

# Table Of Content

<b>Strengthening the role of civil society within the TB response in Europe</b> .....	2
<b>Summary</b> .....	3
<b>Work Package</b> .....	10
Mapping civil society stakeholders across the region .....	10
Facilitate access to information and resources for capacity building for target groups. ..	10
Conduct outreach to civil society across the region with the aim of expanding the network and building relationships with target groups. ....	10
Engage with decision-makers on behalf of civil society across the region. ....	10
Manage the network effectively to implement the three-year work programme .....	10
<b>Coordinator, Leader contact and partners</b> .....	13
<b>Outputs</b> .....	14
Newsletter web page .....	14
Technical and Financial Report .....	14
Mentoring Programme web page .....	14
Case Studies .....	14
Blog articles .....	14
Policy Submissions .....	14
Conference Briefings .....	14
SC Meeting Minutes .....	14
Annual SC Meeting Report .....	14
Annual Report .....	14
Promotional Materials .....	14
Policy Document .....	14
Country Visit Report .....	14
Mapping report .....	14
Thematic Report .....	14
Social Media Pages .....	14
New web pages .....	14

# Strengthening the role of civil society within the TB response in Europe

JA2015 - GPSD [705038]

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PROGRAMME TITLE: 3rd Health Programme (2014-2020)

PROGRAMME PRIORITY: -

CALL: Specific Grant Agreements for 2015 under the Framework Partnership Agreement for Operating Grants 2015-2017

TOPIC: Financial contribution to the functioning of non-governmental body (Specific Grant Agreement 2015)

EC CONTRIBUTION: 79110 EUR

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PORTFOLIO: Communicable diseases

## Project abstract

The TB Europe Coalition (TBEC) is an advocacy network that brings together civil society representatives (individuals and organisations) from across the WHO European Region; in order to strengthen the role of civil society within the regional response to tuberculosis (TB), and to increase the political and financial commitment required to effectively control the epidemic in region. TBEC was formed by a group of TB advocates in 2009. They identified a need to capacitate and bring together civil society in order to address two major concerns: high-rates of drug resistance, coupled with low awareness among general populations and policy-makers about this problem. This was especially due to a scarcity of civil society stakeholders working on TB in the region, despite their important role within an effective response, with few capable of advocating for TB at national or regional level. TBEC addresses this by providing a coordinating body that brings together civil society stakeholders across the region, disseminates high-quality information and resources, promotes collaboration and best practice, and aims to build the advocacy capacity of civil society stakeholders working to control TB.

## Summary of context, overall objectives, strategic, relevance and contribution of the action

The TB Europe Coalition (TBEC) is an advocacy network that brings together civil society representatives (individuals and organisations) from across the WHO European Region; in order to strengthen the role of civil society within the regional response to tuberculosis (TB), and to increase the political and financial commitment required to effectively control the epidemic in region. TBEC was formed by a group of TB advocates in 2009. They identified a need to capacitate and bring together civil society in order to address two major concerns:

- 1) high-rates of drug resistance tuberculosis, and
- 2) low awareness among general populations and policy-makers about this problem.

This is especially due to a scarcity of civil society stakeholders working on TB in the region, despite their important role within an effective response, with few capable of advocating for TB at national or regional level. TBEC addresses this by providing a coordinating body that brings together civil society stakeholders across the region, disseminates high quality information and resources, promotes collaboration and best practice, and aims to build the advocacy capacity of civil society stakeholders working to control TB.

TB Europe Coalition's key operational objectives are to adequately address the challenges and capitalise on the opportunities, TBEC must maintain access to relevant information, tools, resources and support for its members, expand the network's membership to achieve a greater coverage of the region and

continue to build the operational capacity of its Secretariat, to ensure the successful implementation its work programme.

The operational objectives below have been developed in response to the above situational analysis and in relation to the multi-annual work programme of the network (2015-2017):

Strategic Objective 1.1: Increase understanding of the civil society contribution to TB response across 65% of the Region by the end of 2015.

Strategic Objective 2.1: By the end of 2015, maintain and strengthen the TBEC website as a regional platform serving 300 civil society stakeholders working within the TB response.

Strategic Objective 3.1: Provide access to TBEC support and representation to civil society stakeholders in at least 70% of countries within the Region by the end of 2015.

Strategic Objective 4.1: Strengthen the voice of civil society in all accessible EU and regional forums/consultations throughout 2015.

Strategic Objective 5.1: Strengthen TBEC's governance and internal processes for the successful implementation of its work programme by the end of 2015.

Involvement of civil society in policy processes relating to TB and associated health issues remains weak and unsystematic in many countries. In fact, the political environment, especially in Eastern Europe and Central Asia, is often not conducive to effective dialogue between health authorities, civil society and affected communities. Very often, health authorities are not aware of the NGOs working on TB and related social issues, or of the essential services they provide. At the same time, a lack of understanding of policy processes and advocacy impairs the capacity of civil society stakeholders to participate in these processes. Without this capacity, civil society is unable to address issues of policy or resource mobilization for TB and related health issues at national level. Without this, regional efforts by the EU and other agencies will be undermined. The lack of coordination with other actors working to fight TB and related issues also contributes to the limited capacity of civil society to be effectively represented in public governance processes and consultations. Improved collaboration and networking of civil society stakeholders in these countries is essential to address these challenges, and forms part of TBEC's multiannual strategy.

## Methods and means

The objectives were achieved via the delivery of key outputs that form the annual work programme by:

- 1) Mapping civil society stakeholders across the WHO European Region,
- 2) Facilitating access to information and resources for capacity building for target groups,

- 3) Conducting outreach to civil society across the region with the aim of expanding the network and building relationships with target groups,
- 4) Engaging with decision-makers on behalf of civil society across the region, and
- 5) Managing the network effectively to implement the three-year work programme.

## Work performed during the reporting period

TBEC conducted qualitative and quantitative mapping of civil society stakeholders in 15 target countries. Mapping of these countries was carried out via desk research; country visits, trainings and an online 'join us' application function on the website as well as networking at various conferences and meetings. Mapping data of civil society stakeholders across the region are published in an accessible format on the TBEC website. The target mapped countries in 2015 included Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia, in order to strengthen TBEC's understanding and positioning ahead of the High level Ministerial Conference on TB, hosted by the Latvian presidency of the EU in March 2015. In addition, the five countries of Central Asia (Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan), the Russian Federation, Belarus, Turkey, Poland, Hungary, Romania and Bulgaria were also the focus of mapping activities. Mapping data have been disseminated with our members and have been made available on the website for all members and wider public interested in TB and issues related to TB. Mapping data are updated regularly on quarterly basis to ensure reliability of the data.

The Secretariat of the network produced and disseminated a monthly email newsletter to the entire membership (in both English and Russian, to adequately provide for all members). These newsletters are archived and publicly available on the TBEC website.

In addition, the annual thematic report was launched as part of World TB Day activities (March 24th). The focus of TBEC's 2015 thematic report 'shared responsibility: international vs. domestic financing for the TB response', aimed to build the capacity of civil society to participate in relevant policy processes and engage with their national governments around the transitioning from external financing (i.e. Global Fund) to domestic financing of TB and HIV programmes. The report is publicly available and was disseminated amongst the membership via TBEC communication channels – listserv, social media, website, mail, and also distributed at conferences, meetings and trainings. The report was translated into Russian that was highly appreciated by Russian speakers or non-English speakers, such as in Latvia, Bulgaria.

During the year 2015 the TBEC website went through a significant development and maintenance. The website is bilingual and serves to Russian speakers as well. At least two/four blogs and information were posted every

month on the website. Eight new website pages were developed: Social media, Calendar of events, Fundraising opportunities, Feedback, Members forum, Blog, Map of Civil Society Organisations, Mentoring Programme, and five pages were improved: TBEC Membership, Resources, Case studies, Newsletter Archive and Technical Assistance.

In September 2015 (14-18) we organised a country visit to one of the priority countries identified for this grant - Latvia. The country visit is particularly important as both an outreach tool and a means to build the capacity of civil society at national level. Latvia has been identified as the priority country for 2015 (with other visits within the EU planned in the following years) as it hosted the Ministerial Meeting on TB and MDR-TB in Riga under the Latvian EU Presidency in March 2015. Following this event, civil society were more mobilised and interested in conducting effective follow-up with national decision-makers and parliamentarians. The TBEC delegation (3 members of TBEC) lead the visit that included preliminary meetings with Latvian stakeholders, a two-day advocacy workshop for civil society representatives and a meeting with key decision-makers from the Ministry of Health of Latvia.

The Secretariat also developed and distributed promotional materials that were disseminated to national focal points and members of the Steering Committee to help them network and expand the reach of TBEC within their country. A leaflet was produced as lig

## The main output achieved so far and their potential impact and use by target group (including benefits)

The TB Europe Coalition has gone from strength to strength in 2015. The network is now recognized as the leading civil society network in the region. The additional capacity in the UK secretariat has enabled TBEC to reach and attract a wider range of members, which is definitely a result of being able to systematically provide all our information in both English and Russian. The thematic report launched in March is being used by civil society across the region facing transition from donor funding, providing added value not just within TB actors but HIV and harm reduction players too. We are receiving requests for joint workshops, sessions and symposiums with international players.

At the moment, a weakness of TBEC is the capacity at secretariat at an operational level. Due to our added value and increasing status as a reputable network, we receive many requests for activities however secretariat capacity is preventing ability to follow through. Strengthening governance, secretariat and functioning of the network is still a priority for us, and will continue throughout the duration of the three year grant.

## Achieved outcomes compared to the expected outcomes

Since the beginning of this specific project in January 2015, TBEC and TBEC members have:

- 29% Increase of members of the network (Baseline: 215) and the number of members who have access to information on policy and resource developments as well as networking opportunities. This has been done by improved web communications, a monthly newsletter, social media and workshop with country visits. There are now 303 members accessing information through our various outlets.
- Improved our communication with the members; for instance our successful email deliveries rate is 99.6% with an open rate of more than 27.4%. Social media coverage increased with 222 fans on the FB page and 242 followers on Twitter.
- Produced a mapping report of 15 target countries in the EU, in order to provide information about civil society stakeholders working in specific country contexts. We have reached 60% of WHO European Region countries that are represented within the TBEC network. This has been shared with the membership on the website.
- Produced a thematic report, *After Aid: What Next for TB and HIV in Europe*, on the consequences of donor withdrawal from countries with a high burden of MDR-TB in the WHO European Region.
- Participated in the Latvia Ministerial Meeting on TB and its Drug Resistance. TBEC members attended the event and read out a civil society statement on TBEC's behalf. Many were then able to discuss more specific country matters with their Ministers or Minister's representatives.
- Participated in the Wolfheze Workshops, a technical TB conference in the Netherlands, with TBEC speaking on the importance of civil society and community involvement in TB care and control.
- Facilitated a regional advocacy workshop in the Netherlands for 10 TB advocates, former patients and stakeholders from within the EU and neighbouring countries. This was a two day long advocacy and public speaking workshop.
- Produced policy submissions for various consultations, including that of the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, TB and Malaria and on the European Neighbourhood Policy.
- Produced promotional materials (leaflets, banners) that contribute to increase TBEC visibility at conferences, workshops, and meetings; help to provide more information on TBEC work; and promote TBEC activities.
- Improved the website pages by creating and adjusting 9 pages with regular updates with upcoming events, information blogs. The website has been translated into Russian language to reach and serve our Russian speaking members.

- Facilitated an advocacy workshop (11 participants) and meetings with stakeholders and decision makers in Latvia, as part of our series of country visits and national advocacy workshops for local civil society.
- Participated in the 47th Union World Conference on Tuberculosis and Lung Health in Cape Town and supported 2 civil society representatives to attend the conference and present at the TBEC Symposium;
- Conducted an advocacy tour, brought a former MDR-TB patient and advocate to Brussels to meet with EU decision-makers.
- Developed a ToR of Steering Committee members
- Organised Annual Steering Committee meeting and produced the report
- Developed mentoring programme accessible to all members
- Conducted Annual Member Survey
- Further improved membership outreach and strengthened the Secretariat

## Dissemination and evaluation activities carried out so far and their major results

The work programme activities and outcomes were disseminated across the network's communication channels to ensure broad public exposure and increase levels of awareness of both the issue and the network's role in the response. These channels include the TBEC newsletter, social media and the website, which was updated in 2015 to enhance the network's existing dissemination strategy. These communication channels were strengthened in 2015 by being disseminated in both English and Russian, to ensure maximum accessibility for target groups across the region. In addition, hard copies of promotional materials were distributed to Steering Committee members and key stakeholders across the region during conferences, meetings, workshops, etc.

The website, social media and listserv

The TBEC website that significantly improved in 2015, functions as a hub for the network members to strengthen regional and national networking, information sharing and to enhance the use of best practice. Country mapping and the dissemination of information served to strengthen the understanding of civil society concerns, activities and the potential opportunities for collaboration between stakeholders. The dissemination of majority of information on the website was in two languages: in English and Russian.

Electronic versions of the Annual Report and the Thematic Report are published on the website and they were also mailed to the members to strengthen their awareness of actions at EU and regional levels that have significant relevance to their work at national level.

Complementary to these reports, the website hosted case studies, funding opportunities, technical assistance programmes, calendar of events and other information to support members' advocacy in response to the TB epidemic.

The TBEC logo and the emblem of the EU/Chafea 3rd Health Programme with disclaimer have been visible on all reports publicly disseminated by the network. These have been presented on the TBEC website and newsletters to ensure maximum visibility and recognition of support.

The implementation of the work programme was monitored throughout the year, with monitoring data gathered monthly. The internal monitoring data reports were shared with the Steering Committee regularly on quarterly basis. The annual monitoring data were also included in the Annual Report. Qualitative data were gathered through evaluation questionnaires, de-briefings after meetings, and annual survey to measure outcome.

The evaluation was focused on assessing the effective completion of the activities, the production of the deliverables included in the activity plan and the achievement of the proposed targets. It included participants' evaluations, conducted to determine the impact of specific activities for 2015 - Survey, specific evaluations was carried out for both the advocacy training with national CSOs and for other events organised during the country visit. Participants of these events were asked to complete a questionnaire and give feedback on the quality, effectiveness, relevance and likely impact of the activities and make improvements to content as necessary. The questioners and de-briefings were mainly used for the workshop/training participants and the annual survey targeted all TBEC members.

#### Survey results:

- From the responses we have received 62% stated that they were very satisfied with the TBEC on an overall basis. The respondents were from 23 countries with Ukraine, Kyrgyzstan, and Romania covering more than 10% each.
- More than 50% of respondents were very satisfied and almost 30% extremely satisfied with information resources provided by TBEC. 'Funding' (45x), 'Advocacy' (18x) and 'Stigma' (14x) were the top three words mentioned as the words that describe their biggest issues they are dealing with in their TB work.
- To ensure we use the best communication channels when disseminating information and new resources, we were particularly interested wh

# Work package

## Work Package 1: Mapping civil society stakeholders across the region

Start month: 1

End month: 5

Work Package Leader: RESULTS UK

TBEC activities under Work Stream 1 of the 2015 work programme, "Mapping civil society stakeholders across the region", will ensure a better understanding of civil society actors that are working on TB and related fields. This will allow civil society to understand who their civil society partners are across the region and gain important insight into national issues that impede the successful control of TB. Comprehensive knowledge of relevant actors is the basis to ensure increased participation of civil society and affected communities in policy processes, which is a fundamental principle of the EU. Greater collaboration and networking capacity across the region has value at EU level as many countries move/aim to move towards gaining EU membership. Regional or national policies on TB that are the result of an inclusive, collaborative processes are likely to be shared and supported by all stakeholders, enabling improved outcomes for TB in the EU.

The target countries to be mapped in 2015 include Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia, in order to strengthen TBEC's understanding and positioning ahead of the High level Ministerial Conference on TB, hosted by the Latvian presidency of the EU. In addition, the five countries of Central Asia, the Russian Federation, Belarus, Turkey, Poland, Hungary, Romania and Bulgaria will also be the focus of mapping activities. TB in these countries presents a real threat to the EU due to the mobility of populations in the region. Greater understanding of civil society activity to address TB in these countries can be used to improve EU policy to tackle the TB epidemic. Similarly, greater knowledge of the civil society stakeholders in these countries will help strengthen the outreach of TBEC activities that include capacity building and information dissemination. In turn, these activities will help to contribute to the development of more effective policies to address the TB epidemic in the EU and in neighbouring countries.

## Work Package 2: Facilitate access to information and resources for capacity building for target groups.

Start month: 1

End month: 12

Work Package Leader: RESULTS UK

TBEC will ensure that all members are kept up-to-date on civil society activities,

policy and resource developments around the TB response throughout the region. Under this work stream the network produces and disseminates a monthly email newsletter to the entire membership (in both English and Russian, to adequately provide for all members). These newsletters will be archived and publicly available on the TBEC website from 2015.

This work stream also includes the on-going development and maintenance of the TBEC website. At least two new blogs are posted every week on the website. The membership and resources/publications page are updated quarterly. The patients' testimonies/case studies section and any Announcements relating to governance are published when available and relevant. New web pages will be developed in 2015 that enhance the information available to members, including the strengthening of regional networking and peer-to-peer exchanges. These new pages include: a calendar of events and opportunities; a civil society forum page, which will link members with social media community pages; a technical assistance web page (including toolkits, archived and current Q&A webinars, training materials and best practice reviews); a page dedicated to fundraising opportunities for civil society organisations, and a feedback/submission form.

A mentoring programme will be developed as part of this work stream by the Secretariat, available to all members and implemented year-round. In 2015 TBEC will invite participants to join the programme based on the needs identified by the mapping activities, with the process becoming open application-based from 2016 onwards. This programme will aim to provide long-term support to members as they engage in a particular process (e.g. advocacy strategy development, funding applications and coalition-building).

In addition, the annual thematic report will be launched as part of World TB Day activities (March 24th). The report will be made publicly available and disseminated amongst the membership via TBEC communication channels.

## Work Package 3: Conduct outreach to civil society across the region with the aim of expanding the network and building relationships with target groups.

Start month: 1

End month: 12

Work Package Leader: RESULTS UK

Whilst outreach is conducted on an informal level throughout the year, specific actions of the network serve to expand the network and help support more members.

The country visit is particularly important as both an outreach tool and a means to build the capacity of civil society at national level. Latvia has been identified as the priority country for 2015, as it will host the High-Level Ministerial Meeting on TB in Riga (March 2015) under the Latvia EU Presidency. Following this important event, civil society will be mobilised and ready to conduct effective follow-up to this meeting, aiming to maintain the engagement of national decision-makers and

parliamentarians. TBEC will help to strengthen these efforts and to forge links between national civil society stakeholders and TBEC members in neighbouring countries to further increase the impact of this event.

This work stream also includes the development and distribution of promotional materials that are then disseminated to national focal points and members of the Steering Committee to help them network and expand the reach of TBEC within their country. A leaflet is produced that is lightweight and cost-effective to send out across the region. It is produced in both English and Russian to be fully accessible to target groups.

## Work Package 4: Engage with decision-makers on behalf of civil society across the region.

Start month: 1

End month: 12

Work Package Leader: RESULTS UK

This work stream implements the role of the network as a representative of civil society in policymaking for the TB response at EU and regional levels. It utilises the expertise of the Secretariat in developing strategic relationships and access decision-making spaces, enabling the voice of civil society to be included within discussions that directly impact upon the response to TB at different levels.

TBEC will advocate on behalf of the network within key opportunities throughout 2015.

## Work Package 5: Manage the network effectively to implement the three-year work programme

Start month: 1

End month: 12

Work Package Leader: RESULTS UK

This output involves the day-to-day management and administration of the network, as well as systematic strengthening of the network's internal processes and governance. This is to be achieved via the strengthening of the rules and procedures relating to the Steering Committee, e.g. for the election of Steering Committee members, as well as the development of a fundraising strategy to ensure the long-term sustainability of the network.

## COORDINATOR



RESULTS EDUCATION (RESULTS UK)

2nd Floor, 31-33 Bondway  
SW8 1SJ London

United Kingdom

WEBSITE: <http://www.results.org.uk>

## PARTNERS

No partners related to the current project

## Newsletter web page

RESULTS UK

Strengthening the role of civil society within the TB response in Europe (TBEC)

Published on: 15/09/2015

Single web page created to house archive of TBEC newsletters to establish a reference library for members. Live on website & JPG (i.e. screenshot).

## Technical and Financial Report

RESULTS UK

Strengthening the role of civil society within the TB response in Europe (TBEC)

Published on: 15/07/2016

End of term Technical and Financial Reports. Please note that findings of these reports will be included in the Annual Report (D18) which will be made publicly available.

## Mentoring Programme web page

RESULTS UK

Strengthening the role of civil society within the TB response in Europe (TBEC)

Published on: 22/12/2015

Web page dedicated to mentoring programme published on website, providing information on how to sign up for support and what activities the programme contains (e.g. webinars). Live on website & JPG.

## Case Studies

RESULTS UK

Strengthening the role of civil society within the TB response in Europe (TBEC)

Published on: 22/12/2015

Case studies of target group members across the region are published online. At least two case studies are collected per country visit. Live on website.

## Blog articles

RESULTS UK

Strengthening the role of civil society within the TB response in Europe (TBEC)

Published on: 22/12/2015

At least 8 of the blog articles per year (approx. 2 per week) are dedicated to

sharing information about policy meetings, forums, and consultations. Collated quarterly in PDF Document.

## Policy Submissions

RESULTS UK

Strengthening the role of civil society within the TB response in Europe (TBEC)

Published on: 22/12/2015

Written policy submissions prepared by Secretariat are shared amongst Steering Committee and membership. Collated quarterly in PDF Document.

## Conference Briefings

RESULTS UK

Strengthening the role of civil society within the TB response in Europe (TBEC)

Published on: 22/12/2015

Following the network's participation in conferences at EU, regional or international levels, the Secretariat produces an report to inform the Steering Committee and members of their activities and outcomes. PDF Document/Web Page.

## SC Meeting Minutes

RESULTS UK

Strengthening the role of civil society within the TB response in Europe (TBEC)

Published on: 22/12/2015

The minutes of the monthly Steering Committee conference calls are produced for dissemination to SC members and help inform the annual report. Collated quarterly in PDF Document.

## Annual SC Meeting Report

RESULTS UK

Strengthening the role of civil society within the TB response in Europe (TBEC)

Published on: 22/12/2015

Report produced following the Annual SC Meeting, with includes key discussion and action points. PDF Document.

## Annual Report

RESULTS UK

Strengthening the role of civil society within the TB response in Europe (TBEC)

Published on: 22/12/2015

The annual report is released publicly (online) and provides an overview of the network's activities and impact throughout the year, its income and expenditure, updates on governance and membership. PDF Document.

## Promotional Materials

RESULTS UK

Strengthening the role of civil society within the TB response in Europe (TBEC)

Published on: 18/12/2015

a) A5 colour leaflet to promote the activities of the network and membership is designed and printed. PDF. b) Newsletters to membership.

## Policy Document

RESULTS UK

Strengthening the role of civil society within the TB response in Europe (TBEC)

Published on: 18/12/2015

The expanded policy document/TOR pertaining to the rules of the Steering Committee, particularly relating to the election of members and the appointment of a Chair. PDF Document.

## Country Visit Report

RESULTS UK

Strengthening the role of civil society within the TB response in Europe (TBEC)

Published on: 20/11/2015

An internal report is produced by Secretariat following each country visit to share lessons learnt and visit outcomes. PDF Document.

## Mapping report

RESULTS UK

Strengthening the role of civil society within the TB response in Europe (TBEC)

Published on: 15/09/2015

Analysis of civil society landscape across the region, with in-depth focus on annual target countries. PDF Document.

## Thematic Report

RESULTS UK

Strengthening the role of civil society within the TB response in Europe (TBEC)

Published on: 15/09/2015

2015 annual thematic report is focused on financing for TB programmes and

services across the region. The report will be launched as part of TBEC's activities around World TB Day, including media outreach. PDF Document.

## Social Media Pages

RESULTS UK

Strengthening the role of civil society within the TB response in Europe (TBEC)

Published on: 15/09/2015

Twitter and Facebook pages created for network in English and Russian. Web links and JPG.

## New web pages

RESULTS UK

Strengthening the role of civil society within the TB response in Europe (TBEC)

Published on: 18/08/2015

Screenshots of the new Calendar; Civil Society Forum (i.e. links to social media forum managed by TBEC); Technical Assistance; Fundraising resources; feedback form. Live on website & JPG.