

Stop TB Partnership

COORDINATING BOARD

High Level Missions (HLM)

DRAFT Guiding Principles

Making High Level Missions more effective

Based on the positive experiences to date, the benefits from the powerful commitments of the Coordinating Board (CB) members can be enhanced if guiding principles for High Level Mission (HLM) are agreed upon by the full board.

1. The initial decision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The proposal has to come from a country, a CB member, the Executive Secretary or a partner. • The CB or the Executive Committee (Exec. Com) will decide on the such visit.
2. The composition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Its composition has to be based on the proposal and particular needs made by the CB or the Exec. Com. • The board will be guided by availability of elected Board members and after that by other constituencies: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ A constituency representative or a high level partnership member ○ A senior staff member of the Partnership Secretariat • The head of the mission will be selected on the basis of comparative advantage for the purpose of the mission. • The head of the mission will be in charge of the visit, the reporting of the outcome to the CB and the voice for the mission in press and other briefings.
3. The preparation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The requesting party/partner(s) with the head of the mission propose the TOR • Wherever possible a technical review should take place prior to a HLM. • The final draft TOR are presented for approval to the CB or to the Exec. Com. • After approval, the Stop TB Partnership Secretariat will prepare with the requesting party/partner(s) a formal detailed briefing document. • This formal briefing document will be shared with the host at this point in time. • The Secretariat may draft with the partner(s) a confidential briefing document. • The Secretariat makes the necessary logistics arrangements for the mission.
4. The actual visit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The head of the mission will brief the mission members and will outline the visit, • He/she will ensure that the mission presents a constructive image of the Stop TB Partnership. • Special assignments may be included for mission members based on their specific interests. • A senior staff member of the Secretariat will be the rapporteur for the mission.
5. The reporting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The final report will include conclusions and recommendations. • The report will be endorsed by the members of the mission and presented in the next CB meeting. • Mission members are responsible to provide feedback to their respective constituencies.
6. The follow-up	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Depending on the outcome and recommendation of the mission, technical or other partners can be invited to perform the actual follow-up to inform the CB • The follow-up should be achieved within 3 months after the mission and one after 1-2 years. • The Partnership Secretariat will provide further assistance in this process.

Lessons learned up till now

1. Up till now country visits by HLM were done on specific informal indications that there was a need for greater political or other commitment in those countries.
2. Experiences with HLMs show that the purpose and expected outcomes should be clearly defined beforehand. Without such predetermined purpose, a HLM can easily become just another courtesy visit without significant impact afterwards.
3. The best results were to date obtained when the HLM was preceded by a (joint) technical review mission to the country, allowing relevant policy recommendations to be included in the mission's agenda.
4. The participation by CB members in missions was on a voluntary basis of individual interest and availability. Limited strategic considerations determined the final composition of the mission, as much depended on the availability of individuals rather than constituencies.
5. The lack of a briefing prior to the visit, puts great strain on the members of the mission, who participated successfully mainly on the basis of their own institutional and personal experience and expertise.
6. Unfortunately no records of the visits were maintained, thus the follow-up was incidental and not very well structured. Also the full CB was not formally briefed on the outcomes of missions.

Definition

A HLM by partners of the Stop TB Partnership is a powerful political advocacy tool in support of TB control and DOTS expansion. The purposes and expected outcomes of such mission differ greatly from a regular technical mission, as the mission does not get involved in the technical details but maintains a strategic overview with a keen eye open for opportunities at higher levels of decision making. Principally, it aims to positively influence top level decision makers to progressively include TB and its control in their priorities.

The underlying process

When a high level CB members meet and discuss with key politicians and decision makers, crucial issues of TB and the opportunities for effective TB control are presented from an international and global perspective. Members represent both their own constituency and the Stop TB Partnership as the global coalition. This dual representation is a very powerful political statement that cannot be easily ignored. With this background HLM can access levels of decision making that would otherwise not be available.

Subsequently the issues that are addressed by the HLM are likely to be taken very seriously and to be placed in a different dimension than if it would have come from a lower level voice.

Purposes of HLMs

- **General:**
 1. To represent the Stop TB Partnership (including its components like GDF, GLC, the working groups and task forces).
 2. To enhance the profile of TB as a curable disease of great global public health importance, that calls for international and global solidarity.
 3. To advocate for the global application of the most effective TB control strategies and standards (access to high quality drugs through GDF, DOTS, DOTS-Plus, PPM-DOTS, TB/HIV, TB and Poverty).
 4. To highlight the Stop TB Partnership achievements.

- **Specific:**
 1. To generate specific additional support from key decision makers, based on the TOR for each mission.
 2. To obtain sustained political commitment for verifiable action
 3. To offer potential solutions to continue to move forward TB high in the political agenda.
 4. To help to address any specific policy issues in the country

Strategic focus of High Level Missions

HLMs involve top officials of leading institutions that are represented in the Stop TB Partnership. Most of them have already overburdened agendas therefore the targets for these missions must be chosen with great care and with strategic considerations. From a strategic perspective the following focus for these missions is proposed:

1. TB high burden countries that require encouragement to reach the global targets.
2. Regional, international or global bodies (EU, NEPAD etc) that are mandated for political governance and influence
3. Regional and international meetings with overarching agenda on global development and development cooperation, including North-South, South- South and East-West dialogues
4. Bilateral and other donors that have not yet included TB sufficiently as a development issue in the priority setting for their respective development assistance portfolios
5. Global and other summits present the opportunities for creating greater awareness of TB and making effectively its control strategies.

Based on the above mentioned target audiences, as examples, the following potential outcomes of visits by HLMs can be anticipated:

Target audience	Potential outcome	Follow-up
TB high burden countries	Greater emphasis on TB control in the national political agendas or addressing other policy issues	NTP and technical partners
International meetings	Enhanced profile for TB control	Technical and development partners
Supra-national governing bodies	Greater push for political and financial commitment for TB control	Country and development partners
New donors	Greater priority for TB control	Donor coordination mechanisms
Summits	Greater awareness of TB as a global issue	MDG campaign

Evaluation

The medium and long term added value of HLM will be determined by an external evaluation after 2 years.

Practical considerations

- Given the importance of HLMS, the total efforts, costs and time involved, realistically 3 of such missions can be carried out in a year.
- The CB decided in its October 2004 meeting to give priority to the 8 countries with the highest TB burden as they proportionally contribute significantly towards the reaching of the global targets to stop TB.
- Also in the light of the diminishing available financial resources for TB control, urgent attention is needed to approach and invite new donors (for example European Commission) to commit themselves more.

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