



The deaths of more than 74 000 children from tuberculosis (TB) could be prevented each year through measures outlined in the first ever action plan developed specifically on TB and children.

The "Roadmap for childhood TB: towards zero deaths", launched today by global TB leaders in Washington D.C., estimates that US\$ 120 million per year could have a major impact on saving tens of thousands of children's lives from TB, including among children infected with both TB and HIV.

Every day, more than 200 children under the age of 15 die needlessly from TB – a disease that is preventable and curable. WHO (the World Health Organization) estimates that as many as 1 in 10 TB cases globally (6 to 10% of all TB cases) are among this age group, but that the number could be even higher because many children are simply undiagnosed. The new roadmap builds on the latest knowledge of the disease and identifies clear actions to prevent these child deaths.

“Any child who dies from TB is one child too many,” says Dr Mario Raviglione, Director, Global Tuberculosis Programme at WHO. “TB is preventable and treatable, and this roadmap focuses on immediate actions governments and partners can take to stop children dying.”

The launch of the first roadmap on TB and children follows increasing awareness on the urgent need to address the issue. Under the child survival movement's banner of A Promise Renewed, more than 175 countries signed a pledge in June 2012, vowing to redouble efforts to stop children from dying of preventable diseases, including tuberculosis.

### **A small price tag to halt a global disease**

The US\$ 120 million a year in new funding for addressing TB in children from governments and donors includes US\$ 40 million for HIV antiretroviral therapy and preventive therapy (to prevent active TB disease) for children co-infected with TB and HIV.

The funds will also go towards improving detection, developing better medicines for children and integrating TB treatment into existing maternal and child health programmes. Getting more paediatric health professionals to actively screen for TB with better tools, i.e. drugs, diagnostics and vaccines, will help capture the full scope of the epidemic and reach more children with life-saving treatment sooner.