and opportunities:

13. What are the main challenges facing the TB Women Movement in the French-speaking region?

The main challenge remains mobilizing the resources needed to implement the activities. At the same time, female TB survivors continue to face stigmatization.

14. What opportunities do you see for overcoming these challenges and strengthening the fight against tuberculosis among women and vulnerable populations?

The support of partners such as StopTB and L'Initiative are opportunities that TB Women intend to use to meet many challenges.

Collaboration and partnerships:

15. How does the TB Women Movement in the French-speaking region intend to collaborate with other organizations and partners to maximize the impact of its initiatives?

To maximize the impact of its initiatives, TB Women Movement in the French-speaking region intends to collaborate with other sub-regional initiatives such as DRAF-TB, as well as with the networks of umbrella organizations fighting TB in the region.

Impact and future prospects:

16. What tangible results do you hope to see emerge from the TB Women initiative in the French-speaking region?

We also plan to strengthen our collaboration with international partners committed to the fight against tuberculosis, such as the Stop TB Partnership, which is already supporting us. In addition, we will seek to work closely with national TB control programs in our respective countries, as well as with NGO networks and civil society organizations working against TB in French-speaking Africa, such as DRAF-TB.

17. What are your hopes and aspirations for the future of the TB Women Movement in the French-speaking region?

We aspire to greater recognition of women's rights in the fight against tuberculosis, and to their enhanced involvement in this fight. It is our hope that the TB Women Movement will energize the fight against tuberculosis in French-speaking Africa, aiming to prevent all deaths from this preventable disease.

Conclusion:

18. What message would you like to convey to women, communities and international partners about the importance of this movement and the fight against tuberculosis in general?

We call on women TB advocates, especially former TB patients, to join this movement. We ask for the support of communities and international partners to support this initiative, to ensure that the rights of women with TB are respected, and to build the capacity of women to contribute fully to this fight.

19. Is there a question you would have liked to ask, but which was not asked during this interview? If so, please feel free to respond.

We would like to thank you sincerely for this valuable opportunity to present the TB Women Movement.

We would also like to express our gratitude to OFM/AIDSPAN for their invaluable support and collaboration.

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