

# Will India succeed in its unexpected struggle to defeat the syndemic of COVID-19 and tuberculosis in the post-covid world?

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India accounts for a quarter of world's Tb burden. The disruptions during the lockdown to control COVID-19 pandemic, has triggered escalation in Tuberculosis (Tb) burden which may likely cause a lag in achieving the SDG focused on a Tb free India by 2030. It can take years to get back to pre-pandemic levels, due to increase in accumulated pool of undetected and untreated TB cases during the lockdown. The post-covid India will see a snowball effect in the rise of Tb cases and will have to deal with additional 13% Tb cases resulting from a 3-month first lockdown alone between 2020-2025 and 19% increase in preventable deaths due to TB between 2020-2025 in India.

Publications on assessing the impact of COVID-19 on Tb burden through mathematical/ epidemiology prediction models became very common in the past few months. These models were developed by researchers to assess the impact of lockdown scenarios on cascade of Tb care in India. The focus of evidence-based policy formulations relies on predictive models and systematic reviews

along with other forms of research methods. These methods generate indicative data for the government programs established to eradicate and control Tb for identifying potential strategies to bring the Tb response back on track.

Potential users of the predictive models include researchers and clinicians interested in evidence-based medicine, and policy makers to support decision making to develop guidelines. Therefore, it is essential to assess these predictive models for robustness, bias and uncertainty to assess their validity and reliability based on best modelling practices to inform decision making.