

Terms of Reference for the WHO Civil Society Task Force on Tuberculosis (CSTF-TB), 2024-2025 mandate

The World Health Organization (WHO) Civil Society Task Force on Tuberculosis (CSTF-TB) provides a platform for discussion and exchange with WHO, acting as an advisory body focusing on leveraging engagement with civil society and affected communities at all levels to accelerate progress towards ending TB, in line with WHO End TB Strategy.

I. Functions

The CSTF-TB shall have the following functions:

- 1. Bringing the voices and priorities of communities and civil society from the grassroots to the national, regional and global levels, including in the development of WHO norms and standards;*
- 2. Advising on advancing the implementation of the WHO End TB Strategy and related guidance and policies and contribute to the attainment of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, focusing on promotion of the WHO Guidance on engagement of communities and civil society to end tuberculosis, fostering multisectoral action, and translating the political declaration of the 2023 UN High-Level Meeting on TB into action;*
- 3. Advising on strengthening collaboration between civil society and communities affected by TB and WHO, national tuberculosis programmes (NTPs) and stakeholders in efforts to end TB;*
- 4. Providing direction on initiatives to build the capacity of communities and civil society to enhance networking, facilitate sharing of information, knowledge, good practices and innovation, and promote dialogue and consultation on the implementation of WHO's TB policies and norms through meaningful community engagement;*
- 5. Advising WHO on advocacy initiatives to increase domestic and donor funding for the TB response at all levels;*
- 6. Providing critical evaluation of community and civil society engagement to end TB at the various level (national, regional and global).*

II. Composition

1. The CSTF-TB shall have up to 20 members¹, who shall serve in their personal capacities to represent the broad range of disciplines relevant to meaningful engagement of communities and civil society to end TB. In the selection of the members, consideration shall be given to attaining an adequate distribution of technical expertise, geographical representation and gender balance.
2. Members of the CSTF-TB, including the Chair and Vice-Chair, shall be selected and appointed by WHO following an open call for experts. The Chair's functions include the following:
 - to chair the meetings of the CSTF-TB;
 - to steer the work of the CSTF-TB and to help assure that communication, processes, activities, and decisions are carried out diligently and efficiently;
 - to work with the Secretariat to oversee and plan activities of the CSTF;
 - to represent or nominate (a) CSTF-TB member(s) to represent the CSTF-TB in WHO meetings and national, international, or regional fora when necessary;
 - To represent the CSTF in STAG-TB meetings;
 - The Vice-Chair works closely with the Chair and takes on responsibilities delegated to them by the Chair in case of his/her unavailability.

¹ Members serve as full participants and partake in the deliberations and the adoption of the recommendations of the meeting in which they are involved.

In appointing a Chair and Vice-Chair, consideration shall be given to gender and geographical representation.

3. Members of the CSTF-TB shall be appointed to serve for a period of 2 years and shall be eligible for reappointment. Members may not serve more than two consecutive terms. Chair and Vice-Chair shall serve for a period of 1 year, and are eligible for reappointment in this role for another year (i.e. up to a period of 2 years total). A Chair and Vice-Chair are eligible for reappointment as a member of the CSTF-TB, but are only permitted to serve as Chair and Vice-Chair for two years. Their appointment and/or designation as Chair/Vice-Chair may be terminated at any time by WHO if WHO's interest so requires or, as otherwise specified in these terms of reference or letters of appointment. Where a member's appointment is terminated, WHO may decide to appoint a replacement member.
4. CSTF-TB members must respect the impartiality and independence required of WHO. In performing their work, members may not seek or accept instructions from any Government or from any authority external to the Organization. They must be free of any real, potential or apparent conflicts of interest. To this end, proposed members/members shall be required to complete a declaration of interests form and their appointment, or continuation of their appointment, shall be subject to the evaluation of completed forms by the WHO Secretariat, determining that their participation would not give rise to a real, potential or apparent conflict of interest.
5. Following a determination that a proposed member's participation in the CSTF-TB would not give rise to a real, potential or apparent conflict of interest, the proposed member will be sent a letter inviting them to be a member of the CSTF-TB. Their appointment to the CSTF-TB is subject to WHO receiving the countersigned invitation letter and letter of agreement. Notwithstanding the requirement to complete the WHO declaration of interest form, CSTF-TB members have an ongoing obligation to inform the WHO of any interests real or perceived that may give rise to a real, potential or apparent conflict of interest.
6. As contemplated in paragraph II.4 above, WHO may, from time to time, request CSTF-TB members to complete a new declaration of interest form. This may be before a CSTF-TB meeting or any other CSTF-TB-related activity or engagement, as decided by WHO. Where WHO has made such a request, the CSTF-TB member's participation in the CSTF-TB activity or engagement is subject to a determination that their participation would not give rise to a real, potential or apparent conflict of interest.
7. Where a CSTF-TB member is invited by WHO to travel to an in-person CSTF-TB meeting, WHO shall, subject to any conflict of interest determination as set out in paragraph II.6 above, issue a letter of appointment as a temporary adviser and accompanying memorandum of agreement (together 'Temporary Adviser Letter'). WHO shall not authorize travel by an CSTF-TB member, until it receives a countersigned Temporary Adviser Letter.
8. CSTF-TB members do not receive any remuneration from the Organization for any work related to the CSTF-TB. However, when attending in-person meetings at the invitation of WHO, their travel cost and per diem shall be covered by WHO in accordance with the applicable WHO rules and policies.

III. Operation

1. The CSTF-TB shall normally meet in-person at least once each year. However, WHO may convene additional meetings. Virtual CSTF-TB meetings (via video or teleconference) shall be held at least every two months.

CSTF-TB meetings may be held in open and/or closed session, as decided by the Chair and Vice-Chair in consultation with WHO.

- (a) Open sessions: Open sessions shall be convened for the sole purpose of the exchange of non-confidential information and views, and may be attended by Observers (as defined in paragraph III.3 below).
 - (b) Closed sessions: The sessions dealing with the formulation of recommendations and/or advice to WHO shall be restricted to the members of the CSTF-TB and essential WHO Secretariat staff.
2. The quorum for CSTF-TB meetings shall be two thirds of the members.
 3. WHO may, at its sole discretion, invite external individuals from time to time to attend the open sessions of the CSTF-TB, or parts thereof, as “observers”. Observers may be invited either in their personal capacity, or as representatives from a governmental institution / intergovernmental organization, or from a non-State actor, or members from previous CSTF-TB (2028-2023; “CSTF-TB alumni”). WHO will request observers invited in their personal capacity to complete a confidentiality undertaking and a declaration of interests form prior to attending a session of the advisory group. Invitations to observers attending as representatives from non-State actors will be subject to WHO internal due diligence and risk assessment including conflict of interest considerations in accordance with the Framework for engagement with non-State actors (FENSA). Observers invited as representatives may also be requested to complete a confidentiality undertaking. Observers shall normally attend meetings of the CSTF-TB at their own expense and be responsible for making all arrangements in that regard.

At the invitation of the Chair, observers may be asked to present their personal views and/or the policies of their organization. Observers will not participate in the process of adopting recommendations of the CSTF-TB.

4. The CSTF-TB may decide to establish smaller working groups (sub-groups of the CSTF-TB) to work on specific issues. Their deliberations shall take place via teleconference or video-conference. For these sub-groups, no quorum requirement will apply; the outcome of their deliberations will be submitted to the CSTF-TB for review at one of its meetings.
5. CSTF-TB members are expected to attend the scheduled meetings of the taskforce. If a member misses two consecutive virtual or in-person meetings, WHO reserves the right to terminate his/her appointment as a member of the CSTF-TB.
6. A biennial report shall be submitted by the CSTF-TB to WHO (the Assistant Director-General of the responsible Cluster). All recommendations from the CSTF-TB are advisory to WHO, who retains full control over any subsequent decisions or actions regarding any proposals, policy issues or other matters considered by the CSTF-TB.
7. The CSTF-TB shall normally make recommendations by consensus. If, in exceptional circumstances, a consensus on a particular issue cannot be reached, minority opinions will be reflected in the meeting report.
8. Active participation is expected from all CSTF-TB members, including in working groups, teleconferences, and interaction over email. CSTF-TB members may, in advance of CSTF-TB meetings, be requested to review meeting materials and to provide their views for consideration by the CSTF-TB.
9. WHO shall determine the modes of communication by the CSTF-TB, including between WHO and the CSTF-TB members, and the CSTF-TB members among themselves. Any WHO requests for CSTF-TB representation, participation or input will be addressed to the CSTF-TB Secretariat.
10. CSTF-TB members shall not speak on behalf of, or represent, the CSTF-TB or WHO to any third party.

IV. Secretariat

WHO shall provide the secretariat for the CSTF-TB, including necessary scientific, technical, administrative and other support. In this regard, the WHO Secretariat shall provide the members in advance of each meeting with the agenda, working documents and discussion papers. Distribution of the aforesaid documents to Observers will be determined by the WHO Secretariat. The meeting agenda shall include details such as: whether a meeting, or part thereof, is closed or open; and whether Observers are permitted to attend.

V. Information and documentation

1. Information and documentation to which members may gain access in performing CSTF-TB related activities shall be considered as confidential and proprietary to WHO and/or parties collaborating with WHO. In addition, by counter signing the letter of appointment and the accompanying terms and conditions referred to in section II(5) above, CSTF-TB members undertake to abide by the confidentiality obligations contained therein and also confirm that any and all rights in the work performed by them in connection with, or as a result of their CSTF-TB-related activities shall be exclusively vested in WHO.
2. CSTF-TB members and Observers shall not quote from, circulate or use CSTF-TB documents for any purpose other than in a manner consistent with their responsibilities under these Terms of Reference.
3. WHO retains full control over the publication of the reports of the CSTF-TB, including deciding whether or not to publish them.