

Autumn newsletter

Dear friends of India Health Fund,
 This quarter, the public health world had a lot going on – from the urgency of the antimicrobial resistance crisis that topped the agenda at the UN High-Level Meeting last week; to the new regimen for MDR-TB being approved in India last month. The last three months at India Health Fund were eventful too, with key updates in infectious disease innovations including those in digital health, antimicrobial resistance, and climate and health. As we highlight progress across key initiatives, our portfolio, and partnerships, we welcome you to glance through these and thank you for being a part of our journey.

Moving The Needle – Portfolio Updates

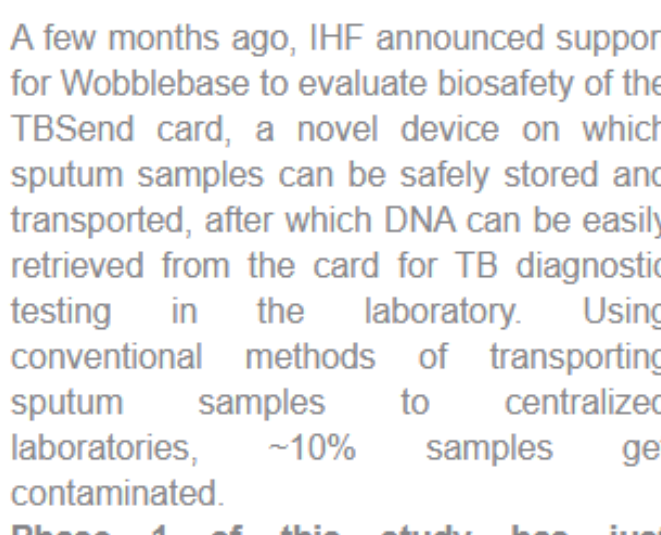
Healseq’s multiplex RT-PCR test for TB detection and treatment efficacy monitoring is now ready

- With IHF’s support, Healseq is developing a first-of-its-kind RT-PCR test for
- detecting extrapulmonary TB and pulmonary TB in non-sputum producers;
 - monitoring TB treatment response so that poor and intermediate responders can undergo standard DR-TB testing and treatment modification; and
 - determining when TB patients are fully cured and their treatment can be ended.

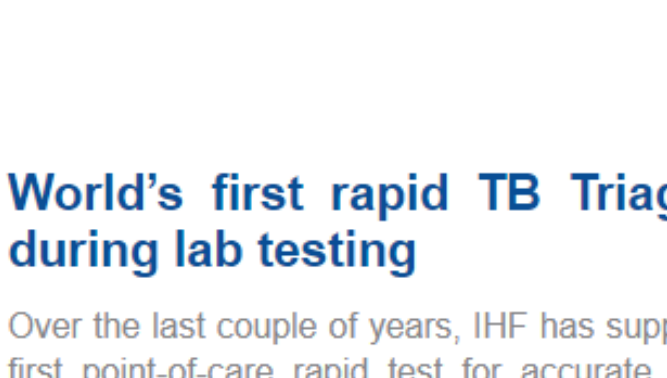
The host-based biomarker test is now ready with a cost-effective RT-PCR kit that is showing 91% accuracy. In Progress is an easy-to-use mobile application to help clinicians easily interpret test results and provide actionable insights. The test also holds potential for other use cases like therapy personalization, diagnosis of paediatric TB, subclinical TB, and identifying latent TB populations that are at high risk of progressing to active TB.

100% accuracy achieved for ASSURED fever panel for dengue, chikungunya and malaria

With IHF’s support, Ameliorate is developing ASSURED, a fever panel that can simultaneously detect dengue, chikungunya, and malaria, and co-infections, all in one test. The test’s multi-centric validation with dengue, chikungunya and malaria samples has now been completed with the test demonstrating near 100% accuracy. The test is now awaiting CDSO license, after which manufacturing at scale and deployment will begin.



Biosafety evaluation of TB Send Card Kicked off



A few months ago, IHF announced support for Wobblebase to evaluate biosafety of the TB Send card, a novel device on which sputum samples can be safely stored and transported, after which DNA can be easily retrieved from the card for TB diagnostic testing in the laboratory. Using conventional methods of transporting sputum samples to centralized laboratories, ~10% samples get contaminated.

Phase 1 of this study has just commenced at ICMR-NIRT (National Institute for Research in Tuberculosis), Chennai, with interim results expected in November.

World’s first rapid TB Triage test unlocks 85% accuracy during lab testing

Over the last couple of years, IHF has supported Stellar for the development of the world’s first point-of-care rapid test for accurate, low-cost triage of potential TB patients. This quarter, Stellar’s lateral flow assay achieved an accuracy of 85% during lab testing, and its development is likely to be completed by October, after which multi-centric clinical validation with ICMR will begin at four sites.

Swasa, an app that detects TB using cough signatures, starts pilot deployment



Our grantee Salcit Technologies has just kicked off the pilot of Swasa, an AI-based mobile application for detecting pulmonary TB by analyzing cough sounds, at clinical and community sites in All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) Delhi, AIIMS Bhubaneswar, AIIMS Gorakhpur, and JIPMER Pondicherry. Funded and supported by IHF and ACT Grants, the study is set to validate the use of Swasa for TB detection.

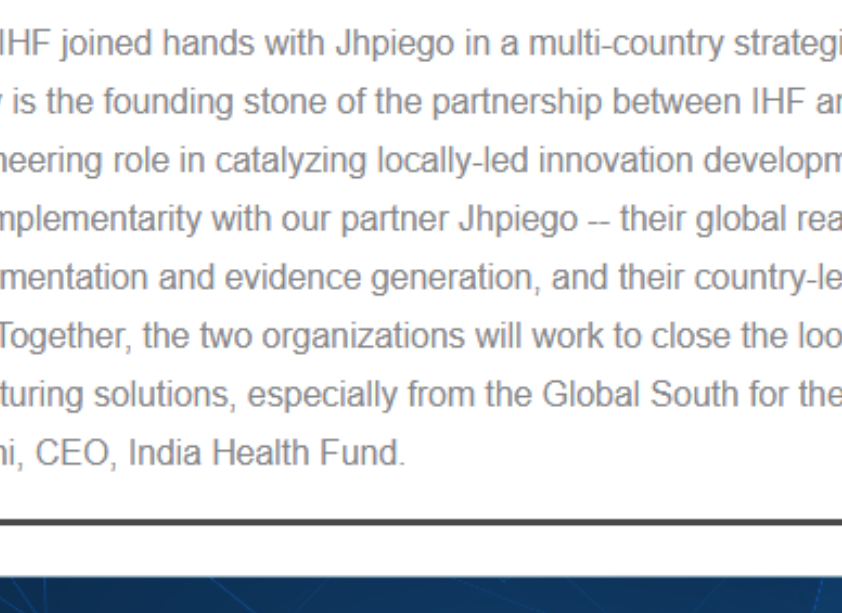
New Partnerships

Stronger together



The past quarter witnessed the forging of two new key partnerships. IHF’s MoU with Collective Good Foundation (CGF) will jointly leverage the power of Digital Tools and diagnostics in tackling climate-sensitive infectious diseases. With India Health Fund’s strengths in catalyzing the development of innovations, and CGF’s stronghold on the ground through the Samyak urban Health initiative, the partnership is set to gather the missing evidence needed for innovations to be adapted into locally relevant solutions and adopted in the Indian public health system.

United for health



Also this quarter, IHF joined hands with Jhpiego in a multi-country strategic partnership. “Complementarity is the founding stone of the partnership between IHF and Jhpiego. With IHF playing a pioneering role in catalyzing locally-led innovation development, we look forward to the complementarity with our partner Jhpiego – their global reach, their strong expertise in implementation and evidence generation, and their country-level experiences from the ground. Together, the two organizations will work to close the loop on identifying problems and nurturing solutions, especially from the Global South for the Global South,” said Madhav Joshi, CEO, India Health Fund.

Blog Round-Up

Below, is a quick recap of blogs published by IHF this quarter:

Breathing New Life into Lung Health: The Role of Technology in Overcoming Chronic Respiratory Diseases
 An article by Dr. Shibu Vijayan, Chief Medical Officer- Global Health, Qure.ai

Recognizing the five blind spots in tackling antimicrobial resistance: An urgent call
 An article by Dr. Poshan Thapa, Postdoctoral Fellow at the School of Population and Global Health at McGill University, Canada

Measuring and Acting on AMR – Before it’s too late
 An article by Dr. Nerges Mistry, Director and Trustee of The Foundation for Medical Research, Mumbai and The Foundation for Research in Community Health, Pune.

Combating Antimicrobial Resistance in Low- and Middle-Income Countries: Essential Strategies for Resource-Limited Settings
 An article by Dr. Kayzad Soli Nigiriwaala, Ex-Assistant Director (Research), Foundation for Medical Research

A diagnostic route to eliminating Extrapulmonary Tuberculosis
 An article by Dr. Jay Sarojini Michael, MD FRCPATH, Professor, Department of Clinical Microbiology Christian Medical College, Vellore

Revolutionizing TB Diagnosis With Diagnostic Network Optimization
 An article by Archana Beri, MD, Principal Scientist – Lab Systems, FND

Targeted Next-Generation Sequencing (tNGS) is set to transform the diagnosis of drug-resistant tuberculosis
 An article by Anita Suresh, Director of the Genomics and Sequencing Unit at FND, and Swagata Uplekar, Principal Scientist in the Genomics & Sequencing Unit at FND

Events corner

Here is a glimpse of events that IHF was a part of this quarter:



Catalyzing the Digital Health Landscape in India at BIRAC Global Bio India Summit 2024

IHF was part of the panel on “Catalyzing the Digital Health Landscape in India” at BIRAC’s flagship event Global Bio India Summit in Delhi (13th September 2024). Moderated by Anurag Agrawal (Ashoka University), panelists included our CEO Madhav Joshi, Neeraj Jain (PATH), Anand Krishnamurthy (Dassault Systèmes), Kolfi Sarath (Boltzmann Labs), Karthik Adapa (WHO) and Dr. Rajendra Pratap Gupta, PhD.



Healthcare’s Shifting Paradigm – Bridging Economics and Impact at Prabhav 2024

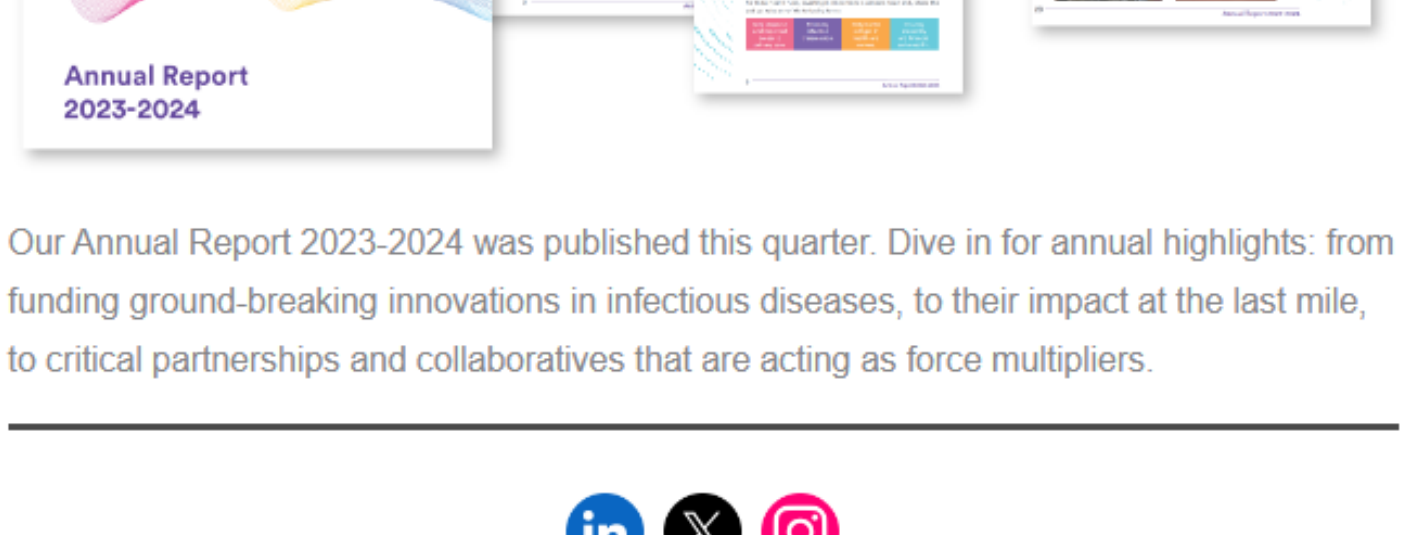
On 12th September 2024, at Impact Investors Council-led Prabhav 2024, IHF was part of a discussion on “Healthcare’s Shifting Paradigm – Bridging Economics and Impact” with co-panelists LM Singh from Vital Strategies, Prateek Madhav from AssisTech Foundation (ATF), Rajat Jain from Sunfox Technologies, Shivani Sahai from Quadria Capital, Mayur Sirdesai from Somerset Indus Capital Partners, and Vibha Tilwani Sharma, CA, CFA from Vilagro.



Panel at the OECD - OCDE netFWD Health and Climate Working Group meeting on the sidelines of 77th World Health Assembly, Geneva

Back in June, on the sidelines of the 77th World Health Assembly, IHF was delighted to be part of the panel at the OECD - OCDE netFWD Health and Climate Working Group meeting in Geneva, speaking alongside colleagues from Aga Khan Foundation; Rockefeller Foundation; Africa Europe Foundation and WHO.

In case you missed it



Our Annual Report 2023-2024 was published this quarter. Dive in for annual highlights: from funding ground-breaking innovations in infectious diseases, to their impact at the last mile, to critical partnerships and collaboratives that are acting as force multipliers.