



The Foundation for Innovative New Diagnostics and India Health Fund partner Municipal Corporation of Greater Mumbai; expand access to Covid-19 and Tuberculosis dual testing in Mumbai

- To expand rapid, onsite Covid-19 confirmatory testing for symptomatic people who test negative to rapid antigen tests, and facilitate tuberculosis screening of people with Covid-19 symptoms, FIND and IHF are deploying five Truenat™ machines at select MCGM-run hospitals in Mumbai

February 16, 2021, Mumbai: The Foundation for Innovative New Diagnostics (FIND) and the India Health Fund (IHF), a Tata Trusts initiative, today announced that they are deploying five Truenat™ machines – an innovative, multi-disease diagnostic platform developed by Goa-based Molbio Diagnostics – at select MCGM-run hospitals in Mumbai, to support testing efforts led by the Municipal Corporation of Greater Mumbai (MCGM) for, both, Covid-19 and tuberculosis (TB).

Covid-19 and TB share similar clinical presentations and are both transmitted through respiratory droplets and aerosols. A combined strategy to tackle both diseases is in line with the Union Health Minister's [recent pledge](#) to build on private and social impact efforts to fight TB. It also bolsters the government's approach to address both diseases with the same focus.

Ramping up testing in Mumbai to meet the dual challenges of Covid-19 and TB includes implementing recent [bi-directional screening](#) guidelines (i.e. to conduct Covid-19 screening in all people diagnosed TB, and screen for TB all those who are Covid-19 positive), issued by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MoHFW), Government of India.

Truenat is a chip-based, molecular diagnostic platform, developed in India in collaboration with FIND and with support from IHF, among others. It delivers test results in under 60 minutes. It uses reverse transcription polymerase chain reaction (RT-PCR) to test for multiple diseases including TB, and the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) [validated an assay for Covid-19](#) before the end of May 2020.

Today's announcement will enhance rapid Covid-19 confirmatory testing, at the same hospital, for symptomatic people who test negative to rapid antigen tests. Each of the select MCGM sites are now being equipped with the Truenat platform, requisite laboratory staff, test cartridges and consumables. The testing facilities will be in the same premises or in close vicinity of the rapid antigen testing site(s), which will minimize sample collection and transportation challenges, reduce waiting times for patients, and limit the chances to spread Covid-19. As a result, more cases of Covid-19 should be identified, better patient management will be possible, and hotspots can be rapidly identified – in line with MCGM's 4T (Tracing, Tracking, Testing and Treating) strategy.

Madhav Joshi, CEO of India Health Fund, said, “By supporting multi-disease platform solutions such as Truenat, we are accelerating the identification, development and deployment of innovations to scale and augment existing health system capacities. Innovations are enabling the strengthening of the healthcare response and to that effect we are supplementing the MCGM’s sustained efforts in the screening, diagnosis of TB and Covid-19.”

Sanjay Sarin, Head of FIND India, said: “Faced with the dual burden of TB and Covid-19, integrated screening for both diseases is a critical step forward for Mumbai. This collaboration with IHF and MCGM will save lives by enabling timely testing and streamlining patient processes, which will help limit the spread of disease.”

FIND’s involvement in this project is supported by multiple donors. A full list of FIND’s Covid-19 donors can be found [here](#).

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About FIND

FIND is a global non-profit organization that drives innovation in the development and delivery of diagnostics to combat major diseases affecting the world's poorest populations. Our work bridges R&D to access, overcoming scientific barriers to technology development; generating evidence for regulators and policy-makers; addressing market failures; and enabling accelerated uptake and access to diagnostics in low- and middle-income countries (LMICs). Since 2003, we have been instrumental in the development of 24 new diagnostic tools used in 150 LMICs. Over 50 million FIND-supported products have been provided to our target markets since the start of 2015. A WHO Collaborating Centre, we work with more than 200 academic, industry, governmental, and civil society partners worldwide, on over 70 active projects that cross six priority disease areas. FIND is committed to a future in which diagnostics underpin treatment decisions and provide the foundation for disease surveillance, control and prevention. For more information, please visit www.finddx.org

About India Health Fund

India Health Fund is a collaborative initiative seeded by Tata Trusts and the Global Fund, conceived to:

- Accelerate India’s progress towards the elimination of infectious diseases in line with the objectives of the Government of India and UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), by identifying and supporting the development of breakthrough solutions which help accelerate eradication of these diseases.
- Aggregate funds and deploy resources to finance the development of these solutions to enable better outcomes in diagnosis, treatment, control, and monitoring of infectious diseases.
- Collaborate with the public and private sectors to develop and scale up new solutions, business models and financing mechanisms. For details see: <http://www.indiahealthfund.org/>

About Tata Trusts

Since inception in 1892, Tata Trusts, India’s oldest philanthropic organisation, has played a pioneering role in bringing about an enduring difference in the lives of the communities it serves. Guided by the principles and the vision of proactive philanthropy of the Founder, Jamsetji Tata, the Trusts’ purpose is to catalyse development in the areas of health, nutrition, education, water, sanitation and hygiene, livelihood, digital transformation, migration and urban habitat, social justice and inclusion, environment and energy, skill development, sports, and arts and culture. The Trusts’ programmes, achieved through direct implementation, partnerships and grant making, are marked by innovations, relevant to the country. For more information, please visit <http://tatatrusts.org/>

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