



# THE STORY OF THOMAS

## **FACILITATOR READS ALOUD:**

Meet Thomas, an HIV-positive shop owner and single father who recently lost his wife to TB. She left him with baby Nando and their teenage daughter Bella. They all live with his mother, Luisa.

Thomas feels guilty that he never told his wife he was HIV-positive. He fears she may have been HIV-positive too, which could have led to her TB and death. She may have even passed HIV on to their baby, who is not thriving.

### ***SUGGESTED DISCUSSION POINTS***

**Stigma**

**Disclosure**

**Relationship between TB and HIV**

**PMTCT**



## **FACILITATOR READS ALOUD:**

If only I could turn back time, Thomas thinks, remembering his pregnant wife and her terrible cough. His mother tried taking her to Francisco, the neighborhood healer, where she got herbs and potions, but they never stopped the cough. And even as she was giving birth, she was coughing up blood.

## ***SUGGESTED DISCUSSION POINTS***

**TB symptoms**

**Action steps (upon observing symptoms)  
for family and community**

**Role of traditional healers**



## **FACILITATOR READS ALOUD:**

Soon after Nando was born, his sister Bella got really frightened about their mother's condition, so she contacted Maria, the local community health worker. Maria visited their home, but by the time she arrived, mama was near death. Maria told the family that she suspected mama had TB and that it was time to say their goodbyes.

### ***SUGGESTED DISCUSSION POINTS***

**TB detection**

**Communication between community health workers and families**

**Advocacy for quality TB treatment**



## **FACILITATOR READS ALOUD:**

After Mama's death, Maria had a heart-to-heart discussion with Thomas. Since he had lost a lot of weight and started to cough, she suggested that he might have TB or be HIV-positive. She also suggested that since the baby was not thriving, he might have TB or HIV, too. Without being judgmental, and in complete confidence, she urged that the whole family get tested for TB.

## ***SUGGESTED DISCUSSION POINTS***

**Reinforce link between HIV and TB**

**Care & treatment**

**ART for newborns**

**TB testing**

**Introduce TB treatment (DOTS)**

**Preventing the spread of TB**

**Stigma**



## **FACILITATOR READS ALOUD:**

This presented a huge conflict for Thomas. He felt very guilty about not telling his wife that he was HIV-positive. He blamed himself for his foolish ways, for taking his wife for granted, and for not getting her the medical help she needed sooner. He took full responsibility for his wife's death.

## ***SUGGESTED DISCUSSION POINTS***

**Disclosure**  
**Gender equity**  
**Care and treatment**  
**Prevention for positives**  
**Male involvement**



## **FACILITATOR READS ALOUD:**

Unable to cope, Thomas goes to Francisco, a healer and long-time family friend, and pours his heart out. Francisco, apologetic that he did not have the power to save Thomas's wife, recommends that he follow Maria's advice and get himself and his family tested for TB. In addition, he tells Thomas to think about disclosing his HIV status, at least to his family, and to get his baby tested for HIV to avoid further pain, sickness, and death.

### ***SUGGESTED DISCUSSION POINTS***

**Stigma**  
**Disclosure**  
**Role of traditional healer**  
**TB testing**  
**VCT**



## **FACILITATOR READS ALOUD:**

Thomas takes Francisco's advice and visits the local health clinic. He learns that he has TB and begins treatment. That night, Thomas has a dream. In his dream, he has the strength and power to make a huge difference in the future of his family and community. He wakes up with an idea and visits Maria to discuss the idea and get her involved.

### ***SUGGESTED DISCUSSION POINTS***

**Community mobilization and  
involvement**  
**Male involvement**





**FACILITATOR READS ALOUD:**

Thomas shares his idea with his mother and daughter as well. He asks them to extend an invitation to store customers, neighbors, and community leaders to attend a big community meeting at his store.

***SUGGESTED  
DISCUSSION POINTS***



**Advocacy**

**Community mobilization**



## **FACILITATOR READS ALOUD:**

With the whole community gathered in front of his store, Thomas shares some of the valuable lessons he's learned. He tells them that TB is contagious and deadly, but when discovered and treated, it is curable. He announces his plan to sponsor a community TB Testing Day at his store, with transportation and refreshments provided. He asks Francisco to say a few words before introducing Maria, who educates the community about TB symptoms, testing, and treatment.

### ***SUGGESTED DISCUSSION POINTS***

**TB symptoms**  
**TB testing**  
**TB treatment**  
**TB control**



## **FACILITATOR READS ALOUD:**

TB Testing Day was a success. With the support of his family and friends, Thomas is staying on treatment without much difficulty. Baby Nando tested HIV-positive, but has started treatment and is thriving. Bella feels proud that her dad has become a leader in the community and tells him how proud mama would have been. She tells Thomas not to feel guilty for mama's death and that he has taught her some valuable lessons, most importantly, that we all have the ability to learn and change, and truth is the healthy choice.

## ***SUGGESTED DISCUSSION POINTS***

**Prevention for positives**

**ART**

**PMTCT**

**Family & community involvement  
(adherence support)**

**Patient's right to quality treatment**

**DOTS**

