



Kenya Medical Association

NATIONAL EXECUTIVE

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Kenya Medical Statement on World Tuberculosis (TB) Day 2026

World TB Day is commemorated annually on 24 March to raise awareness about tuberculosis and renew commitments to ending the disease. The date marks Dr. Robert Koch's 1882 discovery of Mycobacterium tuberculosis, which enabled the subsequent development of diagnosis and treatment. Today, World TB Day serves as a critical platform to review progress, celebrate achievements, and mobilize multi-sectoral action toward the global targets of ending TB by 2030.

In this collective effort, the Kenya Medical Association, as the umbrella professional association for doctors in Kenya, plays a pivotal role. Established in 1968, KMA is mandated to champion the welfare of doctors and advocate for quality healthcare. In the fight against TB, KMA provides technical leadership, supports evidence-based policy formulation, facilitates continuing medical education for healthcare workers, and advocates for sustainable financing and equitable access to TB services across all counties. Notably, KMA was instrumental in the signing and commissioning of the Kochi Declaration of 2024, a landmark international commitment emerging from the International Leadership Summit of Medical Associations. This declaration emphasizes private sector engagement as a critical strategy for TB elimination, recognizing that in high-burden countries, 60% to 80% of patients initially seek care from private providers.

By signing and commissioning this declaration, KMA committed Kenya to strengthening public-private mix approaches, enhancing case detection, improving treatment quality, and advancing global health equity in alignment with World Health Organization strategies and the United Nations High-Level Meeting targets.

Furthermore, TB financing remains far below targets, with only 3.8% of funding coming from domestic sources and approximately 96% reliant on international donors. Declining global health funding is therefore increasing the urgency for domestic and county-level investment. KMA has consistently called upon the national and county governments to increase domestic financing for TB, recognizing that sustainable progress cannot be achieved without local ownership and investment.

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The theme for this year's World TB Day 2026 is "Yes! We can End TB! Led by Countries! Powered by Innovation!"

This theme places strong emphasis on country leadership, innovation, accountability, and community action. It calls upon counties, professional associations like KMA, and all stakeholders to take ownership of the TB response and harness innovative approaches to accelerate progress. KMA embraces this theme by championing the adoption of new health technologies, including shorter all-oral regimens for drug-resistant TB, child-friendly TB formulations, and advances in diagnostic tools such as digital chest X-ray with artificial intelligence-assisted interpretation.

The Kenya Medical Association reaffirms its commitment to supporting the Ministry of Health, county governments, healthcare workers, and both local and international communities in the fight against TB. Through evidence-based advocacy, professional development, and unwavering dedication to quality healthcare, and building upon the commitments made in the Kochi Declaration, KMA will continue to stand alongside all stakeholders until Kenya is free from the burden of tuberculosis.

Yes! We can end TB in Kenya!

This statement was prepared by members of the KMA Public Health Committee, with special acknowledgement to:

- Dr. Naimah Barasa (Author)
- Convenor Dr. Leon Gakuo
- Co-Convenor Dr. Cynthia Chemonges



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