

Loving Gaze thanks the National Tuberculosis and Leprosy Control Programme (NTBLCP) for the generous donation of the GeneXpert test device platform to St Kizito Clinic, in Lekki.

On Thursday 30th March 2017, Dr **Alda Gemmani**, the Medical Director of St. Kizito Clinic, welcomed **Dr Hussein Abdur Razzaq** the Co-ordinator of Lagos State TBLC program, **Mrs. Ineke Huitema** the Acting Director of KNCV Tuberculosis Foundation in Nigeria and **Mr Jeffrey Ewing**, Chairman and Managing Director of Chevron Nigeria to celebrate a major step forward in the fight against tuberculosis. Currently, St Kizito Clinic is the only comprehensive diagnostic and treatment TB-DOTS centre with experienced and trained health personnel and standard laboratory operating in Eti-Osa, and Lagos Island LGA since 2005. Recently, the National Agency for the Control of AIDS (NACA), through the recommendation of the Lagos State TBLC, donated a GeneXpert test device platform to St Kizito Clinic. This donation comprised the installation of the equipment at the facility and the training of staff on GeneXpert technology.

The GeneXpert test will substantially improve the diagnosis of tuberculosis among the Eti-Osa community and beyond. This landmark achievement will enable the detection of Multi-Drug-Resistant Tuberculosis (MDRTB) as well as hard to diagnose especially among People Living with HIV.

Dr. Gemmani praised this initiative championed by the Lagos State TB program and reported the 2016 World Health Organization Tuberculosis Report *“Unfortunately, case detection in Nigeria is still very low at 16%, while Nigeria is among the six countries accounted for 60% of the new cases in 2015: India, Indonesia, China, Nigeria, Pakistan and South Africa. Nigeria estimates an incidence of 586,000 new cases in 2015 and 180,000 deaths every year. Early and accurate diagnosis is essential for prompt and adequate treatment.”*

Dr Hussein Abdur Razzaq, Lagos State Co-ordinator National TB program (NTBLCP), adds: *“Tuberculosis (TB) still constitutes a serious public health problem in Nigeria, despite the implementation of the DOTS centres since 1993 and the adoption of the World Health Organization (WHO) “Stop TB strategy” in 2006. We set 2017 as the year of accelerated case finding for TB, we believe that the GeneXpert machine in St Kizito Clinic will further improve their capability to detect TB cases and prevent further infections in the community.”*

St Kizito Clinic’s fight against TB

St Kizito has been involved in tuberculosis care and treatment since 2005 with the use of standard TB diagnostic methods and anti-koch’s therapy as recommended and provided under the NTBLCP through the Lagos State Tuberculosis, Buruli Ulcer and Leprosy Control Program.



This effort was recognized by the Lagos state Ministry of health, which formally designated St Kizito Clinic as a TB/DOTS site operating with FMOH/NTBLCP guidelines of Nigeria. Since then, over 10,000 patients have benefited from Tuberculosis diagnosis, treatment and support services from the clinic. Great accolade also goes to Chevron Nigeria whose continuous support has strengthened the capacity of St. Kizito Clinic to care for TB patients with the construction of a dedicated DOTS unit. Their noble efforts include the installation of an X-ray machine and chemistry auto analyser for TB diagnostic support. This support is an important approach to health care such that every person, every family, and every community is considered to be a potential resource regardless of their vulnerability. This approach increases awareness among the community members.

St Kizito Clinic's TB Fight Key Numbers (2007-2016)

St Kizito Clinic, as a TB DOTS Centre (DOTS stands for Directly Observed Treatment Short course) has been at the frontline of the fight against TB. Being able to physically observe patients as they take the TB medications guarantees treatment compliance and this approach has proven to be efficient and effective in ensuring that the patients do not interrupt their treatment thereby curbing MDRTB and MDX-RTB emergence. Between 2007 and 2016 St Kizito Clinic reached out:

- Indirect beneficiaries: screening, education and health support: 527,060 (total attendance to clinic)
- TB related visits for clinical care, diagnosis, treatment and follow up: 36,402
- New confirmed TB infections treated: 1,217
- Up to 1,040 patients have successfully completed anti-tuberculosis therapy

St Kizito Clinic Medical Trainings

In November 2016, St Kizito Clinic organized a medical international workshop tagged "Update on Clinical and Laboratory Methods in Tuberculosis and STIs and Laboratory Infection Control" on improving case detection and providing comprehensive care to mitigate Tuberculosis and its complications including Multi Drug Resistant Tuberculosis (MDRTB). Among the speakers were Dr Alda Gemmani, Medical Director St Kizito Clinic, Dr Hussein Abdur Razzaq, Lagos State Co-ordinator National TB program (NTBLCP), and the key note speaker of the program, Prof Vittorio Sambri, Head Medical Microbiologist -The Greater Romagna Hub Laboratory - Cesena, Italy.

GeneXpert Test Device Platform

The diagnosis of active TB can be quite complex since many of its symptoms are similar to those of other common diseases. Nigeria has one of the lowest detection rates in the world with only 16% of cases being notified to the National TB, Buruli ulcer and Leprosy Control Programme (NTBLCP). The use of the rapid Xpert MTB/Rif® test has expanded substantially since 2010 when WHO first recommended its use. The test simultaneously detects TB and resistance to rifampicin; the most important TB medicine. Diagnosis can be made within 2 hours and the test is now recommended by WHO as the initial diagnostic test in all persons with signs and symptoms of TB.



It purifies, concentrates, amplifies (by rapid, real-time PCR) and identifies targeted nucleic acid sequences in the TB genome, and provides results from unprocessed sputum samples in less than 2 hours, with minimal hands-on technical time.

Tuberculosis (TB) is still one of the top 10 causes of death worldwide.

In 2015, there were an estimated 10.4 million new TB cases worldwide, of which 5.9 million (56%) were among men, 3.5 million (34%) among women and 1.0 million (10%) among children. People living with HIV accounted for 1.2 million (11%) of all new TB cases. There were an estimated 1.4 million TB deaths in 2015, and an additional 0.4 million deaths resulting from TB disease among people living with HIV.¹ TB is an infectious disease caused by TB bacteria (*Mycobacterium tuberculosis*) and most often affects the lungs. TB infection can cause serious damage to the lungs and other organs. Tuberculosis is curable and preventable. TB is spread from person to person through the air. When people with lung TB cough, sneeze or spit, they propel the TB germs into the air. A person needs to inhale only a few of these germs to become infected. Common symptoms of active lung TB are cough with sputum and blood at times, chest pains, weakness, weight loss, fever and night sweats. Many countries, including Nigeria, still rely on a long-used method called sputum smear microscopy to diagnose TB. Trained laboratory technicians look at sputum samples under a microscope to see if TB bacteria are present. Microscopy detects only half the number of TB cases and cannot detect drug-resistance, that is why the GeneXpert testing approach is advised and now practiced as a more reliable method for quick detection of TB cases.

ABOUT LOVING GAZE

Loving Gaze is an independent not-for-profit organization, with 25 years of experience in Nigeria. We serve the unprivileged community in Lagos and Taraba State, through educational activities, basic health care service, women empowerment and vocational training. Run by a multi-cultural team of 150 Nigerian professionals, Italian expatriates and international volunteers. We recognize and respect each individual life and dignity without gender, religious or ethnic boundaries. We believe there is a desire for joy, hope and positive change in each of us. Our purpose is to serve with care, joy and professionalism people in need, to ignite hope and seeds for growth. For more info, visit our website: www.lovinggaze.org.

PRESS CONTACT

Barbara Pepoli, Loving Gaze General Manager, mob +234 0806 251 8907, e-mail Barbara.pepoli@lovinggaze.org

¹ WHO Global Tuberculosis Report 2016