

WHO CIVIL SOCIETY TASK FORCE ON TB



Engagement with civil society
as a driver for change



Progress report,
March 2020-June 2021



World Health
Organization

WHO Civil Society Task Force on TB: engagement with civil society as a driver for change, progress report, March 2020 - June 2021

ISBN 978-92-4-004976-5 (electronic version)

ISBN 978-92-4-004977-2 (print version)

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Suggested citation. WHO Civil Society Task Force on TB: engagement with civil society as a driver for change, progress report, March 2020 - June 2021. Geneva: World Health Organization; 2022. Licence: [CC BY-NC-SA 3.0 IGO](#).

Cataloguing-in-Publication (CIP) data. CIP data are available at <http://apps.who.int/iris>.

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FOREWORD

"It is essential that civil society is front-and-center in building back better and ensuring greater equity and resilience in health systems, communities and economies."

In the context of the COVID-19 pandemic

Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus,
WHO Director-General



After more than two years of hard work, in 2020, despite disruptions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, the level of Task Force engagement has been astonishing, adapting very quickly to the changing context. The Task Force continued to actively contribute to the development of WHO tuberculosis (TB) policies, catalyzing growing collaboration between civil society organizations, national TB programmes, and WHO, as well as engaging in advocacy at the highest levels.

Last year was hard for all of us, around the world. The COVID-19 pandemic has led to a dramatic loss of human life worldwide and presents an unprecedented challenge to public health. The economic and social disruptions caused by the pandemic are devastating. Tens of millions of people are at risk of falling into extreme poverty and the number of undernourished people has increased. Progress made in recent years on ending the TB epidemic has been reversed by COVID-19. New policies in response to the pandemic, particularly lockdowns and reassignments of health staff and equipment, severely impacted essential TB services in most affected countries in 2020. Now more than ever, as we shape a new post-coronavirus world, we need affected communities and civil society to come together to accelerate efforts to end TB and recover from the health and non-health effects of the pandemic.

During these pressing times, the Task Force voices at the civil society webinars convened by the WHO Director-General in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic were highly pertinent. The WHO Civil Society Task Force was also one of the key contributors to the WHO note "COVID-19: Considerations for tuberculosis (TB) care". Furthermore, the Task Force provided the community perspective during the launch of the Global TB Report at the end of 2020, highlighting the disruptions in TB services caused by COVID-19.

Since early 2020 to date, the Task Force continued its systematic engagement in high-level events and advocacy. All members closely collaborated to frame their priorities and identify unified messaging. They effectively highlighted the communities' concerns, bringing forward voices of TB survivors and affected communities. "At the STAG-TB meeting in 2020, Task Force raised concerns and highlighted needs of closer collaboration between civil society and the governments; called for faster adoption of all-oral regimens for

multi-drug resistant TB treatment, especially in the COVID-19 context; and stressed the importance of multisectoral action in TB response. One of the key highlights of 2020 was the Task Force participation in the United Nations (UN) General Assembly side event "Progress and Multisectoral Action towards achieving global targets to end TB", with a passionate appeal. A related prominent milestone was securing Task Force input to the UN Secretary General's report on the progress towards achieving global tuberculosis targets and implementing the UN Political Declaration on Tuberculosis, to ensure civil society views were reflected in the report.

It was my pleasure to see the Task Force members in the WHO- convened World TB Day 2021 event. Shortly after, in a meeting in April 2021, Dr Tedros, WHO TB representatives from regional and country offices, and the Global Tuberculosis Programme, engaged in an open dialogue with the Task Force to discuss priorities and agree on next steps. This resulted in a joint statement by WHO Director-General and the Task Force, calling for urgent action to stop preventable deaths and suffering due to TB and recover gains lost during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Moving ahead, WHO will continue to improve its efforts and promote adequate resources and commitment to reach the common goal of ending TB, with civil society as a close partner and supporting the Task Force as a catalyst of change through mutual trust.

I also take the opportunity to say farewell to Nandita Venkatesan and Ahn Tuan Nguyen, and sincerely thank them for their commitment and contributions. I warmly welcome the newly appointment members, Aneeta Pasha, Chamreun Sok Choub, Fatima Karmadwala, Paran Winarni and Tenzin Kunor, to the Task Force.



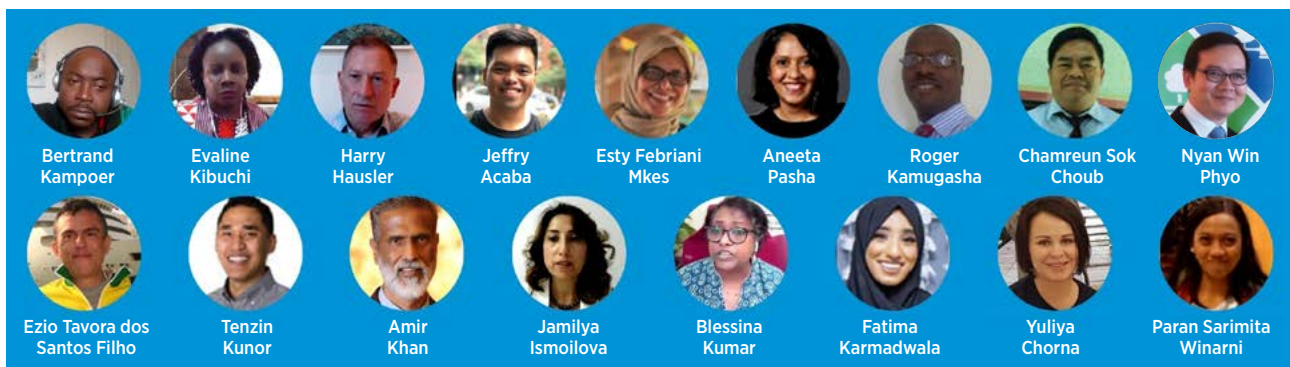
Dr Tereza Kasaeva
Director, Global TB Programme
World Health Organization

ABOUT THE WHO CIVIL SOCIETY TASK FORCE ON TB

The WHO Civil Society Task Force on TB provides a platform for discussion and exchange with WHO, building on the commitment of the Director-General, with an emphasis on harnessing the untapped potential for engagement with civil society and affected communities at all levels.

Following commitments made by Heads of State at the Force aims to strengthen collaboration and accelerate first-ever UN General Assembly High-level Meeting on the progress towards ending TB. The renewed activity of the Fight Against Tuberculosis in September 2018, the role of Task Force is a culmination of the commitment made by the civil society in driving action and accountability is more WHO Director-General, Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, important than ever. The Political Declaration of the UN to

strengthen civil society engagement, as discussed at High-level Meeting on TB and the WHO End TB Strategy several consultations with civil society representatives, both call for prioritizing the strong and meaningful starting with the First WHO Global Ministerial Conference engagement of civil society and affected communities in on Ending TB, in 2017.



The Task Force mandate runs from January 2019 to December 2022. Its original mandate was until December 2020. The end date was subsequently extended to December 2022, due to the particular context related to the COVID-19 pandemic we are in.

The Task Force seeks to emphasize key action to drive stronger civil society engagement in efforts to End TB, including:

- ▶ translating into practice WHO TB policies, including the End TB Strategy, into practice by mainstreaming voices of communities affected by TB and their networks at global, regional and country levels;
- ▶ catalysing greater collaboration between civil society organizations, national TB programmes and WHO at all levels in all activities and projects in pursuit of improved TB outcomes, including meaningful engagement of civil society and affected communities in policy development;
- ▶ contributing to the implementation of WHO TB policies, with a particular focus on multisectoral action for social protection and universal health coverage and advocating for their inclusion in national TB strategies and plans, national social programmes and political platforms (such as parliaments) and regional and global platforms for policy dialogue;
- ▶ promoting and nurturing strong and effective links between community-based actors and national TB programmes or their equivalents, as well as promoting demand for TB prevention, diagnosis, care and treatment services;
- ▶ developing a framework for monitoring and evaluating collaboration among civil society organizations, national TB programmes and WHO at all levels;
- ▶ promoting capacity-building for civil society members and representatives of communities affected by TB to intensify information-sharing, dialogue and consultation on the implementation of WHO TB policies and norms;
- ▶ advocating for increased domestic funding and donor commitments for TB response at all levels.

The Task Force has seventeen* civil society members. They were selected with input from an independent selection panel. Selection was based on assessments of individual competencies and experiences, and the process aimed to balance geography, gender and the diversity of communities and civil society representatives.

* Three civil society members stepped down from the Task Force after its inception; five new members have been appointed.

MEET THE TASK FORCE CIVIL SOCIETY MEMBERS AND THE SECRETARIAT



CANADA

YULIYA CHORNA

- ▶ Regional advocacy
- ▶ Boosting political and financial commitments
- ▶ Multisectoral engagement

To end TB, we urgently need to unite efforts by all sectors, beyond the health sector alone, to address the risk factors and social determinants of TB. Only by making ending TB an all-of-government and all-of-society priority will we be able to catch up with the progress lost due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. Civil society and TB-affected communities should be at the centre of TB response, both in providing psychosocial and peer support and as catalysts for change. The Task Force gives us a platform for dialogue with WHO leadership, through which we can share knowledge and collaborate to co-create a vision to influence policies and practice for rights-based and people-centered TB care.



USA

TENZIN KUNOR

- ▶ Diversity and equity
- ▶ Advocacy
- ▶ Peer mentorship and patient support

The Task Force engages in the critical work of uplifting the voices of TB survivors and affected communities and utilizes this insight to create and meaningfully inform change. Building solidarity and bringing the experiences of those at the margins to the centre is crucial in our work towards a world without TB.



BRAZIL



EZIO TAVORA DOS SANTOS FILHO

- ▶ Research
- ▶ Advocacy
- ▶ Building partnerships

COVID-19 has given the best example of how different sectors can engage in a strong response for an emergency, and how crucial health systems are. Implementation of MAF-TB is the right strategy to tackle increasing poverty in a synergistic manner. Strengthening civil society participation for universal health coverage is essential.



UNITED KINGDOM

FATIMA KARMADWALA

- Multi-drug resistant TB survivor
- TB advocate
- Affected community lead for the UK Academics & Professionals for TB (UKAPT)

The Task Force provides a large partnership forum which allows affected communities from all geographical areas to have an input into changing the future for TB patients. Having this voice will hopefully bring us one step closer to ending TB.



TAJIKISTAN

JAMILYA ISMOILOVA

- Advocacy
- Boosting community engagement in the region
- Community, Rights and Gender

If you don't consider TB to be something very worrying for our global family, then that is sad. Humanity has gone through tremendous challenges to make TB less threatening for our lives. Therefore, we are here to End TB all around the globe.



SWITZERLAND

TASK FORCE SECRETARIAT

TEREZA KASAEVA

- Global health leader
- WHO Global TB Programme Director, leading the response to End TB and responsible for setting norms, policies and standards
- Strong believer in the power of civil society and community representatives, and the importance of engagement to reach the SDGs

WHO is working closely with the Task Force in implementing jointly identified priorities and actions for ending TB. The Task Force is a strong ally in driving forward the End TB response. We need the voice and power of those most affected by TB and civil society to make the ambitious commitments made by Heads of State at the UN High-level Meeting a reality.



FARAI MAVHUNGA

- Head of the Vulnerable Populations, Communities and Comorbidities Unit at the WHO Global Tuberculosis Programme, and the Task Force Secretariat.
- Public health practitioner with more than 10 years' experience in clinical and programmatic management of TB and HIV.
- Advocate for community engagement, involvement and ownership of the response to health challenges.

Partnerships between civil society and governments, through constructive dialogue, help us focus on the needs of the people as a key ingredient to improving the lives and well-being of the population. Civil society action is needed not only to advocate for improvement and change, but also to actively engage communities and complement governments' efforts to address these needs, as well as to help communicate these needs to the relevant policymakers. The Task Force aims to catalyse and support these actions.



LANA SYED

- Specialist in community health programming
- Civil society mainstreaming and partnerships
- Monitoring and evaluation and project management

The strength of the Task Force is its diversity: both geographical and in its members' areas of expertise. Its action is anchored in perspectives from high-burden TB countries. Its underlying principles of transparency, open dialogue and mutual trust are increasingly influencing TB policies, decision-making and response at all levels.



ELIZAVETA SAFRONOVA

- Coordination and support of Task Force activities
- Ensuring strong community engagement in national efforts
- Support for WHO country offices

The voices of civil society, communities and youth and their engagement in governmental activities are essential for Ending TB.



CAMEROON



BERTRAND KAMPOER

- Dynamics of Francophone Africa's Response to TB (DRAF-TB)
- Community, Rights and Gender
- Health Systems Strengthening

We need fast scale-up of TB preventive treatment, capacity-building for health-care providers, sustained community involvement including TB survivors, reduction of gender and human rights barriers, and attention to ethical considerations. As a Task Force, our mandate is also to support national programmes in strengthening community-based active TB case-finding and human rights approaches to close the notification gap, because currently a lot of efforts are still to be made.



UGANDA



ROGER PAUL KAMUGASHA

- Global digital reporting
- Health policy advocacy
- Mobilization of regional parliaments for health commitments

The Task Force is a global linkage between WHO, and civil society and affected communities in catalysing greater collaboration in ending TB at all levels. The Task Force has supported the WHO multisectoral accountability framework adoption across all regions ensuring achievement of commitments and targets of the UN high-level meeting on TB to ensure universal health coverage.



KENYA



EVALINE KIBUCHI

- National partnership
- Parliamentary engagement (regional)
- Advocacy for increase domestic investments

Three ingredients for the recipe to End TB with civil society: reduce stigma for improved access to TB services; create more awareness in the entire community; bring in other sectors to identify their role in ending TB. And ensure immediate rollout of research and

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