Meeting Report

Meeting of the
WHO Civil Society Task Force on TB
8 - 9 June 2022

Meeting Report
Background

The WHO Civil Society Task Force on TB (CSTF) was established in December 2018 as a platform for dialogue and exchange to harness the untapped potential in civil society engagement and accelerate progress to End TB. The Task Force aims to emphasize a set of seven comprehensive key actions in efforts to end TB in the SDGs era. Fifteen members were selected with inputs from an independent Selection Panel. The fifteen members are: Amir Khan, Pakistan; Bertrand Kampoe, Cameroon; Blessina Kumar, India; Chamreun Sok Choub, Cambodia; Evaline Kibuchi, Kenya; Ezio Tavora dos Santos Filho, Brazil; Fatima Karmadwala, United Kingdom; Harry Hausler, South Africa; Jamila Ismoilova, Tajikistan; Jeffry Acaba, Thailand/Philippines; Nyan Win Phyo, Thailand; Paran Winarni, Indonesia; Roger Kamugasha, Uganda; Tenzin Kunor, USA; Yuliya Chorna, Canada/Ukraine.

The CSTF members are leading efforts to mainstream the voices of TB civil society and survivors in the work of WHO, national TB programmes and multisectoral partners. WHO Global Tuberculosis Programme (GTB) has been ensuring the task force members are an integral part of all priority workstreams, including systematic membership in all guideline development processes. The Progress Report on the UN Political Declaration on Tuberculosis includes CSTF inputs. An overview of achievements, progress and future plans of CSTF can be found in the progress report here. The report highlights key achievements of the task force since its establishment in late 2018, focusing on high-level engagement and advocacy, action around the UN Secretary-General’s priority recommendations to accelerate the TB response, impact in high TB burden countries, action in the time of COVID-19, mainstreaming task force voices in the work of WHO, boosting multi sectoral accountability and strengthening the WHO guideline development process.

The two-days in-person meeting was organized on 8-9 June 2022 in WHO Headquarters, Geneva. The meeting observes strict health and safety protocols due to COVID-19 in-person meeting rules and regulations on WHO premises.

Meeting Objectives

1. To discuss status and future perspectives in CSTF members’ and civil society engagement at global, regional and country levels, through consultation with WHO regional TB representatives;
2. To discuss the CSTF mandate post-2022 as well as the transition plan towards new membership;
3. To obtain inputs from CSTF members to the draft WHO guidance on community and civil society engagement to end TB;
4. To convene a CSTF Town Hall with participation of the WHO DG, to raise the visibility of CSTF work and solicit civil society inputs on additional priority needs and future engagement.
Key Topics

**Status and future perspectives on strong civil society engagement at regional and country level**

All WHO regional offices recognize and acknowledge the importance of engaging civil society and TB affected communities in efforts to end TB. Several regional offices showcased best practices in meaningful engagement with civil society and affected communities, including the CSTF members.

WHO Regional Office for Africa (AFRO) provided the example of scaling up the ENGAGE-TB approach to strengthen community-based TB service delivery as well as the recording and reporting of the relevant data through the national surveillance systems and publication in the Global TB Report 2021. WHO Regional Office for the Americas (AMRO/PAHO) elaborated the adoption of the ENGAGE-TB approach to map and identify civil society and community actors to establish national and regional coordination mechanism. WHO Regional Office for the Eastern Mediterranean (EMRO) described civil society and community involvement in the development of regional action plans and analysis of actions linked to the Multisectoral Accountability Framework for TB (MAF-TB). WHO Regional Office for Europe (EURO) engaged civil society and community through the establishment of Regional Collaboration Committee on Accelerated Response to TB, HIV and Viral Hepatitis (RCC-THV) as a platform for information exchange, strengthening collaboration and together with a regional civil society network TB Europe Coalition spearheaded MAF-Baseline assessments in five countries of Easter Europe and Central Asia region. WHO Regional Office for South-East Asia (SEARO) showcased the involvement of civil society and community on regional Technical Advisory Group (TAG) and regional Green Light Committee (rGLC) and active participation of civil society members in development of key regional strategic documents. WHO Regional Office for the Western Pacific (WPRO) highlighted the Western Pacific regional framework to end TB which indicates the need for strong civil society and community engagement, and is continuously monitored.

Similar opportunities and challenges were mentioned in several regions, which include growing attention to the civil society engagement at national and subnational levels, however, slower than desired; insufficient investments and resources for civil society and community activities; and need for guidance including the means and way to measure the engagement of civil society and affected communities in countries.

**Next steps and recommendations**

CSTF members appreciated WHO regional offices for their commitment in engaging civil society and community. Furthermore, the members urged WHO regional offices to identify concrete actions to address the challenges they are facing and they reiterated their commitment to assist in regional and country level engagement with WHO.

CSTF members underlined the importance of a clear definition of (affected) communities and civil society in the context of the development of the new guidance for community and civil society engagement to end TB. It was recommended for WHO to highlight the need for increased engagement with community led organizations and for increased investments in community systems. It was also highlighted that community-led monitoring needs more engagement from WHO, particularly in emphasizing the opportunities to inform strategic decision making.
CSTF members recommend to facilitate exchange of experiences and sharing of best practices between countries, in order to catalyze strong engagement with civil society through peer learning. In light of this, WHO will keep documenting the engagement of CSTF members in regional and country level activities.

**CSTF mandate post-2022 and transition to new membership**

The secretariat presented the CSTF mandate post-2022 to discuss the transition to new membership and the current plans for the post-2022 CSTF. The presentation aimed to assess the fundamental areas of CSTF work post 2022. This includes the relevance of the current objectives, recruitment process for new members, methodology of transfer of knowledge from current to new members, suitability of the term Civil Society “Task Force”, retention of working groups and means to track engagement.

The discussion also underlined the need to put COVID-19 into consideration of the interactions and work of CSTF. It was further highlighted that recruitment of new members, and the mandate of current members until end-2022, needs to be carefully considered in view of the United Nations High Level Meeting (UNHLM) on TB which will take place in 2023. Proposal was made to explore the possibility of extending the current membership until after the UNHLM on TB in 2023, as well as to establish a steering group/mentor group from the past experienced members to ensure efficient transfer of knowledge in the new CSTF composition.

**Next steps and recommendations**

- The secretariat noted the suggestion to explore the possibility of extending the current membership until after the UNHLM on TB in 2023, as well as to establish a steering group/mentor group from the past experienced members.
- It was recommended for WHO to continuously document and track engagements and activities of the CSTF Members to ensure accountability.
- It was recommended for WHO to review CSTF Terms of Reference (ToR) based on current experiences of CSTF members and need to mention necessary skills, for example: diplomacy, research, etc.
- It was highlighted that new membership is necessary to ensure sustainability of the CSTF, whilst retaining institutional memories by exploring different models and structures, such as establishing a steering group/mentor group from the past experienced members.
- It was recommended for WHO to review the usage of the term “task force” to reflect the objectives of the group.

**WHO guidance on community and civil society engagement to end TB**

The secretariat presented the concept of new guidance on community and civil society engagement to end TB and also highlighted the evaluation of the ENGAGE-TB approach. Despite the commitments for meaningful communities and civil society engagement in efforts to end TB, challenges remain. These challenges include insufficient investments in community systems strengthening; a need to strengthen institutional/managerial capacity of community-based and civil
society organizations; lack of focus beyond service delivery; and weak national platform and integration with other programmes.

The development of the new guidance is necessary to ensure meaningful engagement of communities and civil society and address existing challenges. It will be built on ENGAGE TB experiences, aligned with Primary Health Care Framework and the End TB Strategy pillars and principles, while incorporating COVID-19 learnings. The guidance will focus on community empowerment and expand the roles of community for TB. It will also link to the primary healthcare concept to ensure sustainable system development, with community systems as an integral part of the health system. The process of guidance development will consist of consultative meetings inviting partner organizations and experts, including national programs and affected communities. First draft of the guidance should be ready by the end of Q3 2022.

Next steps and recommendations

- The guidance needs to clearly define the target audience and ensure support towards meaningful community engagement. It was suggested to expand community-led monitoring to keep track of indicators beyond those collected through national surveillance systems and to explore ways how to integrate community-led monitoring findings and indicators into the National surveillance systems for informed programmatic and policy decision-making.
- It was suggested to provide definitions that enrich the vocabulary around human rights. Ensure use of respectful language and avoid stigmatizing language throughout the document, respectful of the lived experience of TB survivors and their families. It also needs to be constructed in a manner that is ethical and can be adapted in settings where privilege and discrimination vary widely.
- The guidance update should adopt a people-centered approach in promoting community systems as an integral part of health systems to ensure sustainability.
- It was recommended that the guidance must be community-led, an inclusive process that respects the lived experience of TB survivors.
- It was suggested to translate the guidance into different languages, using language that is easily comprehended by communities and civil society.
- The secretariat noted a request to define additional indicators for the global reporting on community and civil society engagement beyond service delivery. The additional possible indicators discussed for monitoring at national and sub-national levels include access of TB affected communities to state social support, food security, and quality of care. It was highlighted these would also need to be gender-sensitive and include aspects of human rights, stigma and discrimination.

CSTF Dialogue with WHO Director-General and CSTF Town Hall

Several key asks of CSTF have been presented to WHO Director-General, Dr Tedros Ghebreyesus, as follows:

- Reiterate WHO commitment and endorsement of Civil Society Task Force on TB.
- Reinforce WHO Regional and Country Office’s engagement with civil society and TB affected communities at country level.
● Call to developmental partners/national governments to increase investment in TB, and to NTP Managers to establish a funding mechanism for civil society and community engagement as a part of the TB-NSP.

● Support the WHO multi sectoral and multi stakeholder task force on ending TB to unite efforts and set collective priorities in preparations for the UNHLM on TB in close collaboration with CSTF.

● Commit to further increase of TB visibility in WHO work across all three levels.

The dialogue was continued with CSTF Town Hall which was open to the public. About 150 participants join virtually during the session. The aim of the Town Hall was to highlight CSTF priorities and achievements to date; and consult with participants including civil society and affected communities to harness their inputs and recommendations on the future priorities for the CSTF and its engagement with the broader civil society and affected communities working on TB and related themes. The session started with opening remarks by WHO Director-General, continued by remarks by Director of WHO Global TB Programme on WHO GTB and engagement with civil society. CSTF Members then presented their workplan, recent achievements and successes. The session also conducted open dialogue with participant using Slido to discuss 2 questions:

● Going forward, how can the CSTF priorities better address the needs of affected individuals/communities?

● How can the CSTF engage more closely with broader civil society and affected communities?

Next steps and recommendations

● WHO Director-General, Dr Tedros Ghebreyesus and CSTF Members have agreed to publish a new joint statement, on urgent actions to mobilize efforts in preparation for the 2023 United Nations General Assembly High-level meeting on Tuberculosis and getting progress to end TB back on track through increased political commitment and accountability.

● The secretariat noted the suggestion to ensure high burden countries representation in the CSTF membership in order to engage more closely with broader civil society and affected communities.

● The secretariat noted the suggestion to develop novel communication approach to address TB stigma and discrimination in various level. It was also suggested to translate documents and guidance in different languages, and unpack the languages in a simple and understandable manner for civil society and communities to comprehend.

● It was recommended for WHO Regional and Country Offices to collaborate with CSTF Members to organize regional or country consultation meetings/Town Hall.

● It was suggested to develop an engagement plan which will institutionalize the town hall platform and proactively reach out to TB civil society and communities delegations from other organizations such as Stop TB partnership, Global Fund, UNITAID etc.

● In order to ensure that CSTF priorities better address the needs of affected individuals/communities and to engage more closely with broader civil society and affected communities, the secretariat noted the recommendation to:
  o Address the issues of communities, rights and gender.
  o Develop guidance and framework for stronger community led monitoring
o Raising awareness and improving participation of civil society and communities in decision making process
o Push for stronger accountability to improve program implementation
o Support political advocacy from decision makers and Parliamentarians at national level
o Engage with communities in country level pandemic responses
o Bridge the gap between policy/plan and implementation on the ground.
### Annex 1.
### Meeting agenda

#### Wednesday, 8 June 2022

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Session</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>14:00 – 14:30</td>
<td><strong>Opening session</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>Welcoming remarks</strong> <em>(30 minutes)</em>&lt;br&gt;Ren Minghui, Assistant DG UCN&lt;br&gt;Tereza Kasaeva, Director Global Tuberculosis Programme&lt;br&gt;Moderator: Farai Mavhunga, WHO Global Tuberculosis Programme</td>
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<td>14:30 – 15:30</td>
<td><strong>Status and future perspectives on strong civil society engagement at regional and country level</strong>&lt;br&gt;Secretariat sets the scene <em>(Lana Syed, 5 minutes)</em>&lt;br&gt;WHO TB regional representatives present on progress and challenges <em>(5 minutes per region)</em> [total: 30 min]&lt;br&gt;Discussion <em>(All, 25 minutes)</em>&lt;br&gt;Moderator: Bertrand Kampoer, CSTF</td>
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<td>15:30 – 15:50</td>
<td><strong>Tea/Coffee break</strong></td>
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<td>15:50 – 17:30</td>
<td><strong>CSTF mandate post-2022 and transition to new membership</strong>&lt;br&gt;Secretariat presents the current plans for the post-2022 CSTF <em>(Lana Syed)</em> <em>(15 minutes)</em>&lt;br&gt;CSTF perspectives <em>(Ezio Távora dos Santos Filho)</em> <em>(15 minutes)</em>&lt;br&gt;Discussion <em>(70 minutes)</em>&lt;br&gt;Moderator: Roger Kamugasha, CSTF [Session total: 100 min]</td>
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#### Thursday, 9 June 2022

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Session</th>
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<tr>
<td>09:00 – 10:30</td>
<td><strong>WHO guidance on community and civil society engagement to end TB: soliciting CSTF inputs</strong>&lt;br&gt;● Concept presentation <em>(Lana) – 15 mins</em>&lt;br&gt;● Evaluation of ENGAGE-TB <em>(Lana) – 10 mins</em>&lt;br&gt;● Policy landscape <em>(Andrea) – 10 mins</em>&lt;br&gt;● Guidance development process <em>(Lana) – 5 mins</em>&lt;br&gt;● General feedback <em>(All) – 20 mins</em>&lt;br&gt;Moderator: Tauhid Islam, WHO Global Tuberculosis Programme</td>
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<td>10:30 – 11:00</td>
<td><strong>Tea/coffee break</strong></td>
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<td>11:00 – 12:30</td>
<td><em>(continued)</em>&lt;br&gt;<strong>WHO guidance on community and civil society engagement to end TB: soliciting CSTF inputs</strong>&lt;br&gt;4 sessions/topics <em>(30 mins each)</em></td>
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**Topic 1: Key terms and definitions**
- Are we missing any roles of community and civil society?
- How do we define meaningful engagement?
- How to be inclusive? Involving all types of communities and civil society.

CSTF discussants (3-5 minutes each): Bertrand Kampoer and Jeff Acaba CSTF moderator: Evaline Kibuchi
WHO co-moderator: Ernesto Jaramillo

**Topic 2: Conceptual shift**
- How to plan level of community engagement?
- How to design preferred approaches?
- How to ensure linkage with PHC?

CSTF discussants (3-5 minutes each): Blessi Kumar and Evaline Kibuchi CSTF moderator: Evaline Kibuchi
WHO co-moderator: Tauhid Islam

**Topic 3: Operational aspect**
- Comments on the proposed model?
- What is missing?

CSTF discussants (3-5 minutes each): Harry Hausler and Paran Winarni CSTF moderator: Evaline Kibuchi
WHO co-moderator: Kerri Viney

**Topic 4: Monitoring and evaluation**
- Identify indicators beyond service delivery?
- How to collect and analyze them?

CSTF discussants (3-5 minutes each): Nyan Win Phyo and Jamila Ismoilova CSTF moderator: Evaline Kibuchi
WHO co-moderator: Gita Parwati

**12:30 – 13:45**
**Lunch break**

**13:45 – 14:30**
**CSTF open dialogue with WHO DG**
Moderator: Yuliya Chorna, CSTF

**14:30 – 16:00**
**CSTF Town Hall**

*Zoom link for participants*
https://who.zoom.us/j/96086669021
Meeting ID: 960 8666 9021
Password: fbA3q+CJ

**Objectives**
1. Highlight CSTF priorities and achievements to date;
2. Consult with participants including civil society and affected communities to harness their inputs and recommendations on the future priorities for the CSTF and its engagement with the broader civil society and affected communities working on TB and related themes.

**Agenda**
- Welcome – Blessi (5 mins)
- Opening remarks – WHO DG (10 minutes)
- WHO GTB and engagement with civil society – Tereza (10 minutes)
- Recent achievements and successes – Amir, Jamilya (15 minutes)
- 2022 workplan presentation – Chamreun, Paran (15 minutes)
- Open dialogue responding to 2 questions (and using SLIDO) (30 minutes)
  - Going forward, how can the CSTF priorities better address the needs of affected individuals/communities?
  - How can the CSTF engage more closely with broader civil society and affected communities?
- Closing remarks – Blessi and Tauhid (5 minutes)

Moderator: Blessi Kumar, CSTF

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<th>Time</th>
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<tr>
<td>16:00 – 16:15</td>
<td><strong>Tea/coffee break</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>16:15 – 16:45</td>
<td><strong>Next steps and closing remarks from the WHO GTB director</strong></td>
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Annex 1.
List of Participants

Members of the WHO Civil Society Task Force on TB

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10. Ms Blessina Kumar  
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