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Background

TB Proof is a South African based non-governmental organisation which was established in 2012, by health workers, who had developed occupational TB, as well as students, who were passionate about TB prevention. We strive towards a TB Proof world and aim to achieve this through combining stories and science. Our initial focus was on preventing the spread of TB in healthcare facilities through advocacy and education. Since then, we have expanded our advocacy efforts to include access to new treatment options, empowering community health workers and addressing stigma.

Through involving communities affected by TB and using the latest research, we advocate for high quality TB prevention and care.

Social Media

Facebook

We aim to create a platform where TB survivor stories can be heard and to spread the message that behind the mask, we are all the same. TB can affect anyone.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, TB Proof adapted our World TB Day 2021 campaign to focus on social media. Our top three Facebook posts for World TB Month were that of TB survivor stories with a reach of between 2100 to 11 000 people:

Lara Berry - a healthcare worker and TB survivor shared her story. She highlighted the importance of TB education and reducing TB stigma.

Thato Mayongo - shared about how she visited numerous doctors, before being diagnosed with TB. She emphasised the importance of emotional support and educating people in communities about stigma.

Taylor-Lee Slabb - shared her story of beating TB and also a poem she wrote while undergoing TB treatment.
Click here to watch Thabo Pelesane, TB survivor's inspirational and encouraging video that he shared on World TB Day.

Renier Coetzee showed his support for World TB Day by sharing the photo below.

Peter Ng'ola used social awareness on TB and supported the #TheClockIsTicking campaign for World TB Month.

TB Proof also hosted a series of live events with our volunteer members on our Instagram:

Zolelwa Sifumba was the guest speaker for the Stellenbosch University's anatomy society's virtual talk on TB awareness. She spoke about her TB journey and how she became the doctor she needed as a TB patient. Click here to view this inspirational talk.

**Virtual Talk on TB awareness**

TB champions, Wubshet Tolossa and Peter Ng'ola each shared a photo of them wearing a mask with an encouraging message. This was shared on both our Instagram and Facebook accounts. Click on the links below to view this in more detail:

- [Instagram](#)
- [Facebook](#)
- [Instagram](#)
- [Facebook](#)

Phumeza Tisile was invited by former miss South Africa Tamaryn Green to participate in a discussion about her TB diagnosis on Instagram. Approximately 1700 people viewed this session. Click here to view the full interview.
A Twitter chat with TB experts was held on World TB Day on the latest TB Prevalence Study and the role of community health workers in the national TB recovery plan (click here to read the blog post). Michelle Galloway and Ruvandhi Nathavitharana also joined the Twitter chat.

Phumeza Tisile provided a quote for International AIDS Vaccine Initiative (IAVI) which was shared on Twitter.

Ilsa Hausler and Peter Ng'ola shared the following on their Twitter feeds in celebration of World TB Month:
Another highlight for World TB Day, was the launch of our Community Health Worker TB Champions video. This video aims to celebrate and thank CHWs for their key roles in responding to health emergencies such as COVID-19 and TB!

Portia Muedi was interviewed on MamsFM where she discussed the important role of CHWs in the fight against TB. TB Proof members, Arne von Delft and Wieda Human, were interviewed on PretoriaFM and Radio Sonder Grense (RSG) respectively where they raised awareness on TB and discussed the impact of COVID-19 on TB services. Helene-Mari van der Westhuizen was interviewed on Capricorn FM and Khaya FM where she spoke about the Masks4All campaign and shared general TB information with listeners.
**Online articles**

TB Proof members, Ruvandhi Nathavitharana, Wieda Human, Arne von Delft and Ingrid Schoeman co-wrote the articles, ‘The battle against Covid-19 can provide valuable lessons for those fighting against tuberculosis’, which was published in *Daily Maverick* and ‘Engage communities and leverage COVID-19 innovations to address SA’s TB crisis’ which was published in *Spotlight*.

Phumeza Tisile was interviewed for the article, ‘Fight against tuberculosis: Prioritizing COVID sets back years of progress’ which was published in the *Deutche Welle Paper*. She also contributed along with Zolelwa Sifumba to the article ‘As Covid-19 Derails TB Progress, Advocates Demand Renewed Commitment To End TB’ which was published in *Forbes*.

Helene-Mari van der Westhuizen provided input for an article on the impact of COVID-19 on the TB pandemic which was published by *Three Media Streams*.

Phumeza Tisile was interviewed for the article, ‘Support for TB patients just a phone call away’, which was published in *Spotlight*. Erika Mohr-Holland and Wieda Human were also quoted in this article.

“I would like TB to be treated as a priority and an emergency, just as we responded to Covid-19,” said Phumeza Tisile, a TB advocate with *TB Proof* in South Africa. “Resources are there, yet TB is not prioritized like it should be. We have seen and learnt that everything can be done quickly and efficiently with Covid-19, but this kind of response is missing with TB,” she emphasized.

Peter Ng’ola wrote the article, ‘Greater access to treatment for people with drug-resistant TB’. For the full article, please click here.

**Greater access to treatment for people with drug-resistant TB (MDR-TB)**

Peter Ngo’la Owiti is an advocate for tuberculosis patients in Kenya. Since 1994, he has lost 13 family members to MDR-TB. Read his story.
Portia Muedi featured in the Section 27 article which salutes frontline workers on International Women’s Day 2021. Click here to read more.

Online sessions

In celebrations of Commonwealth Day, Zolelwa Sifumba joined The Duke and Dutchess of Cambridge where she discussed about surviving both TB and COVID-19 and how healthcare workers need protection against airborne diseases. To view the full interview, click here.

Arlette Bekker was the guest speaker at the WITS students’ Physician Society’s online World TB Day event.

Phumeza Tisile was invited by MSF Sweden and The Global Fund to share her TB survivor story and the stigma associated with her TB journey via webinar with approximately 13 700 people. Click here to view the recording of this webinar.

Helene-Mari van der Westhuizen was interviewed on Newzroom Afrika where she spoke about ‘One year of COVID-19 in South Africa’, with a particular focused on mask-wearing.

Both medical doctors and TB survivors, Arlette Bekker and Zolelwa Sifumba were interviewed on SABC’s Health Talk.

Goodman Makanda was interviewed on SABC News where he discussed his TB journey and why TB preventive therapy is crucial to #EndTB.
Phumeza Tiisle, XDR-TB survivor, shared her story with health care workers from Brooklyn Chest Hospital in Cape Town. While being a TB patient, Phumeza was admitted at this hospital. This was also where she woke up one morning, not being able to hear. She then found out that she lost her hearing due to the injectable drug that she had to take as part of her TB treatment.

Peter Ng’ola joined World TB Day celebrations with health workers and community health workers in Makueni, Kenya. Peter also assisted with the collection of TB survivor stories as requested by Nation media house. These stories are yet to be published.

Covid-19 protocols were adhered to during these events.

**Closing**

TB Proof would like to thank all our members and partners who did their part this World TB Day to raise awareness. Without the support of passionate TB activists, this World TB day would not have been as big a success. Thank you!

For any questions, please contact Wieda Human (TB Proof’s Communications Officer) at wieda@tbproof.org.