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Monday, 25 June 2012 13:01 -

Dr Chan visits clinic responsible for reducing TB prevalence in Brazil’s largest slum

The Director-General of the World Health Organization (WHO), Dr Mararet Chan, visited the primary clinic responsible for reducing TB prevalence in Rocinha, Brazil’s largest slum.

The clinic adopts the "Directly Observed Treatment" (DOTS) approach to control tuberculosis, which results in fewer people abandoning treatment, fewer cases of drug resistance and higher cure rate. In the case of the Rocinha slum, the cure rate rose from 68% to 84% with the combination of DOTS and the family health program run by 11 teams, each one in charge of a subdivision of the slum.

The modern and confortable facility includes a primary health care unit, a psicosocial sevices unit, and small emergency unit. Prior its inauguration in 2009, there was no public health care in the community, except for a small TB clinic run by Catholic Church. Rocinha has 70,000 inhabitants.

“I am very impressed by the way the public health authorities are able to address the major determinants of health in this clinic, including poverty and lack of education”, said Dr Chan. “Brazil is showing important leadership in making the right connections between ill-health and its determinants.”

Dr Chan was accompanied by the Executive Director of the United Nations Population Fund, Babatunde Osotimehin, the Brazilian Minister of Health, Dr Alexandre Padilha, and other health authorities.

See photos from the visit and others from Rio+20 here !