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What is behind programmatic treatment outcome definitions for tuberculosis?

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Following the launch of the DOTS (directly observed treatment, short-course) strategy in 1995, the World Health Organization (WHO) recommended the evaluation of treatment outcomes [1, 2]. The methodology and the forms for recording and reporting, in order to programmatically evaluate the proportion of tuberculosis (TB) cases achieving treatment success ("cured" and "treatment completed"; table 1) or dying, failing treatment and being lost to follow-up, were initially developed by Karel Styblo in the 1980s as part of the pilot programme of TB control in Tanzania [1, 2].