

## Research

The National TB Control Programme is based on global scientific and operational guidelines and evidence. As new evidence became available, RNTCP has made necessary changes in its policies and programme management practices. In addition, with the changing global scenario, RNTCP is incorporating newer and more comprehensive approaches to TB control. To generate the evidence needed to guide policy makers and programme managers, the programme implemented measures to encourage operational research (OR).

The program requires more knowledge and evidence of the effectiveness of interventions to optimize policies improve service quality and increase operational efficiency. This has led to the realization of the need for a more proactive approach to promoting OR for the benefit of the TB control efforts. Furthermore, the program seeks to better leverage the enormous technical expertise and resources existing within India both within the Program, and across the many medical colleges, institutions and agencies.

Operational research aims to improve the quality, effectiveness, efficiency and accessibility (coverage) of the control efforts.

To promote and support OR, a Research Cell has been constituted at CTD to Coordinate the National Standing Committee on Operational Research comprising of 14 individual and institutional members. This Committee mainly provides technical guidance to CTD on OR and expertise to identify OR priority areas for commissioned research. Apart from it there are Zonal and State Operational Research Committees which identify priority areas for research as relevant to their Zone/State, based on the national research agenda.

The scientific agenda, developed by the Central TB Division and partners, articulates opportunities to understand RNTCP weaknesses, develop solutions, and refine policies to better achieve the programme objectives. The RNTCP promotes and supports research on issues which are of key relevance to guide interventions and to monitor and evaluate the impact of the programme through collaboration with specialized institutions.

Studies on the RNTCP Operational Research agenda is prioritized for funding by the RNTCP. Proposals are to be submitted in the prescribed RNTCP OR proposal format as per prescribed mechanisms to the state and zonal OR committees. Proposals with a budget of Rs. 5 lakhs or less will be reviewed and forwarded by the State OR Committee to the respective zonal OR committee for approval or rejection and it will not require approval by CTD. Proposals of more than Rs. 5 lakhs will be reviewed and sent to CTD for consideration. PG students undertaking research on a topic listed on the RNTCP Operational Research agenda are eligible for a grant of Rs 30,000. Approved proposals would be funded by the respective state from the account head on "Medical College" if the proposal is from a Medical College and from the "research and studies" head if the proposal is from another type of institution or agency. Funds for OR proposals will be released in three instalments – 50 % at the beginning of the study, 30% at mid-point of the study when a particular milestone has been achieved and remaining 20% after the final report is made available. Thesis grants will be released at 80% in the beginning and remaining 20% after the final report is made available.

Projects that involve human subjects require documentation of ethical approval from an institutional ethical committee. Before submission, all studies should have agreement from the host (public or private) institution where they will take place, and the endorsement should accompany the proposal.

For detailed information on the research priority areas, processes for submission of the research proposals, funding mechanisms, levels of approval & details of researches done over a period of time under the programme, the information is available on the official web site of National TB Control programme [tbccindia@gov.in](mailto:tbccindia@gov.in)