

TAKE ACTION:

TB in South Africa's mines is a major driver of the global TB epidemic. Mine workers in South Africa have the highest rates of TB in the world, and it is estimated that 760,000 cases of TB each year are linked back to the mines – a staggering 8% of the global total. Yale Epidemiologist Jonathan Smith is producing a powerful film – ‘They Go To Die’ - which brings this issue to life and demands the world's action to save lives in Southern Africa's mining communities. Jonathan will be our guest speaker on January's Conference Call, and will then be bringing his film to the UK in March. We want to work with you and with him to bring his film to the attention of the British public and UK Government decision-makers. Take action:

- **Organise a screening of ‘They Go To Die’** in your local area between 6th and 23rd March, which Jonathan Smith (the film's director) will attend. **You should have now been given a date to screen the film in your community or to help with a screening nearby.** If you haven't, and you want to screen the film, please get in touch. Background Sheet 2 gives you lots of ideas and tips for making this happen.
- **Invite your MP and local media to your screening.** The Resource Pack with this month's action includes template invite letters for you to send as well as tips for getting your local media to cover the event.
- **At your screening, ask your audience to take action on this issue.** On our March Conference Call we'll be giving you lots more information about the actions you, and your audience, can take to persuade mining companies, the UK Government and others to tackle this issue.

You can find details of your MP at www.theyworkforyou.com

Why are we campaigning about TB and mining?

Tuberculosis in South African mine workers might seem like a small or ‘niche’ issue. **It's not.** Physical, biological and social factors all combine to create conditions that see gold miners reporting the highest rates of TB in the world. Mining in Southern Africa is estimated to be responsible for 760,000 cases of TB annually. High levels of HIV infection amongst miners, crowded living conditions, and exposure to harmful silica dust all cause TB to thrive.

The problem gets worse. Many of the miners are economic migrants from surrounding countries who travel to South Africa specifically to work in the mines. They are often on short-term contracts, and so they soon return home, many of them ill with TB and without access to quality healthcare or medication. Because TB is airborne and highly infectious, it is estimated that a migrant worker who has TB that returns home to their families and communities can spread the disease to up to 15 people each year.

Taken together, these conditions have created a huge health crisis. The estimated 760,000 cases of TB per year linked to the mines is the equivalent of around 8% of the total global TB burden - all from this one source. An estimated one-third of TB infections in Sub Saharan Africa are linked to mining activities. And this isn't just

a health issue, it is an economic one too. The current cost of the epidemic in the South African mining sector is estimated at \$866 million per year. **For more background on TB and mining, see Background Sheet 1. You can also download an audio recording of our October 2012 Focus Call on this issue from our website.**

‘They Go to Die’

Jonathan Smith, an epidemiologist from Yale University, has produced a film following the lives of four miners from South Africa and Swaziland who contracted drug-resistant TB and HIV while working at a gold mine.

After failing to improve their TB status at the mine's hospital, the men are sent home to their rural communities and families where vital health-care and treatment are non-existent. It is this process that has been referred to as *“sending them home to die”*.

Smith's film ‘They Go to Die’ aims to put a human face on a complex medical, development and poverty issue. He's determined to get away from lengthy analyses in dusty medical journals – he wants urgent action to save the lives of these men. And that's where you come in.

Read more about ‘They Go to Die’ on Background Sheet 1, and watch the trailer at www.theygotodie.com.

What we need you to do

This month, Jonathan Smith will be our guest speaker on our conference call, so you'll be able to hear from the man himself the importance of this issue, and why he wants to work with RESULTS, and with you, to bring this film to the UK.

In March, Jonathan will be travelling to the UK and will join up with RESULTS for a film screening tour to bring 'They Go To Die' to communities and decision-makers around the UK. The tour will run from 7th-22nd March, and will culminate on World TB Day, 24th March, with an event in Parliament in London.

We need you to organise screenings of the film in your local area in March, working with your fellow grassroots and with support from student network Medsin and from us at RESULTS. The aim is to show the film within your local community, raising awareness and calling for action on this huge health issue.

Background Sheet 2 gives you lots of information about how to successfully organise your screening, and we'll be talking this through on the conference call in January.

Then, once you've got a date and a venue for your screening event, we need you to **invite your local MP and your local media to attend**. That way we'll be able to raise the profile of this issue even more, and your audience and your MP will be in a strong position to push the mining companies, the UK Government and others to take the urgent actions necessary to start saving lives in Southern Africa.

For the screening event, we'll provide you with all the materials you need, like action postcards, background information sheets and online actions like Twitter campaigns, so that you can ask all your audience to take action on this issue, and to lend their name to the campaign for change.

What difference will it make?

This won't be just any old film screening – it will make a real difference to the lives of those in Southern Africa's mining communities. By showing the powerful 'They Go To Die' film you will be playing a key role in demanding action from all the people, companies and organisations that can change this situation. As we mentioned, these asks will be fleshed out more concretely by the time of our March action.

You'll be demanding action from the mining companies themselves, putting pressure on them to implement a three point plan for combatting TB in their mines: Prevent, Find, Treat. Mining companies can make a huge difference by putting in place best practice interventions like improving dust conditions, putting in place systems to actively find and diagnose TB among current and former employees and their families, and committing to provide treatment for diagnosed cases.

You'll be helping your MP to put pressure on the UK Government to play a leading role in the response to the epidemic by using their influence to convene talks with mining companies and industry bodies to improve the response to the health crisis. The UK can also lead by scaling up its support for TB REACH, an innovative TB case-finding fund that supports projects to reach the poorest, hardest-to-reach and most vulnerable communities.

There are other key decision-makers who can help tackle this situation. The Heads of State of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) are already taking the problem seriously and calling for action from their member states. Organisations like the World Bank can play a crucial role in supporting the Southern African regional efforts - providing economic analysis of the problem and facilitating a cross-border regional health response. In our March Conference Call we'll be able to tell you more about how the campaign will seek to create change at all these levels so that there is a coordinated global response to this health crisis.

All the support you need

We know that this action is not a small thing, and we want you to know now how grateful we are for your continuing advocacy efforts to change the lives of some of the most vulnerable people in the world. Your film screening will make a real difference, and we'll be with you every step of the way. We'll be providing you with as much information as possible so that you know what to do, when to do it, and what you should be asking your MP and others to do about this problem. The student network Medsin is also working with RESULTS on this campaign, and they will also be ready to support you in organising your screenings.

Good luck!