



# Evaluation of routine contact investigation in Ethiopia: a missed opportunity in preventing childhood TB

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## Background

The 2013 global roadmap for childhood tuberculosis calls for countries to implement contact screening and provide preventive therapy to children younger than 5 years.

## Objective

To evaluate the implementation status of child contacts screening and management in Addis Ababa.

## Method

Structured questionnaires were administered to smear positive TB patients living with children ≤ 5 years in their household and care providers in TB, HIV and child health clinics of primary health care setting in Addis Ababa

## Results

From 27 health centers visited in Addis Ababa, 688 registered smear positive TB patients were approached of whom 203 (29.5%) reported to have household contacts of 5 years and below. Health care workers had requested 48 (23.6%) to bring their child for TB screening and 45 (93.8%) had complied with the request.

A total of 230 children were living in a household with a smear positive PTB patient and 152 (66.1%) of these children were not screened for TB. Among the 78 (33.9%) children screened, 2 had TB, 76 screened negative and only 3 (3.8%) were put on IPT. None of the HCW interviewed said to routinely record and report figures on contact screening and IPT provision.

## Conclusion

Household child contact screening and management was sub-optimal and an important opportunity lost in preventing TB among children under 5 years of age. This could be attributed to untrained staff and lack of monitoring tools at key entry point such as child health clinic.

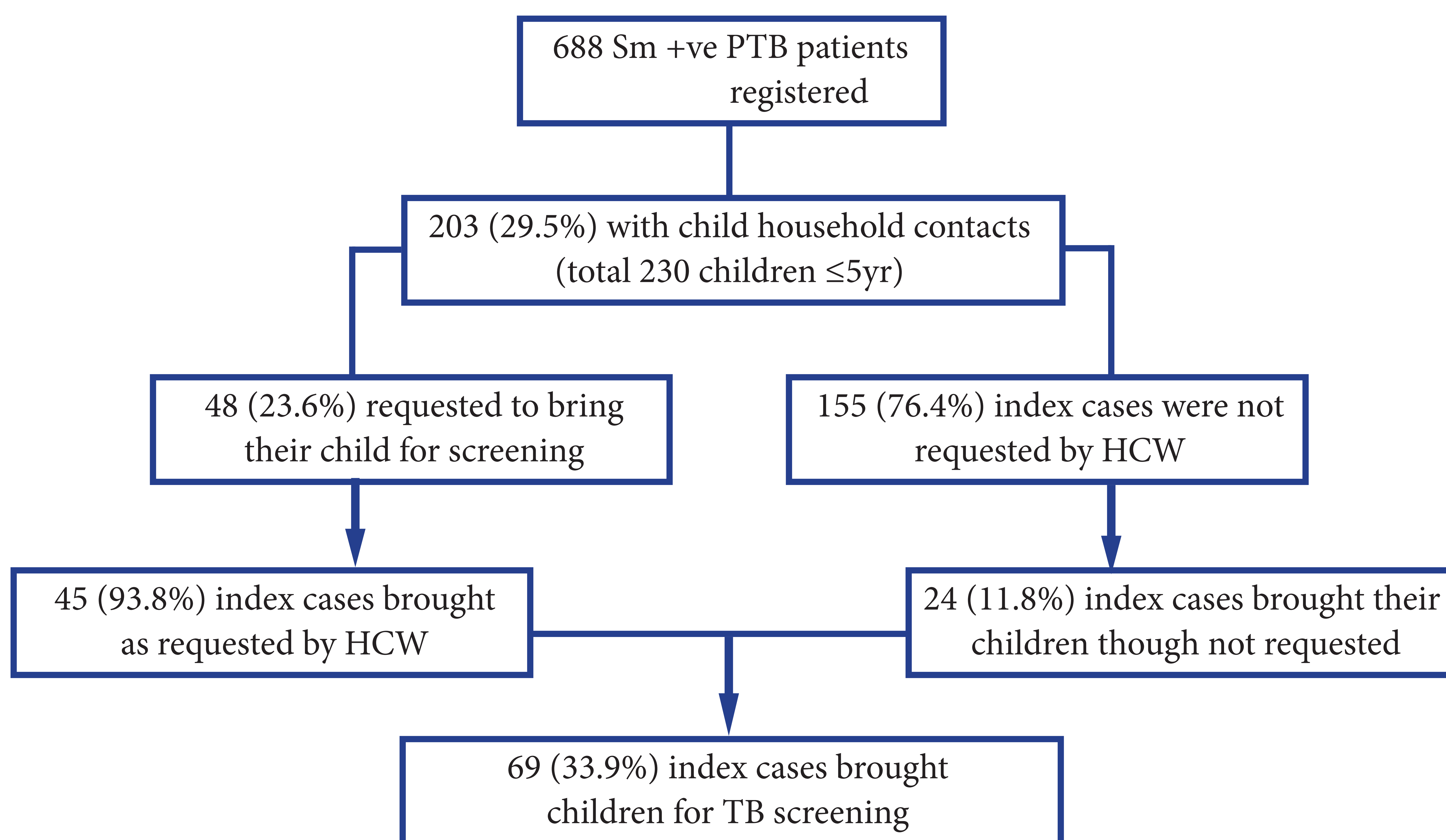


Fig 1: Flow diagram outlining the proportion of index TB patients brings their household child contact for tuberculosis screening

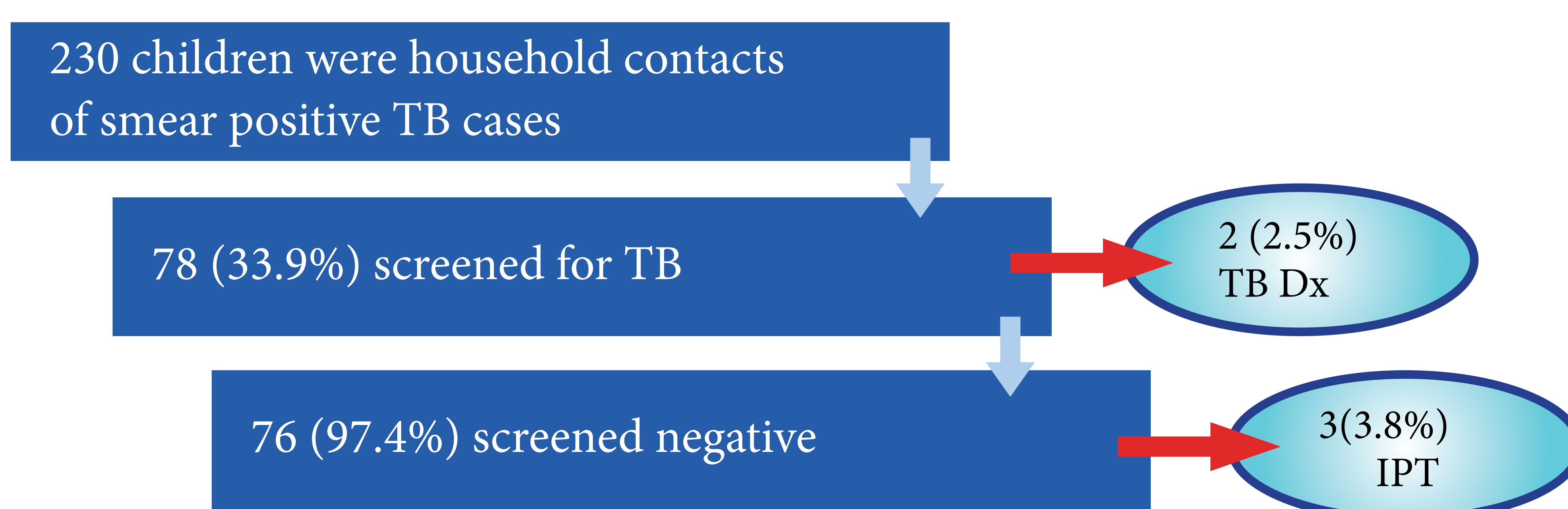


Fig 2: Performance of TB screening & preventive treatment among household contacts of children