

For Immediate Release

Contact:
Richard Kiy, (619) 336-2256
rkiy@icfdn.org

INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY FOUNDATION RELEASES STUDY OF TUBERCULOSIS IMPACTS AND SOLUTIONS IN THE SAN DIEGO-TIJUANA BORDER REGION

SAN DIEGO — April 20, 2010 — In an effort to educate and inform policy makers and key civic leaders about emerging trans-boundary issues and challenges related to the spread of tuberculosis in the San Diego-Tijuana border region, the International Community Foundation has published *“Tuberculosis in the San Diego-Tijuana Border Region: Time for Bi-National Community-Based Solutions.”*

The report is the result of more than a year of cross-border collaborative research, analysis and information exchange between the International Community Foundation and researchers from the UC San Diego School of Medicine, San Diego State University’s School of Public Health, the Universidad Autonoma de Baja California (UABC) Facultad de Medicina y Psicología, County of San Diego Health & Human Services agency, Public Health Services and Baja California’s Secretariat of Health. Funding for the study was provided by the California Wellness Foundation, an organization committed to improving the health of the people of California through grants for health promotion, wellness education and disease prevention.

Once a disease thought to have been eradicated across most of the developed world, today the incidence of tuberculosis (TB) is again on the rise. As the most heavily trafficked land border crossing in the world with close to 60 million crossings a year and an unparalleled level of bidirectional border

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crossers, the San Diego-Tijuana border region is particularly vulnerable to infectious diseases such as TB. The incidence of TB in San Diego remains one of the highest in the nation and was double the U.S. national average in 2007. The incidence of TB in Tijuana is over 2.8 times the Mexican national average.

The report identified several concrete steps that could be taken by the government, business and the philanthropic sector to reduce the incidence of TB in the San Diego-Tijuana border region by investing in laboratory diagnostics, prevention, infection control, expanded surveillance and expanded cooperation of area employers in the areas of TB health education, diagnosis and treatment. In the case of laboratory diagnostics no such services currently exist in Baja California yet could be provided for less than \$213,000 a year permitting the state to accurately identify, detect and diagnose tuberculosis cases using cultures and drug susceptibility testing.

Additional key findings:

- Over 600 cases of pulmonary TB were confirmed and reported annually in Tijuana in 2006 and 2007 with an overall rate of 46 per 100,000 inhabitants, which is substantially higher than rates in neighboring Mexican states.
- Since 2000 there has been an average of over 300 new TB cases per year in San Diego County, of which nearly 40 percent were born in Mexico according to the San Diego County Health & Human Services Agency.
- The estimated cost of TB in San Diego is a minimum of \$21.3 million annually for an average of 300 cases. This includes approximately \$12.7 million in lost earnings for patients due to the disease.

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A complete copy of the report may be obtained at www.icfdn.org/reports/tbstudy.php.

About the International Community Foundation:

The International Community Foundation is a public charity founded in 1990 with a mission to expand the level of charitable giving internationally by U.S. donors with an emphasis on Mexico and Central America. For more information regarding the International Community Foundation, visit www.icfdn.org.

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