

Evaluation Stop TB Partners' Forum

Format, function and timing of future Partners' Forum

The document below evaluates the past two Forums along specific points, and proposes next steps for future Partners' Forum to be endorsed by the Stop TB Coordinating Board.

- i) Lessons learned: objectives and outcomes, participants, agenda, organization
- ii) Recommendations on format, function and timing

I. Lessons Learned from the first and second Stop TB Partners' Forum

a) Objectives and outcomes: functions of the Forum

Both Forums have been successful in defining specific objectives that reflect developments of the Partnership as outlined in its mission and functions of the Partners' Forum as outlined in the Basic Framework and the related procedures manual (Annex I). The outcomes of both Forums have achieved these objectives at large extent.

Both events have shown the importance of major topics for endorsements to ensure the cost-benefit of the event. The events have shown a high-profile advocacy impact, thanks to the involvement celebrities and the broad media outreach. The second forum was linked up to World TB Day which increased the profile of TB across the world around the event of the forum.

First Stop TB Partners' Forum, 22-23 October 2001, Washington DC, USA	
<p>Objectives</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Highlight progress since the Amsterdam Conference on Tuberculosis and Sustainable Development • Accelerate efforts to implement the Amsterdam Declaration to Stop TB • Address the urgent issue of TB & HIV/AIDS • Launch the Global Plan to Stop TB 	<p>Outcomes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Endorsement of the Stop TB Partnership Framework • Endorsement of the Global Plan to Stop TB • Endorsement of the Washington Commitment • Launch of the 50-month countdown to achievement of the 2005 targets • Consensus on collaborative approaches to financing the Global Plan to Stop TB
Second Stop TB Partners' Forum, 24-26 March 2004, New Delhi, India	
<p>Objectives</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reach agreement on the way forward in addressing current constraints to reaching the global targets for tuberculosis control • Review the progress and current status of the Global Partnership to Stop TB and discuss its role in facilitating the intensified efforts to reach the targets • Focus attention on the need for developing country-level partnerships and for broadening the Partnership to further include private/ civil sectors 	<p>Outcomes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "Keeping the Pledge to Stop TB": Agreement on intensified approaches to reaching the global TB targets (2005) and the Millennium Development Goals in 2015 • Release of the Global Plan to Stop TB Progress Update, the Report of the 2nd <i>ad hoc</i> Committee on the Status of the TB Epidemic, and the WHO Global Tuberculosis Control Report • Stop TB awards were given to the first countries (Cuba/ Maldives/ Morocco/ Peru/ Tunisia/ Viet Nam) that have reached and sustained the TB targets • Commitments to Stop TB: Prime Minister of India, Director General of WHO, and Vice President of the World Bank expressed their personal and professional commitment at the Inaugural, added by

^o The evaluation is based on internal discussions within the Stop TB Partnership Secretariat, feedback forms (10) received from participants in the second Partners' Forum.

	<p>several ministerial delegations from the 22 high tuberculosis burden countries, and world leaders such as Kofi Annan, Archbishop Tutu, Bill Clinton and Mikhail Gorbachev</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extensive media coverage by the Indian and international press.
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b) Participants: representation of the Partnership

Both forums, had a similar list of invitees, both aiming at about 300 participants. The categories of invitees were: 1) Ministerial Delegations 22 high TB-burden countries; 2) high level representatives of Stop TB Partners; 3) Stop TB organizational partners ; 4) Special Invitees: e.g. Mr Kofi A. Annan (UN SG), Archbishop Desmond Tutu, Mr Bill Gates, etc.

The final participants for the both forums:

	<i>First Forum</i>	<i>Second Forum</i>
<i>Total participants</i>	200	350
<i>High TB burden countries</i>	18 countries	20 countries
<i>Stop TB Partners</i>	52	112

The invitations to ministerial level delegates have been sent on behalf of the Stop TB Partnership, signed by both DG/WHO (Dr Brundtland, Dr J.W.Lee) and the Worldbank (Mr Wolfensohn). This has been proven to be successful to reach to the highest level within governments. The participation of high-TB-burden countries following the Amsterdam Conference shows a high commitment and ownership amongst delegates, as as reflected in the attendance of the countries in both forums. The support and personal communication from the WHO/DOTS Expansion secretariat and the country focal points was essential in confirming and supporting high-level participants from countries, and also from Stop TB partners.

The participation of partners at the highest levels of governments, organisations and agencies, without which the value of any consensus reached and institutional commitment to implementation are realized, but remain a challenge. Both forums reflect that more patient-groups need to be involved in the event and networking opportunities.

The second forum served as a platform for most of the constituency discussions. This has proven a useful way of increasing partner-to-partner discussions and a stronger constituency voice.

c) Agenda: format for high-level consensus and participatory?

The agenda has shown a major crunch in balancing a high-level formal plenary versus interactive discussions amongst all partners.

Both forums were two-day programs, with mainly plenary sessions with presentations of high-level speakers. The high-level endorsements, the declarations, commitments and pledges have been seen as the major outcomes of the forums.

On the interactive side, in the first forum two parallel tracks were organized on 'partnership' and 'finance' with discussion sessions in two break-out groups. As proposed in the Independent Evaluation (see annex-II), the second forum included several satellite events and bilateral meetings were held, underlining the fact that the Forum is functioning as a platform for discussion among Stop TB partners. Interaction amongst Partners was also stimulated through the organization of a "Market-place" which was successfully received.

The main feedback for improvement to both forums has been, however, related to the need for a more participatory format of the agenda, including more break-out discussions, more discussion time, and more constituency satellites. A careful balance has to be struck to find the right format for the forum programme addressing all the functions as required.

d) Organization, timing, logistics, and preparation

Overall, the organization of the forums have been evaluated as timely and good by participants. Both forums have faced large challenges on the timing of the events: 1) the first forum was held in USA just over a month after the 11/9 event in NY, resulting in many last minute cancellations and travel and security issues; 2) the second forum was postponed from December'03 to March'04, causing rescheduling and organizational arrangements.

As for the timing-sequence, the Forum is proposed to take place every 2-5 years. For the next forum, it is proposed to organize it in 2006 to launch the official data of the 2005 global targets, possibly in conjunction with another major event, but.

From Secretariat point of view, there are many detailed lessons learned, which have been documented separately and can be made available upon request. To highlight some of the key points:

- 1) Different Stop TB partners supported (financially or in-kind) the organization, and proper coordination with these organizations needs to be planned and communicated in various advisory committees/ agenda and material-taskforces/ organizing committees.
- 2) The importance of a professional conference organizer on contract to manage and handle all local arrangements cannot be under estimated. In both forums major challenges had to be overcome in this regard.
- 3) Background documents are the key input to the both forums and the extensive timelines, with consultative and editorial processes takes well over 1-2 years of preparation.
- 4) Financial support for the forums was quickly in place. The financial accounting has been a challenge in both forums for different reasons, and need substantive improvement.
- 5) Communications strategy and products have been produced along the timelines of the both forums, which has proven to be a successful planning cycle. Various products that were developed for the forum have in fact a much larger life-span and engagement impact: a) exhibitions, b) audiovisual materials, c) website, d) discussion forums.

II. Future Partners' Forum: Format, function and timing

Based on the evaluation, the Secretariat would recommend to the Board that the Forum serves a crucial element of the Partnership which needs to be continued, with some improvements and revisions, specifically related to the organization and format.

The Secretariat recommends two specific next steps:

- 1) The evaluation form on the second forum needs to be disseminated to all participants with the distribution of the forum report to get more input from participants on the recent forum, specifically on the format and timing of the next event;
- 2) Forward looking, the Secretariat proposes to design an online poll to engage all Stop TB Partners on the proposed timing, format and functions of the forum.

THE PARTNERS' FORUM - Role, Functions, Procedures[•]

The Forum is the assembly of the Partnership. It is not a decision-making body but an inclusive, consultative meeting of representatives of all the Partners. Others who have an interest in helping to achieve the aims of the Partnership are welcome to participate upon invitation of the Executive Secretary.

ROLE/MISSION

1. To consolidate and increase support for and commitment to the work of the Partnership.
2. To review and comment on the overall progress of the Partnership.
3. To serve as a forum of information exchange on progress, problems and challenges in relation to the work of the Partnership.

FUNCTIONS

4. To identify problems and new challenges and to exchange information thereon.
5. To consolidate and reinforce partners' commitment, particularly high-level political commitment, to the objectives of the Partnership.
6. To create and exploit opportunities for advocacy, information exchange, communications and awareness activities in promotion of the Partnership aims.
7. To review overall progress towards implementation of the Stop TB Partnership, review reports presented by the Board and to make recommendations to the Board.
8. To review the status of the TB epidemic and progress toward its control including achievements on the areas of DOTS Expansion, control of MDR-TB, TB/HIV, and new diagnostic, drug, and vaccine development
9. To formalize commitments to partnership targets and associated strategic plans.

PROCEDURES

10. The Forum will meet as determined by the Board.
11. The date and venue will be decided by the Board.
12. The convocation will be coordinated by the Executive Secretary on behalf of the Board.
13. The provisional agenda will be formulated by the Board with the assistance of the Executive Secretary and promulgated on their behalf by the Executive Secretary.
14. The Board will ensure that the Forum is organized at a moment and around a topical theme or issue which lend themselves to maximum opportunities for advocacy and communications initiatives.
15. The Advocacy and Communications Working Group, with assistance from the Secretariat, will be responsible for the organization of advocacy events and media briefings during the Forum session.
16. Assistance with travel to and attendance at the Forum may be available from Partnership funds through the Secretariat on the principle that funds will be provided only to those attendees from developing countries who have no other source of funding for the purpose.

[•] Excerpt Partners' Forum/ Procedures Manual, based on Stop TB Basic Framework, Secretariat, May 2004

17. The Secretariat will be responsible for the organization of the Forum, support of the conduct of Forum business and for the preparation of the report of the meeting.
18. The Forum will reach conclusions and recommendations by consensus. No votes will be taken. The session Chair will determine the "sense of the meeting".
19. The Secretariat will circulate by website, email and other means the Forum Report in a form approved by the Board within two months of the holding of the Forum.

THE PARTNERS' FORUM - Evaluation & Recommendation*

88. Like other major health partnerships such as GAVI, GFATM and Roll Back Malaria, the Stop TB Partnership has a Partners' Forum and a Partnership Board.

89. While the Stop TB Partners' Forum provides global review and recommendations, it delegates to the Board the detailed specific actions required to implement the mission of the Stop TB Partnership.

90. The Forum is an assembly of the partners, where a partner is defined as "either an individual or an entity (government/organisation) that declared with reason(s) and substantiation of the alignment of its goals and values with those from the Partnership and that has expressed interest to become part of the Partnership to Stop TB"¹⁹. The current exercise to update the partnership directory indicates about 280 partners. Attendance (as observers and upon invitation of the Executive Secretary) is open to all interested in the objectives of Partnership.

91. Under the Basic Framework, the Forum must meet at least once every two years.

92. The first official Stop TB Partners' Forum in 2001 reviewed progress since the Amsterdam Declaration, the Global Plan to Stop TB, and endorsed by consensus both the Basic Framework for the Partnership and the Washington Commitment. The Director General of WHO used the opportunity to sign the Memorandum of Understanding for the Global Drug Facility between the Partnership and WHO, its host agency. This summary encapsulates the value of the Forum – for broad and participatory consensus-building, partnership-wide endorsement of policies, strategies and plans, and high level global advocacy for TB.

93. A second Partners' Forum, originally scheduled for December 2003, will now take place in March 2003. It is intended to highlight progress at country level and the importance of private and civil sector involvement. There seem no grounds for the evaluation to propose amending the principles of the Forum after only one meeting, though these could be reviewed in the light of the 2004 meeting.

Functions of the Partners' Forum

- *Identify problems and new challenges, and exchange information thereon.*
- *Consolidate and increase partners' commitment to the objectives of the Stop TB Partnership, and maintain and reinforce high-level political commitment to the Stop TB Partnership.*
- *Create and exploit opportunities for advocacy, communications activities, and social mobilization.*
- *Review overall progress towards implementation of the Stop TB Partnership, review reports presented by the Board, and make recommendations to the Board.*

* Excerpt on the Partners' Forum from the Independent Evaluation, IHSD, Dec'03

- *Consider any other matter related to the Stop TB Partnership referred to it by the Chair of the Board or the Executive Secretary.*

94. There is though need to assure:

- the participation of partners at the highest levels of governments, organisations and agencies, without which the value of any consensus reached and institutional commitment to implementation are unlikely to be realised
- a more effective operationalisation of the constituency concept envisaged in the Basic Framework. For example, with the notable exception of the Working Group Chairs, the evaluation found scant evidence of regular two-way communication between Board members and their constituencies. It should be noted though that there are likely to be limits to how far the development of the constituency can sensibly be taken. Serious attempts in the AMRO/PAHO region have proved unrewarding. GAVI has also found this a challenge

95. Recommendations

- In section V below, this report recommends a five-year cycle of planning, budgeting and reporting with a mid-term review of the Global Plan and an evaluation towards the end of the cycle to provide the platform for the next five-year Global Plan. Both the outcome of the mid-term review and the next cycle's draft Global Plan should be put to the Partners' Forum for endorsement, in line with practice to date. This suggests two Partners' Forum meetings in each five-year cycle. The Basic Framework should be amended to allow the Partners' Forum to meet at least once every three years rather than every two years.
- Each member of the Coordinating Board should take responsibility for mobilizing participation in the Forum at the appropriate levels within their respective constituencies.
- The forthcoming Partners' Forum should be used to explore mechanisms for making the various constituencies more operational. As one example, the Stop TB Secretariat could support relevant constituencies in the design and operation of a constituency e-forum within the Partnership website, using the partners' directory as starting point. Constituencies should routinely seize opportunities offered by international meetings (UN, WHA, regional committee meetings e.g. of WHO, IUATLD, Partners Forum, etc) to engage their broader membership. Donor Board members could organise a more structured set of constituency relationships and communications, perhaps covering a number of global health partnerships not just Stop TB.
A late session at the Partners' Forum in March 2004 could provide opportunity for participants to review the effectiveness of the gathering, lessons learned for the future and possible alternatives or additions, eg regional mini-partners' fora, piggybacking on WHO Regional Committee meetings