

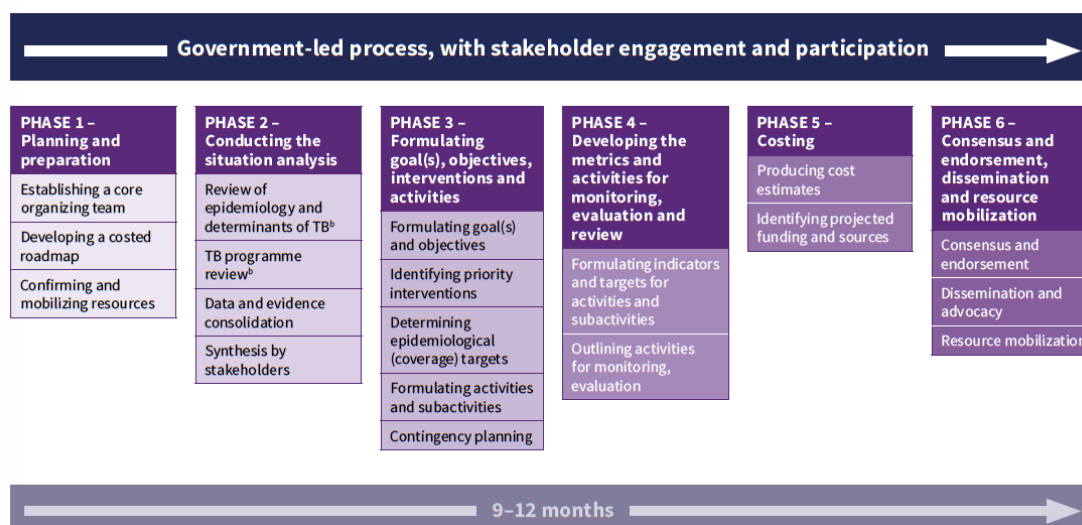


Introduction

A national strategic plan (NSP) for TB is a key document that guides national authorities and stakeholders in how to comprehensively address the TB epidemic through interventions within the health sector and across other sectors. These interventions are implemented as part of collective efforts towards achievement of the health-related Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). National strategic planning is a critical step for ensuring that the TB response at country level reflects the changing context at national, regional and global level. The NSP guides efforts to end TB, and it should contribute to strengthening Primary Health Care (PHC) and the attainment of Universal Health Coverage (UHC) and the SDGs.

The 'Guidance for national strategic planning for tuberculosis' encourages the use of a people-centric focus in the development of national TB strategic plan (NSP). It highlights the importance of government stewardship and ownership, promotes alignment with national health strategy and other health programmes, emphasizes multi stakeholder and multi-sectoral engagement as one of the key steps for multisectoral accountability for TB. It incorporates new guidelines, tools and approaches to TB programming and planning, and lessons learned.

Summary of the process of developing a TB strategic plan



The role of strategic planning in national efforts to end TB

A TB NSP provides direction for the country's efforts to end TB. It outlines the overall goal, strategies and interventions prioritized by national health authorities and stakeholders and provides guidance on how these are coordinated across various sectors as one of the key steps for multisectoral accountability for TB. The NSP translates global, regional and national commitments into national and subnational TB-related targets and activities to be implemented to achieve these targets and provides the basis for mobilization of domestic and external resources for the TB response.

When well-planned and coordinated, the strategic planning process:

- facilitates holistic planning, ensuring linkage with other national strategies, and correct placement of the TB response in the context of the broader UHC and PHC agenda, with a human rights-based approach to reduce inequalities;
- provides an opportunity to assess the country's situation, and adopt and adapt international commitments and recommendations to the local context;
- facilitates the identification of relevant stakeholders and their engagement to - comprehensively identify the needs of people affected by TB;
- builds capacity of TB-affected communities, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and other stakeholders on planning for TB, and strengthens their meaningful engagement in the TB response;
- facilitates critical interdisciplinary and multisectoral review of the country's TB situation, contributing to a shared understanding of the burden, distribution and determinants of the disease;
- facilitates collective exploration of the underlying causes and system factors that need to be addressed to end the TB epidemic;

- provides a platform for collectively identifying and building consensus on the NSP interventions, and of services according to the needs and preferences of people affected by TB; and
- provides an opportunity to increase awareness and strengthen the commitment of political and other leaders to the TB response, and to mobilize the required resources.

Components of a national TB strategic plan



Strategic planning cycle for TB

The strategic planning cycle for TB should be synchronized with the health sector planning cycle. This is critical for multisectoral planning and domestic resource mobilization that aligns with the country's financial planning cycle, and for optimizing synergies across programmes. The involvement of all key stakeholders within and beyond health (including other ministries or higher levels of government, civil society, private sector and development partners) throughout the entire cycle of strategic planning, implementation and review facilitates ownership of the interventions by various sectors. In turn, this helps to leverage resources in these sectors and facilitate allocation of additional resources where necessary. This is in-line with the [WHO Multi-sectoral accountability framework on TB \(MAF\)](#) which aims to accelerate progress to end TB by supporting and strengthening the TB response beyond the health sector, and the accountability of governments and all stakeholders at global, regional and country levels.

Focus on ethics, equity and human rights

Ensuring universal access to quality TB services requires attention to relevant human rights issues, including:

- legislation and instruments on ethics, equity, human rights and gender, related to access to health and social protection services and to other interventions addressing TB determinants;
- the availability and nature of engagement of TB stakeholders in the promotion and protection of human rights, particularly for marginalized populations such as ethnic minorities, prisoners and migrants;
- stigma and discrimination, and their implications for the TB response and access to TB services;
- gender-based values and norms that limit access to health and social services, and interventions addressing TB determinants;
- ethics standards applied in the provision of services to address TB and its determinants

Key considerations for strategic planning

Below are good practices to be considered when developing a TB strategic plan at national, and in some countries, subnational level:

- Government stewardship and ownership
 - Strategic planning should be led and coordinated by the highest level of leadership possible
 - The process should facilitate engagement and participation of key stakeholders, institutions and agencies within and beyond the health sector
- Alignment with the End TB Strategy and relevant global and regional strategies
- Alignment with the national health strategy and other health programmes
 - The TB NSP should complement plans for programmes responsible for addressing TB comorbidities, determinants, disability and social protection, and other relevant programmes
- Multisectoral and multistakeholder engagement at national and subnational level
 - All relevant government authorities, public and private stakeholders, partners, civil society and TB-affected communities should be engaged throughout the development and implementation of the strategic plan within and beyond the health sector

- Adapting the strategic plan at subnational level
 - Given the heterogeneity of populations, geographical variations, infrastructure, local health financing mechanisms, and TB disease burden and determinants, there is need to consider and adapt the strategic plan at subnational level
- Promoting quality care that is effective, safe and people-centred
 - Inadequate quality of care is responsible for significant mortality in low- and middle-income countries. Strategic planning should facilitate interventions to improve overall quality of care for people affected by TB.

WHO role in supporting countries with NSP development

WHO considers development of national strategic plans as one of the key activities which shape the direction of TB programme at the country level. Several partners are providing support to countries on strategic planning, and WHO will provide leadership and facilitate coordination to ensure alignment and complementarity.