

# REPORT OF THE 45th MEETING OF THE TDR SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE (STAC45)

Professor Margaret Gyapong  
Chair, STAC

46th Meeting of the  
Joint Coordinating Board

14–15 June 2023


UNICEF/UNDP/World Bank/WHO Special Programme  
for Research and Training in Tropical Diseases



STAC45 participants

# Outline of Presentation

- Overview of 45th STAC
- Current STAC Membership
- Staff changes in TDR
- Directors' report , STAC Observations and recommendations
- Financial and Risk Management Report, STAC Observations and Recommendations
- Update on Scientific working groups



The forty-fifth meeting of the Scientific and Technical Advisory Committee took place face-to-face on 15–16 March 2023.

The meeting was chaired by Prof. Margaret Gyapong, incoming Chair STAC.

# STAC New Members

- Welcomed five new members (besides Chair STAC)
  - **Professor Karen Barnes**, Division of Clinical Pharmacology, Department of Medicine at the University of Cape Town, South Africa
  - **Professor Debra Jackson**, Takeda Chair in Global Child Health and Deputy Director of the MARCH Centre, London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine, United Kingdom
  - **Dr Thabi Maitin**, Division Manager, Research Grants and Scholarship Funding at the South African Medical Research Council, in Tygerberg, South Africa
  - **Professor Andrea Winkler**, Co-Director, Center for Global Health, School of Medicine at the Technical University of Munich, Germany
- Elected Rapporteur of STAC45
  - **Dr Caroline Lynch**, Regional Adviser, Medicines for Malaria Venture, Chiang Mai, Thailand

# Staff Changes

- **Annette Kuesel**, scientist, Research for Implementation, **retired** after 20 years with TDR. Will continue to support moxidectin research.
- **Pascal Launois**, scientist and Acting Unit Head, Research Capacity Strengthening, **retired** after 20 years with TDR.
- **Anna Thorson** will be **joining** TDR on 1 April 2023 as the new Unit Head, Research Capacity Strengthening.
- **Cathrine Thorstensen** **joined** TDR in August 2022 as the Programme, Monitoring and Evaluation Officer in the PIM unit.
- **Mahnaz Vahedi** has been **selected for a P5 position** in the RCS unit through an open, competitive recruitment process.
- **Corinne Merle** has been **selected for a P5 position** in the IMP unit through an open, competitive recruitment process.

# Directors' Report

## Key TDR achievements of 2022:

- STAC observed that TDR Performance Framework was aligned with TDR's Strategy 2018-2023.
- There are 26 Programme-level KPIs that help to monitor and evaluate results against the planned targets as reflected in the 2021 Results Report.
- As of 31 December 2021, 18 of the 23 expected results in TDR's portfolio were on track, four had minor delays and only one had a major delay due to travel restrictions on TDR grantees imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic.

## STAC's observations and recommendations on the Director's report

- Interest in new learning from actions that have facilitated 50% of leading grants going to women. However, this is yet to reflect in women becoming main authors of publications.
- Effort at putting Implementation Research beyond the remit of TDR to other departments.
- Global Engagement and for the success of the *Global Health Matters* podcast. The inclusion of Portuguese while speaking and tweeting has facilitated better reach in Brazil.

# STAC's observations and recommendations on the Director's report

## Endorsed the Director's report and...

- Congratulated TDR on the remarkable achievements and for being on track in most deliverables through the difficult past year despite challenges due to the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Recommended that TDR should reach out to additional funders regarding gender identity-related policies (e.g. FCDO, NIHR, UKRI).
- Consider TDR to be more explicit on how it tracks impact on policy; identifying of factors that enable policy change; and how it can contribute to enhanced use of evidence in countries.

## STAC's observations and recommendations on the New Strategy

- Commended TDR on extensive and inclusive engagement on the draft Strategy 2024–2029 and endorsed it.
- Welcomed progress in disseminating resources to support bringing an intersectional gender lens to research activities.
- Recommended identifying the objectives of different intersectional training components as to whether the purpose is to raise awareness or create a deeper understanding.
- Recommended that TDR explore opportunities for designated funding to establish a new implementation research leadership fellowship training programme.

# Preliminary financial report 2022 and outlook 2023–2025



- The two programme budgets and workplan scenarios for the biennium 2021-2021 as approved by JCB that included a lower scenario of USD 40 and a higher scenario of USD 50 million were reviewed.
  - *The scenarios that mitigate funding uncertainties once again proved to successful since they allowed planned costs to be revised and adjusted leading to reallocating funds saved on staff costs and operations support*
- The two 2022/2023 budget outlooks that have also been approved by the JCB were reviewed and agreed.

# Risk management report



- The status of programme-level risks and a brief summary of the 2021 Risk Management Report were presented and discussed.
- Previously there were 10 active significant risks, but in 2020, following mitigation progress made on risk on Information and Project Management Systems, this was closed in 2021 leaving 9 risks.
- A new risk and mitigation measures were proposed concerning the expected gap due to the scheduled retirement of a large number of senior managers and key personnel.

# STAC decisions and recommendations

## Decisions:

STAC endorsed the following documents:

- TDR Preliminary 2022 financial report and outlook 2023–2025.
- 2022 TDR Results Report
- TDR Risk Management Report, 2022

## *Recommendation:*

- *Welcomed increased efforts to promote balanced recognition of authorship in articles resulting from TDR support.*
- *Recommended that activities supported by TDR consider the multidisciplinary nature of research efforts and to promote equitable recognition of all members of the research teams.*

# Update on Scientific Working Groups

## Updates from SWG Chairs were presented and discussed

- Proposed membership of both Scientific Working Groups (IMP and RCS) to 31 March 2023 was presented.
- From 2022 change in the tenure of SWG membership was proposed to start on 1 April to 31 March instead of following the calendar year.

## ***STAC Decisions:***

- *Agreed on the membership of the SWGs as presented*
- *Noted the proposed change of SWG membership terms from calendar year to 1 April to 31 March, beginning in 2022*
- *Agreed that STAC45 will take place in Geneva on 15-16 March 2023 including a briefing on TDR for new members on 14 March.*

# STAC45 participants

