

# SUCCESS STORY

## Saving Baby Mary's Life: Learning to Diagnose TB Early and Accurately

**The Challenge TB (CTB) project has equipped health workers with the right skills to diagnose and treat TB in both children and adults.**



MSH

*Baby Mary after two successful weeks on anti-TB treatment.*

***“I came to realize that my daughter got TB from me ... I thank the nurses for diagnosing the sickness that has been affecting my family...”***

***-- David Kwaje,  
Mary's father***

At nine months old, Mary Yeno had lived with tuberculosis for nearly half of her short life before being accurately diagnosed and treated.

Mary's mother, Flora Faida, carried the baby to three different health facilities without success. “She was coughing and had difficulty breathing. She stopped breastfeeding,” said Faida.

Faida and her husband, David, are farmers in Kenyi village in South Sudan's Central Equatoria State. Their livelihood grew more precarious when Baby Mary fell sick in August 2015. Faida used her savings to pay for treatment, but the health workers they saw never suspected TB.

While adults can be diagnosed routinely by sputum examination, infants and children with TB are often misdiagnosed, as TB can mimic nearly any other disease. Few health workers in rural facilities have been trained in pediatric TB.

In January 2016, Faida brought her daughter to Yei Hospital. There, in the TB Management Unit, Nurse Loise Nyoka finally diagnosed Mary with TB, using a diagnostic score chart. The score chart presents questions about family history of TB, coughing, breastfeeding, and malnutrition. The answers revealed that Mary had TB; she was also severely malnourished. The USAID-funded Challenge TB (CTB) project had equipped health workers at Yei and other hospitals with the skills and tools to diagnose and treat TB in all age groups.

CTB continues to mentor health workers in Central Equatoria on contact investigation, diagnosis, and treatment. In 2015, the project mentored 40 clinicians and nurses (23 men and 17 women) in a variety of facilities.

Meanwhile, health workers at the hospital screened Mary's parents. David, it turned out, had been coughing for two years. He was diagnosed with TB in November 2015 and was immediately enrolled in treatment.

“I came to realize that my daughter got TB from me,” said David. “I thank the nurses for diagnosing the sickness that has been affecting my family.”

As David began treatment, his daughter was already recovering. After two weeks of medication and therapeutic feeding, Mary was discharged from Yei Hospital to finish her regimen back at home.