

Stakeholders Consultation on Follow Up to International Vaccine Research Taskforce Recommendations (IVTF)

4-5 March 2019

WHO Headquarters, Salle D, 7th Floor, 20 Avenue Appia, Geneva, Switzerland

Organized by ESSENCE Working Group on Developing a Mechanism for Reviewing Investments in Clinical Research Capacity Building (WGRI)



Meeting Minutes

Acknowledgements: ESSENCE on Health Research initiative acknowledges the financial support provided to this area of work by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, Fogarty International Centre/ U.S. National Institutes of Health, Swedish International Development Agency (Sida), Wellcome Trust, and the Special Programme for Research and Training in Tropical Diseases (TDR).

Meeting Objective: To provide input for recommendations for a mechanism to review funding for clinical research capacity building in low- and middle-income countries (LMICs) in response to the World Bank and Coalition for Epidemic Preparedness and Innovation (CEPI) report, Money and Microbes.

Facilitators: Peter Kilmarx, FIC/NIH, Thabi Maitin, MRC South Africa, WGRI co-chairs

Encl.: Annex 1 – Agenda
Annex 2 – List of Participants

1. *Opening, welcome and introductions* – **Peter Kilmarx**, FIC/NIH, and **John Reeder**, Director, TDR

Peter welcomed everyone to WHO, and to the consultation meeting of the ESSENCE working group on developing a mechanism for reviewing investment in clinical research capacity building (WGRI). He expressed satisfaction with the level of work done so far by the consultant, and thanked TDR for graciously hosting the meeting. He noted that ESSENCE is working with other partners, including major external funders of clinical research and LMIC representation, as well as leading the consultative process. Peter emphasized that ESSENCE is uniquely positioned in the months ahead, to prepare a report with recommendations for the most efficient process for review in response to the World Bank, CEPI report, [Money and Microbes: Strengthening Research Capacity to Prevent Epidemics](#).

John thanked everyone for their active participation in the meeting and emphasized its usefulness for the working group, especially in responding to a recommendation for ESSENCE to articulate a mechanism to review funding for clinical research capacity building in LMICs. This was followed by welcome and introductory remarks from the ESSENCE co-chairs, Linda Kupfer and Hannah Akuffo, who both expressed gratitude to everyone participating and willing to work together to help ESSENCE achieve the principal goal of the broad consultations that is required. This was immediately followed by self-introduction of participants.

2. *ESSENCE scope of work discussion* – **Peter Kilmarx**, FIC/NIH; **Thabi Maitin**, MRC South Africa; **Nicole Lurie**, CEPI Consultant

Peter and Thabi gave short presentations on the ultimate objective of IVTF (convened by the World Bank Group and CEPI), which is to increase global clinical capacity for vaccine. The report focuses on a number of recommendations made by the task force, and one of which directly mentioned ESSENCE. Peter informed that ESSENCE by the end of 2019, is expected to identify and articulate a mechanism that permits a thorough review of current and planned investments in clinical research capacity strengthening in LMICs.

Participants were further informed that the work is expected to be done in collaboration with Global Coordination Mechanism (GCM) of the R&D Blueprint at the World Health Organization (WHO), and reinforced with additional LMIC representation. Peter highlighted that the principal goal of the consultation, is to have participants deliberate deeply on the subject and provide input into the draft consultation background paper, and overall, help ESSENCE consult widely with key stakeholders to deliver a set of recommendations, in particular “Recommendation 12” in response to the money and microbes report.

Nicole Lurie thanked the participants for their active participation in the working-level meeting, and highlighted the need to help advance the objective of CEPI – ensuring that research capacity is in place during disease outbreaks no matter where they may occur. She noted that the support of the WB and CEPI, through the creation of an international task force, is aimed at producing actionable

recommendations that secure important national clinical research capacity in LMICs, and especially where certain structures are absent.

Both speakers noted that the international task force is mainly focused on “clinical research”, and informed that one of the gaps identified by the task force is the lack of a mechanism for review of investments in clinical research capacity building. From the task forces’ several discussions, the ESSENCE¹ partnership was recognized as the appropriate entity to make recommendations for such a mechanism.

3. *Rationale, landscape of clinical research capacity building and potential models and recommendations* – **Martin Eigbike**, WGRI Consultant

- Martin gave a brief presentation on the case for developing a mechanism for reviewing current and planned investments for clinical research capacity building in LMICs. He also discussed on the current landscape of clinical research capacity building, and the current mechanisms in place to coordinate/collaborate on clinical research capacity building, to allow the participants engage in high-level discussions on finalizing the consultation background paper, especially on the need, desired characteristics, and options for a review mechanism (s). His presentations are included with these minutes.

4. *Overview, pros and cons of select databases* – **Taghreed Adam**, WHO; **Michael Cheetham**, NIH; **Nick Chapman**, Policy Cures

- The three presenters described in detail the existing databases ([WHO Global Observatory](#), [World RePORT](#) and [G-Finder](#)) for tracking clinical trials and other potential indicators of capacity, and invited comments and questions on each database identified. The PowerPoint presentations are attached to these minutes.
- The World RePORT database, hosted by NIH, captures data from major global funders of health research and capacity strengthening at the institutional and national level. G-Finder, hosted by Policy Cures, reports on global investments in research and development (R&D) in 35 neglected diseases including drugs, vaccines, diagnostics, vector control products and microbicides, from basic research through to post-registration studies. The WHO Global Observatory on Health R&D is a centralized source of information and analyses on global health R&D activities. It builds on existing data and reports, including World RePORT and G-Finder, and gathers new information, where needed and feasible.

5. *Breakout groups deliberations/Output* – **Peter Kilmarx**; **Thabi Maitin**; **Garry Aslanyan**, TDR, ESSENCE Secretariat; **Hannah Akuffo**, Sida

- To ensure actionable recommendations were made or near final decisions reached on the task, the participants were assigned to four smaller groups to discuss on the recommendations for a review mechanism and finalize the recommendations (writing, review, publication), as well as discuss on the implementation, dissemination and communication planning. The discussions focused mainly on the key objectives and desired future state of the mechanism, scope and service offerings, organizational model, host institution (s), governance and funding.

¹ **ESSENCE on Health Research** is an initiative that allows donors/funders to identify synergies, bring about coherence and increase the value of resources and actions for health research. More information: <http://www.who.int/tdr/partnerships/essence/en/>

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- During the report out from the breakout groups, the consultation participants proposed to recommend a mechanism that (a) optimized data on funding flows in LMIC health research, (b) provides a framework for institutional and country-level self-assessment and reporting of national health research capacity, as well as (c) permits a coordinating body to analyse emerging data, discuss actions, spot gaps, and make recommendations.
 - Following the discussion on the output of the breakout sessions, the participants highlighted the need for the group to design the envisaged mechanism, allowing for interoperability between existing systems and resources in order to avoid overlap in reporting and to improve quality of information. Participants also stressed the importance of empowering a coordinating body with a Secretariat that is representative, diverse, inclusive, neutral, responsive, adaptive, and which produces reports and makes recommendations (i.e. ESSENCE + relevant organizations). Everyone had the chance, not only to engage around the central theme of the consultation, but also to network with others to learn and discuss more on how to take the task forward.
6. *Perspectives on a mechanism on reviewing investments* – **Toomas Palu**, World Bank; **Vasee Moorthy**, WHO, GCM; **Jennifer Mabuka-Maroa**, AAS; **Jacques Demotes**, ECRIN/CRIGH; **Thy Pham**, Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation; **Margaret McCluskey**, USAID.
- The six speakers provided their views on the central theme of the consultation, especially from the perspectives of their organization, and along with the charge that the international task force has put forward – having research capacity that can be mobilized quickly and effectively in countries where outbreaks are most likely to occur, because a lack of such capacity could result in tragic delays. In summary, they all agreed that the mechanism should stimulate countries internal drive and support local ownership and sustainability.
7. *Action points and review of timeline* – **Peter Kilmarx**, **Martin Eigbiki**, **Garry Aslanyan**
- Overall, the participants agreed:
 - The World RePORT should be improved, expanded, and used as the primary data source for reviewing investments in health research capacity building at the institutional and national level;
 - WHO will develop a set of indicators of health research capacity at the national and institution levels that can be used for assessment or self-assessment of country level research systems' capacity;
 - ESSENCE on Health Research initiative to facilitate periodic meetings of major funders of health research capacity building by analysing data to help improve coordination, where feasible and desirable.
 - Following the discussion, the co-chairs informed that the information drawn from the consultation, and additional key informant interviews to be conducted (within the next two weeks), will be used to draft elements for the design of the envisaged mechanism. Peter then announced that a revised draft based on the inputs provided will be circulated by Tuesday, 12 March to all attendees. He encouraged participants to provide substantive contributions until Tuesday, 19 March, allowing enough time for the consultant to finalize the report on or before the 26 March deadline – **Action for WGRI Consultant and ESSENCE Secretariat**.

Garry also informed that the revised paper based on the feedbacks, will be presented to the ESSENCE group for a review and approval at its next members annual meeting in the week of 15 April, at Wellcome, London, UK.

- On implementation planning - moving from recommendations to implementation, to process and timeline, the participants consider it useful for ESSENCE to further engage with key partner GCM, to initiate further discussion on moving forward on the rest of the activities - reviewing progress on implementation, identifying the best dissemination options to make it available, how to operationalize the recommendations etc. – **Action for WGRI co-chairs, ESSENCE co-chairs and Secretariat.**
- With regard to finalizing the recommendations - writing, review, and publication, the consultation participants proposed finalizing the report within the September 2019 timeframe, and to disseminate through the Global Preparedness Monitoring Board as stipulated in the money and microbes report. In addition, considers it as something of value to communicate the working group's activities and progress on developing a mechanism for improving coordination of investments in clinical research with the Heads of International Biomedical Research Organizations (HIROs), potentially at its next meeting in June 2019, in order to engage with HIROs member organizations, support the WGRI's work and give ESSENCE a profile within the platform.

8. *Concluding remarks* – **Linda Kupfer**, ESSENCE co-chair (FIC/NIH)

- Linda reiterated her thanks for everyone's participation in the meeting and informed that the next members annual meeting will take place during the week of 15 April in London, aims at updating the ESSENCE group on the outcomes of the March Consultation and secure approval on the revised consultation background paper.

9. Meeting adjourned at 12:30 pm Central Eastern Time.

Annex 1 – **Agenda**






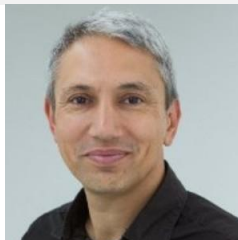
| Time | Subject | Presenter/Moderator |
|------------------------------------|---|--|
| Day 1 – 4 March | | |
| 9:00 | Welcome and introductions – WHO, TDR and ESSENCE Secretariat | John Reeder & Garry Aslanyan, TDR and ESSENCE Secretariat |
| 9:10 | Welcome – ESSENCE co-chairs | Hannah Akuffo, Sida & Linda Kupfer, FIC/NIH |
| 9:15 | Background, goals, objectives and products of consultation | Peter Kilmarx, FIC/NIH & Thabi Maitin, MRC SA |
| 9:25 | Background on <i>Money and Microbes</i> , recommendation to articulate a mechanism for reviewing investment | Nicole Lurie, CEPI consultant |
| 9:35 | Discussion on consultation goals and objectives | Peter Kilmarx & Nicole Lurie, moderators |
| 9:45 | Part 1. Rationale and key considerations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Presentation – 15 minutes - Discussion – 15 minutes | Martin Eigbike, WGRI consultant Thabi Maitin, moderator |
| 10:15 | Part 2. Landscape of clinical research capacity and research capacity building <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Presentation – 15 minutes - Discussion – 15 minutes | Martin Eigbike, moderator |
| 10:45 | Coffee break | |
| Time | Subject | Presenter |
| Day 1 – 4 March (continued) | | |
| 11:15 | Part 3. Potential models and recommendations for a review mechanism <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Presentation – 15 minutes - Discussion – 15 minutes | Martin Eigbike & Ole Olesen, EDCTP, moderators |
| 11:45 | Overviews, pros and cons of select databases <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - WHO Global Observatory | Taghreed Adam, WHO |
| 11:55 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - WorldRePORT | Michael Cheetham, NIH |
| 12:05 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - G-Finder | Nick Chapman, Policy Cures |
| 12:15 | Split into four breakout groups with balanced representation in each group: Recommendations for a review mechanism Salle D, Rooms M205, M505 and M605 | Peter Kilmarx & Thabi Maitin |
| 12:30 | Lunch | |
| 13:15 | Breakout group discussions (continued) | |

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| 14:30 | Report back from breakout groups | Rodrigo Correa Oliveira, Fiocruz, moderator |
| 15:15 | Coffee break | |
| 15:45 | <p>Perspectives on a mechanism on reviewing investments</p> <p>(5 minutes each followed by panel discussion):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Toomas Palu, World Bank (TBC) - Vasee Moorthy, GCM, WHO - Jenniffer Mabuka-Maroa, AAS - Jacques Demotes, ECRIN/CRIGH - Thy Pham, Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation - Margaret McCluskey, USAID | Garry Aslanyan, moderator |
| 17:00 | Wrap up Day 1 | Peter Kilmarx & Thabi Maitin |
| 17:30-19:00 | Reception: Winter Garden at WHO Main Cafeteria | |

| Time | Subject | Presenter |
|-----------------|--|---|
| Day 2 – 5 March | | |
| 9:00 | Welcome, summary of day 1, overview of Day 2 | Peter Kilmarx and Thabi Maitin |
| 9:10 | Draft final recommendations | Martin Eigbike, Peter Kilmarx, Thabi Maitin |
| 9:30 | <p>Resources needed for a review mechanism</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Funding and other resources needed - Potential funding sources | Martin Eigbike; Hannah Akuffo, moderators |
| 9:45 | Discussion – draft final recommendations for a review mechanism | Simon Kay, Wellcome, moderator |
| 10:30 | Coffee break | |
| 11:00 | Implementation planning – moving from recommendations to implementation, process and timeline | Peter Kilmarx |
| 11:30 | Finalizing recommendations – writing, review, publication | Martin Eigbike |
| 11:45 | Recommendations review, dissemination and communication planning | Garry Aslanyan |
| 12:00 | Final discussion | Peter Kilmarx & Thabi Maitin |
| 12:15 | Final remarks ESSENCE co-chairs | Hannah Akuffo/Linda Kupfer |

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| 12:20 | Close of meeting | TDR and ESSENCE Secretariat |
| 12:30 | Meeting adjourns | |

Annex 2 - **List of Participants****WGRI Members**

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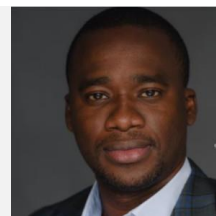
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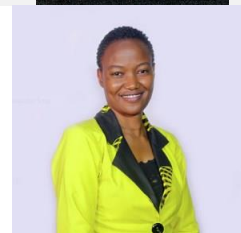
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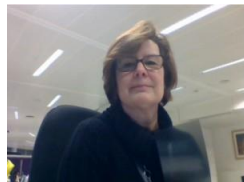


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