

### **CAB of the Quarter: NIRT**

The STREAM Stage 2 site at the National Institute for Research in Tuberculosis (NIRT) in Chennai created their CAB in September 2017 and for the first time, they have integrated community engagement into their approach to a clinical trial. This CAB is coordinated by the Society of the Sisters of the Sacred Heart of Jesus and is made up of 10 CAB members from civil society organizations working in the field of public health with a focus on TB and HIV. All are TB champions who have several years of experience working in this field, many with personal experience of TB, and others as caregivers for TB patients.

"We have a patient-centered approach and try to be as available to trial participants as we can be during their treatment period," Sister Mary Francis Josephinal, CAB Coordinator. The strength of the Chennai CAB lies in the commitment and experience of its members. The Chennai CAB members strongly believe in the role of their CAB, ensuring that patients receive necessary support during their treatment period which is vital to achieving successful treatment outcomes.

The Chennai CAB also provides assistance to participants and their families. For example, the CAB provides nutritional support and advice on personal care and hygiene. When families are struggling financially, the CAB can provide skills training that may lead to additional income for the family and jobs which remain their main source of income, even after their treatment has finished.

The affected community consider the CAB members part of their extended family. Trial participants report that they appreciate the patient-centered personal care that they receive from the Chennai during the trial period. By playing an active role within the community as part of the STREAM trial, the NIRT CAB based in Chennai provides a sense of hope to MDR-TB patients.

### **"STREAM is not only reaching patients but it also touches the whole family"**

The Chennai CAB members also work to raise the profile of TB at the district and state levels, advocating for the allocation of funds to improve TB care. The CAB also works to strengthen communities by organizing awareness programs, and outreach activities.