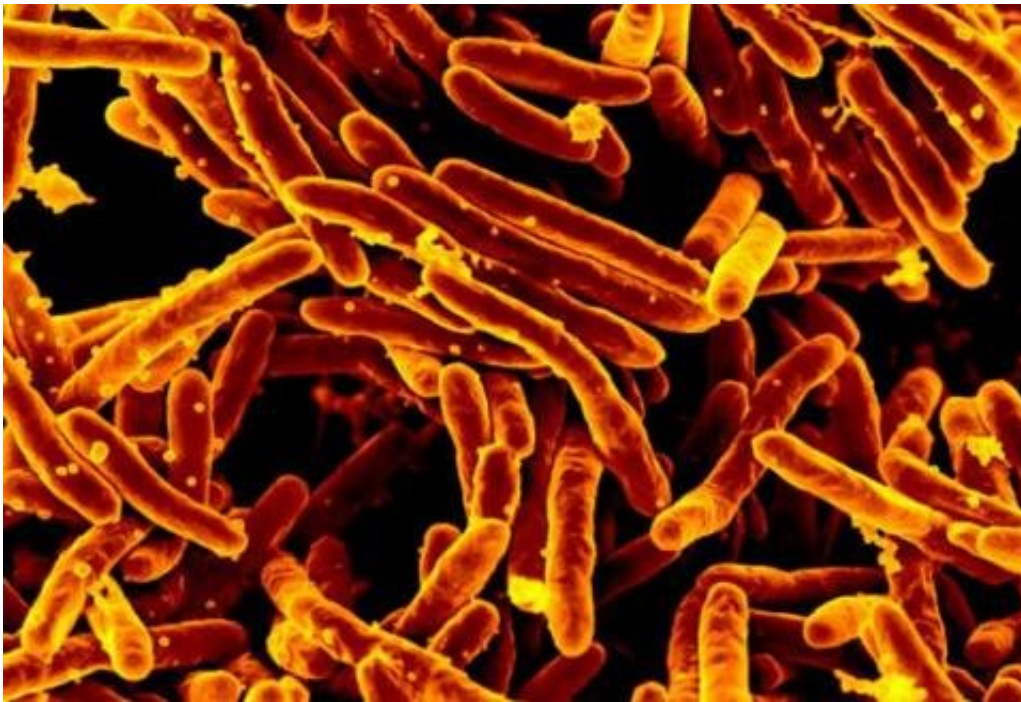


# New WHO handbook on systematic screening for active tuberculosis

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Scanning electron micrograph of *Mycobacterium tuberculosis* bacteria, which cause tuberculosis. Credit: NIAID

New World Health Organization (WHO) guidelines and handbook on systematic screening for active tuberculosis were published in March 2021. The handbook cites two studies from Ph.D. student Olivia Biermann's doctoral thesis, which she collaborated on with researchers from the department and members of the IMPACT TB project.

One study is included in the WHO [handbook](#) to emphasize that both the potential benefits and harms of [screening](#) should be considered throughout the screening and diagnostic pathway—not just in the planning phase. The other study is used to underline that key stakeholders should be involved in the planning of screening, in particular district or regional managers who are often familiar with specific implementation challenges.

The latter study was also referenced when describing that in the initial phases, national [tuberculosis](#) programs may not have allocated funding for new screening activities, and funds might have to be sought from alternative domestic and external sources.

Professor Knut Lönnroth of the department served as a member of the WHO Guideline Development Group. Previously, Knut led the development of the 2013 WHO guidelines for systematic screening when he was still based at the WHO Global TB Program. The new WHO guidelines and handbook on systematic screening for [active tuberculosis](#) [are available for download](#).

**More information:** Olivia Biermann et al. 'A double-edged sword': Perceived benefits and harms of active case-finding for people with presumptive tuberculosis and communities—A qualitative study based on expert interviews, *PLOS ONE* (2021). [DOI: 10.1371/journal.pone.0247568](#)

Olivia Biermann et al. Active case-finding policy development, implementation and scale-up in high-burden countries: A mixed-methods survey with National Tuberculosis Programme managers and document review, *PLOS ONE* (2020). [DOI: 10.1371/journal.pone.0240696](#)

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