

Strategic Plan Template for Cochrane Centres

This document is applicable to **Centres** only.

This Strategic Plan template is divided into six sections:

1. The local environment in which the Centre operates
 2. Current funder priorities / requirements
 3. How your Centre will deliver its Cochrane functions
 4. Specialisms of the Centre
 5. Challenges and Risks
 6. Development Plan
- Appendix – Overview of functions and tiers – for information

1 The local environment in which the Centre operates

a. The use of evidence in your country or region

Please describe in brief (approximately 250 words) the state of the use of evidence in decision-making in your country and highlight where work needs to be done to improve the use of evidence or other gaps in the evidence system that you think the Cochrane Centre needs to fill.

Thanks to the promotional work done by Cochrane Croatia, especially through our annual ‘Croatian Cochrane Symposium’, the teaching of medical and allied health students by Cochrane Croatia members at the University of Split and the translation of Cochrane Plain Language Summaries (PLS), an awareness of Cochrane evidence has been created in Croatia, primarily among health professionals and the lay public. Greater awareness of Cochrane evidence by government policy makers in Croatia is needed for it to be routinely used in decision making. A Cochrane symposium dedicated to policy making (2015) was held in Croatia but did not lead to anticipated collaboration with government officials, although awareness was created. Another gap in the evidence system is the media; although Cochrane Croatia has its collaborators, many media outlets in Croatia use unreliable sources of information on health leading to poor quality reporting, misinformation and confusion among the public. To address this concern, Cochrane Croatia will be organising a series of workshops for the media in 2017.

b. Priorities

What do you see as the highest priorities for Cochrane in your country, and which functional areas are the most important to your Centre.

Our highest priorities are to:

- become a centre and establish a network of affiliates,
- obtain government support and trust,
- continue translating PLS and expand our translation activities to include other forms of Cochrane evidence,
- update and translate training materials for authors and other groups of users,
- organise author training workshops and review completion workshops,
- educate media on Cochrane and its products,
- continue teaching medical and allied health students about the importance of EBM and Cochrane,
- involve students in promoting Cochrane,
- produce more Cochrane Systematic Reviews (CSRs).

Functional areas that are most important to our Group are: the role of Cochrane Croatia as a coordinating Centre for Cochrane activities in the region; to undertake or contribute to methodological or other research; to expand and diversify the funding base for Cochrane work in the region; to maintain a strong advocacy program; to support the work of Cochrane's Consumer Network; to undertake knowledge translation activities locally; to lead translation initiatives; to be Cochrane's official representative locally; to build local partnerships with key stakeholders; to contribute to Cochrane's priority setting work; to build capacity for Review production through training; to host local Cochrane events; to promote Cochrane and its work; to support and develop the community of Cochrane members; and to disseminate Cochrane Reviews locally.

2 Current Funder priorities / requirements

Many funders of Centres add additional requirements to those needed by Cochrane (Section 3). Please list below what additional work you need to do to fulfil the requirements of your funders above and beyond those required by Cochrane.

Translate brochures on health related topics, e.g., Sense About Science materials

So far we have translated two brochures produced by the Sense About Science organisation: the first one was "I've got nothing to lose by trying it" and the second one was "Sense about Screening". Translation and printing of both brochures was funded by the City of Zagreb, Croatia. They use it for promotion of evidence-based medicine among healthcare workers and consumers.

Present at health professional conferences.

We are regularly invited to speak about Cochrane, systematic reviews and evidence-based medicine at health conferences. Travel expenses for attending these meetings are covered by the organizers.

Promote EBM

We have regularly received science popularization grants, awarded by the Croatian Ministry of Science, Education and Sports, for the promotion of evidence-based medicine among healthcare workers, patient associations and consumers. This has involved the translation and printing of Cochrane PLSs, production of leaflets on systematic reviews and organisation of workshops for consumers on EBM.

3 How your Centre will deliver its Cochrane functions

The newly-established functions for Centres are outlined in the below table. Full details of the functions are available in [Implementing Strategy to 2020: Cochrane Centres, Branches & Networks Structure & Function Review](#); and will be incorporated into the *Organisational Policy Manual*.

Centres are expected to respond to these functions in a way that is meaningful in their local context. This template, therefore does not list specific activities, but contains a column requesting details on how the Centre intends to fulfil the function. Centres should complete this column with a detailed explanation of activities to be undertaken.

The functions in this form are organised around Cochrane's four strategic goals:

GOAL 1: PRODUCING EVIDENCE: *To produce high-quality, relevant, up-to-date systematic reviews and other synthesized research evidence to inform health decision-making.*

GOAL 2: MAKING OUR EVIDENCE ACCESSIBLE: *To make Cochrane evidence accessible and useful to everybody, everywhere in the world.*

GOAL 3: ADVOCATING FOR EVIDENCE: *To make Cochrane the 'home of evidence' to inform health decision-making, build greater recognition of our work, and become the leading advocate for evidence-informed health care.*

GOAL 4: BUILDING AN EFFECTIVE & SUSTAINABLE ORGANISATION: *To be a diverse, inclusive and transparent international organisation that effectively harnesses the enthusiasm and skills of our contributors, is guided by our principles, governed accountably, managed efficiently and makes optimal use of its resources.*

The final column asks for targets against which the Centre can be measured. You are invited to give short and long term targets for each functional area. Please ensure these targets are “SMART” (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Time bound). We advise short term targets to be for one year and long term targets to be for three years.

Under each Goal there is also a row for “Additional work the Centre carries out under Goal X”. This is because the new structure and function review allows all Cochrane Groups much greater freedom to perform other functions outside those required of their Group type. Centres therefore have the opportunity to specify other activities that they do which are worthy of note and should be tracked as part of their performance.

The functional areas in purple are the items in the additional ‘Tier 4’ functions which are not mandatory for Centres.

If you wish to see some examples of activities that might be undertaken for each function please see [Implementing Strategy to 2020: Cochrane Centres, Branches & Networks Structure & Function Review](#), pages 16 – 21.

Goal	Functional Area	Tier	How this function will be delivered	Short and long term "SMART" targets.
	<p><i>To build capacity for Cochrane Review production in their country by providing or facilitating face-to-face training and support for authors, editors, trainers and other contributors (in collaboration with Cochrane's Learning & Support Department).</i></p>	Two	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Provide one-to-one support to Croatian authors of CSRs, especially through mentoring (experienced authors working in teams with less experience); 2) Continue to deliver training to potential and current authors at annual Croatian Cochrane symposia; 3) Organise an annual Author Training Workshop for potential new authors; 4) Continue to encourage and support the participation of Cochrane Croatia members at Cochrane Colloquia and other training events; 5) Update and maintain an online training course for authors as a free CPD activity; 6) Translate key training materials into Croatian; 7) Regularly notify all Cochrane Croatia members of Cochrane's Learning and Support Department's activities; 8) Continue educating medical and allied health students, as well as postgraduate students about the importance and methods of CSRs; 9) Continue assisting CRGs and authors from other countries by translating Croatian studies potentially to be included in Cochrane reviews. 	<p>Short-term:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Standard Author Training Materials translated into Croatian - at least one multi-day author training event delivered (annually) - at least 5 persons attending the author training event (annually) - at least 2 people enrolled and completed the online course for Cochrane authors in Croatian (annually) - at least two members of Cochrane Croatia attending Cochrane Colloquium (annually) - responding to all requests for assistance in translation of Croatian studies potentially to be included in Cochrane reviews (per request) - At least 20 new volunteers trained for PLS translations (annually) <p>Long-term:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - at least three completed CSRs with author(s) from Croatia on the byline (cumulatively)

Goal	Functional Area	Tier	How this function will be delivered	Short and long term "SMART" targets.
	<i>To engage with external stakeholders locally to inform Cochrane's review priority setting work.</i>	Two	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Work on guideline development with local stakeholders to provide methodological expertise and identify local research priorities 2) Conduct review priority setting exercise with partner organisations 	<p>Short-term:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Review priority setting exercise with partners <p>Long-term</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Participation in the development of Croatian clinical guidelines
	<i>To undertake or contribute to methodological or other research supporting improved production or use of synthesised evidence.</i>	Three	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Conduct research on knowledge translation and training in systematic review methodology 2) Undertake an assessment of the methodological and reporting quality of published systematic reviews 	<p>Short-term:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Two studies presented as posters or oral sessions at Cochrane Colloquia and/or Cochrane Symposium (annually) <p>Long-term:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - One study on methodological issues published in a peer-reviewed journal
	<i>To undertake searching of local sources, especially non-English sources to contribute to the development of CENTRAL, Cochrane's register of controlled trials. (Optional)</i>	Four	Not relevant, as publication of RCTs exclusively in Croatian is very unlikely.	
	<i>Additional work the Centre carries out under Goal One.</i>			

Goal	Functional Area	Tier	How this function will be delivered	Short and long term "SMART" targets.
	<i>To disseminate Cochrane Reviews locally based on stakeholder networks, the media and other communications channels.</i>	One	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Continue the translation of Cochrane PLSs into Croatian to aid the dissemination of findings in the local context; 2) Develop a network of journalists and promote EBM and Cochrane reviews among them; 3) Organize workshops for journalists; 4) Encourage journalists to use EBM sources for reporting and to subscribe to the Wiley's mailing list for the media 	<p>Short term:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Translate at least 1000 Cochrane PLSs into Croatian (annually); So far we have translated 2204 (as of January 31, 2017) - Invite at least 1 journalist in the field of health and science to subscribe to Wiley press releases monthly; - Obtain a science promotion grant to organize workshops for journalists and journalism students in 2017. <p>Long-term:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Translate at least 3000 Cochrane PLSs into Croatian; - Create a mailing list of relevant journalists for disseminating information about new Cochrane SRs of wide interest - Organize annual workshops for journalists about EBM and Cochrane SRs

Goal	Functional Area	Tier	How this function will be delivered	Short and long term "SMART" targets.
<i>To support the work of Cochrane's consumer network by hosting/supporting a 'consumer champion'. (Optional)</i>	Four	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Continue collaborating with existing consumer non-profit organizations 2) Inviting new consumer non-profit organizations to join the Cochrane Croatia network 3) Conduct a survey among partner consumer organisations on facilitators and challenges to collaboration with Cochrane Croatia 4) Continue to support 'consumer champions' to attend Cochrane Colloquia 5) Continue to support attendance of consumer representatives at annual Croatian Cochrane Symposium 	<p>Short term</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Invite at least one consumer representative to our annual Croatian Cochrane Symposium <hr/> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Invite at least one consumer group to become an official partner of Cochrane Croatia - Conduct a survey among consumers on needs and challenges <p>Long term</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Translate Cochrane consumer network site 	
<i>To undertake Knowledge Translation (KT) work or work with other Groups in Cochrane to implement KT initiatives locally. (Optional)</i>	Four	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Continue disseminating Cochrane PLSs and SRs in relevant professional journals via 'Cochrane Corner'; 2) Continue disseminating Cochrane SRs on the social network for physicians of the Croatian Health Insurance Fund (CHIF); 3) Continue promoting Cochrane PLSs on social networks Facebook and Twitter; 4) Collaborating with journalists to report about Cochrane SRs of interest. 	<p>Short term:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Publish articles about new Cochrane SRs in Liječničke novine (official journal of Croatian Medical Chamber) and Medix (professional journal for physicians) in each issue (11 times per year in Liječničke novine; 6 times per year in Medix); - Publish articles about new Cochrane SRs in relevant journals of chambers of other health care professionals; - Publish notes about new Cochrane PLSs on the CHIF social network; <p>Long-term:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Same goals as in short-term, continued over long term 	

Goal	Functional Area	Tier	How this function will be delivered	Short and long term "SMART" targets.
	<p><i>To support or lead translation initiatives to increase the accessibility of Cochrane Evidence in their native language. (Optional)</i></p>	Four	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Continue the translation of Cochrane PLSs into Croatian and make them publicly available 2) Translate Cochrane Podcasts 	<p>Short term:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Translate at least 1000 Cochrane PLSs into Croatian; - Translate 1 Cochrane Podcast per month <p>Long-term:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Translate all remaining Cochrane PLSs into Croatian
	<p><i>Additional work the Centre carries out under Goal Two.</i></p>			

Goal	Functional Area	Tier	How this function will be delivered	Short and long term "SMART" targets.
	<i>To promote Cochrane and its work in their country.</i>	One	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Continue to teach medical, dental and allied health students at the University of Split School of Medicine and the Catholic University of Croatia about Cochrane 2) Continue to organise annual 'Croatian Cochrane Symposia' 3) Continue to promote Cochrane and its products at health professional meetings/conferences 4) Continue to write and widely distribute 3 issues of our newsletter per year 5) Continue to maintain and update our website, Twitter and Facebook page 6) Proactively set up stands/represent Cochrane at professional conferences 7) Become involved in translating Cochrane content for Wikipedia 	<p>Short term:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - organise 9th Croatian Cochrane Symposium in 2017; - recruit at least 1 new subscriber to our mailing list; - put at least 2 posts on Facebook daily; - promote Cochrane Croatia at at least 1 conference per year. <p>Long-term:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - continue the above - set up a system for regularly translating podcasts, infographics and Wiki content; - trial filming videos about Cochrane content in Croatian
	<i>To be Cochrane's official 'Representative' in the country in accordance with Cochrane's spokesperson policy.</i>	Two	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Continue to uphold Cochrane's policies, incl. Branding guidelines, Spokesperson policy, Charter of Good Management Practice, etc. 2) Continue to respond to, in a timely manner, inquiries from the public, media, government and health professionals regarding Cochrane and its products 3) Continue to accept invitations to speak at/represent Cochrane at various consumer and professional meetings and conferences 	<p>Short term:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - at least 1 presentation per year as official Cochrane representatives at a national meeting/conference <p>Long-term:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To become the "Home of Evidence", i.e., entity to whom Croatian citizens automatically turn if they are looking for reliable evidence in health care.

Goal	Functional Area	Tier	How this function will be delivered	Short and long term "SMART" targets.
<i>To build formal or informal local partnerships with key stakeholders to improve knowledge exchange and dissemination of Cochrane Evidence.</i>	Two	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Continue to build formal and informal partnerships with key stakeholders 2) Continue to invite partner representatives to our Annual Croatian Cochrane Symposium 3) Organise round tables for partner organisations 4) Survey current partner organisations on needs, expectations and review recommendations 4) Try and establish contact with government officials 	<p>Short term:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - establish at least 1 new partnership - annual symposium attended by at least one partner representative - conduct a survey among partners <p>Long-term:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - organise a round table for partner organisations; - establish rapport and collaboration with government officials on use of Cochrane evidence. 	
<i>To host local events such as country or regional symposia that promote the work of Cochrane, actively develop the contributor base, and build stakeholder links.</i>	Two	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Continue to organise regular Croatian Cochrane Symposia 2) Continue to support regional Cochrane symposia 	<p>Short-term:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Organise 9th Croatian Cochrane Symposium in 2017 - Encourage colleagues in Bosnia and Herzegovina to organise 2nd B&H Cochrane Symposium <p>Long-term:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Organise regular symposia, author training workshops and other forms of support for Cochrane contributors 	

Goal	Functional Area	Tier	How this function will be delivered	Short and long term "SMART" targets.
	<i>To maintain a country advocacy programme in support of Cochrane's mission, profile and agenda and provide a country voice for campaigns Cochrane is involved in.</i>	Three	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Continue to actively support 'Students for Best Evidence' 2) Continue to actively support 'All Trials Campaign' 3) Continue to align activities with Cochrane's 'Strategy to 2020' 4) Continue to promote Cochrane's 'Review Priority List' 5) Monitor impact of Cochrane Systematic Reviews in Croatia and Region 6) Advocate for use of Cochrane evidence in planning and funding of primary research 	<p>Short-term:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Find a student champion to promote Cochrane - Continue to promote and support campaigns Cochrane is involved in <p>Long-term:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Find one student per year to promote Cochrane - Become involved in all campaigns Cochrane supports - Report on impact of CSRs in Croatia - Establish collaboration with research funders
	<i>Additional work the Centre carries out under Goal Three.</i>			

Goal	Functional Area	Tier	How this function will be delivered	Short and long term "SMART" targets.
	<i>To support and develop the community of Cochrane members in their country.</i>	One	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Support the Cochrane Membership Scheme by creating a sense of community locally, through newsletters, social media our website and the media; 2) Continue organizing educational activities for students, authors, consumers and the media; 3) Continue to build partnerships with healthcare organizations, professional societies; NGOs and other stakeholders; 4) Continue crowdsourcing for volunteer translators. 	<p>Short term:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Recruit at least 50 people from Croatia to the Cochrane Membership Scheme - Continue to support authors of Cochrane Systematic Reviews, as described earlier; - Encourage a larger number of social media followers; - Continue to provide newsletters and other communications locally <p>Long term:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Organize activities with universities, hospitals and patient organisations, - Maintain an active list of members/contributors in the Cochrane membership database

Goal	Functional Area	Tier	How this function will be delivered	Short and long term "SMART" targets.
	<p><i>To act as a coordinating Centre for Cochrane activities in a country (including supporting CRGs, Fields or Methods Groups that are based in the country). [Please include here any work you do to support development of Cochrane in your region as well as country.]</i></p>	Three	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Support and assist colleagues from Bosnia and Herzegovina (B&H) in establishing a Cochrane presence in their country; 2) Maintain a development plan for Cochrane's presence in Croatia; specifically, help establish a Cochrane affiliate at the University of Rijeka and the Croatian Catholic University in Zagreb; 3) Continue to communicate regularly with established Cochrane groups in Croatia and B&H 4) Explore ways of communicating with colleagues in Slovenia, Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia; 5) Continue information exchange, training, dissemination of evidence, promotion of Cochrane throughout the region; 6) Pursue national subscriptions to the Cochrane Library for all healthcare institutions, including small hospitals, county healthcare centres and general practitioners, especially those in areas of special need. 	<p>Short term:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Establish Cochrane Affiliate in Bosnia and Herzegovina <p>Long term:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Establish Cochrane Affiliate in Rijeka and Zagreb, Croatia

Goal	Functional Area	Tier	How this function will be delivered	Short and long term "SMART" targets.
<i>To expand and diversify the funding base of Cochrane work in the country</i>	Three	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Regularly apply for funds from the City of Split and Zagreb and the County of Dalmatia; 2) Use the establishment of Cochrane Croatia as an NGO for accessing more funds from local authorities; 3) Apply, as an official Cochrane Centre, for funding from the University of Split and from the Ministry of Science and Health; 4) Apply for eligible funding outside Croatia, as partners in EU projects, and search for opportunities for new national state funds complementary to those already regularly applied for and received. 	<p>Short term: apply for funds allocated to NGOs</p> <p>Long term;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - apply for national and EU grants - engage in new partnerships/projects with similar national and international organizations 	
<i>Additional work the Centre carries out under Goal Four</i>				

4 Specialisms of the Centre

Most Centres specialise in a certain function or area of work to some degree. Please give details of any particular specialisms of your Centre. Where you feel that work in your specialist area means you are delivering less in other functional areas please explain this.

Cochrane Croatia specializes in providing training to volunteers for the translation of Cochrane PLSs, resulting in a high number of translated PLSs (only Spanish and French PLSs have more translations than Croatian, and Croatia is regularly among the top 20 countries with access to Cochrane.org). We are also highly committed to knowledge translation; hence, we are recognized as the go-to source for communicating and clarifying evidence. We regularly receive requests from healthcare professionals in Croatia to assist them with clinical questions. Our annual symposia are well attended and highly respected in the region for their quality and innovation. We are also dedicated to the training of future health professionals in the field of evidence-based medicine and the involvement of consumers and other partner organisations in the work of Cochrane.

5 Challenges and Risks

Please provide details of any challenges or risks that might affect your Centre's ability to complete its work over the next three years.

Lack of funding is always a risk, but given our new status as a not-for-profit organisation and the possibility of becoming an independent Centre in the near future, this is unlikely to occur. Also, we have learnt, over the years, to manage with very little, and are accustomed to working for Cochrane on a volunteer basis, therefore, even if funding was decreased, Cochrane Croatia would be able to continue fulfilling its core functions.

Illness or incapacity of leadership team members would, of course, affect our Centre's ability to complete its work over the next three years, but let's hope this doesn't happen.

6 Development Plan

Under the new structure and function arrangements it is now possible to establish multiple presences in a country. Whilst this is not a mandatory step, please consider whether you expect to establish Affiliates in your country, and if so what would be the plan for this.

We are looking forward to establishing Affiliates not only in our own country but in the region, as well.

We have already mentioned this possibility to our colleagues in Rijeka, where a group of clinicians at the University Hospital of Rijeka are heavily involved in CSR conduct, and they showed interest in establishing a more formal relationship with Cochrane. I will be visiting Rijeka in the spring and plan to discuss the process with them in detail.

One of our leadership team members, Dario Sambunjak, from Cochrane Learning and Support Department, is based at the Croatian Catholic University in Zagreb, where he enjoys the support of his host institution and teaches EBM, so we hope to establish a Cochrane Affiliate in Zagreb as well.

Finally, there is a very active and ambitious group of Cochrane supporters in Bosnia and Herzegovina, based at the University of Mostar, who are very keen to establish a Cochrane presence in their country. We anticipate that this will occur in the near future.

Of course, if any other group of Cochrane supporters, either in Croatia or the region, expressed interest in becoming an official Cochrane presence, then we would be more than happy to assist and guide them in the process, and to support and mentor them in the future.

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Index of documentation relating to Geographic Groups

1.1	Registration process for new Geographic Groups
1.2	Procedure for agreeing strategic plans with Groups
1.3	Accountability, support and reporting procedures
1.4	Brand and website guidance for Groups
2.1	Central Executive Team commitments to a Centre
2.2	Generic Collaboration Agreement for Centres
2.3	Sample Collaboration Agreements for Affiliates and Associate Centres
3.1	Application form to register a new Geographic Group
3.2	Application form to register a new Network
4.1	Network Strategic Plan Template
4.2	Centre Strategic Plan Template
4.3	Associate Centre Strategic Plan Template
4.4	Affiliate Strategic Plan Template

Appendix 1: Functions of Centres

The functions of Centres and other geographically-oriented Cochrane structures are all directly built on *Strategy to 2020* objectives. The functions are in a tiered hierarchy. Tier One functions must be performed by any Cochrane Group, however big or small. Tier Two functions must be performed by Associate Centres (formerly Branches) and Centres. Tier Three are functions that Centres must perform as well as those in Tiers One and Two. Tier Four are additional functions that any Cochrane Group would be encouraged to consider, however, Centres must perform at least one Tier Four function. These functions are written as: *"It is a core function of Cochrane Centres [to...]"*

1.1. The functions at a glance



How the tiers map to Groups

