DIRECTOR’S REPORT

47th session of the TDR Joint Coordinating Board

John Reeder
Director, TDR

12-13 June 2024
UNICEF/UNDP/World Bank/WHO Special Programme for Research and Training in Tropical Diseases
New strategy outlines TDR’s support for country-led implementation research to improve the health and well-being of people burdened by infectious diseases of poverty.
The impact pathway

- Global engagement
- Research support
- Research training

Stronger research capacity
Evidence to improve impact of health interventions
Implementation of interventions that reduce the burden of infectious diseases of poverty
Our Theory of Change

VISION
The health and well-being of people burdened by infectious diseases of poverty is improved through research and innovation.

IMPACT
- PROGRESS ON SDGS: health, education, gender equality and equity, water, equitable access, climate change
- IMPROVED TOOLS: Improvement in equitable delivery & access to better health

OUTCOMES
- Stronger more resilient health research system
- Evidence informs policy and behaviour

OUTPUTS
- Locally relevant research programmes developed
- Researchers with strengthened capacity
- New evidence generated
- Evidence communicated
- Impact of TDR activities reported

TDR ACTIVITIES
- Research priorities
- Research training
- Research support
- Research uptake
- Research impact
Making an impact: Supporting country-led research for global health challenges

One Health
Human Health + Animal Health + Environment
Updating the Performance Framework

• Fundamentals unchanged, but aligned with the 2024-2029 strategy: added indicators for the major global health challenges
• Continues to measure what we do (technical achievements) and how we work (core values, managerial performance)
• Serves for accountability and continuous improvement
• Integrates recommendations from the Seventh External Review of the Programme: having ranges for targets, clarifying wording
• Adds annual/biennial milestones for indicator targets
• JCB feedback, recommendations and endorsement sought
IMP key achievements: 2023

In October 2023, WHO announced that **Bangladesh is the first country in the world to eliminate visceral leishmaniasis as a public health problem.**

**TDR was one of the leading partners** who supported research over more than two decades on new diagnostic tools and treatments and their implementation, which helped accelerate this monumental achievement.

- A new regional network of national TB programmes in Southern and Eastern Africa (SEARN-TB) was launched, targeting: **24 countries in the region**

- This new network builds on the successes of the West and Central African Regional Network for TB control (known as WARN/CARN-TB).

A **One Health approach** is operationalized as a transdisciplinary ecosystem approach to addressing various diseases (including fascioliasis, schistosomiasis, vector-borne diseases) in the context of climate change through: **8 projects in Africa**
TDR supports Cameroon to eliminate yellow fever epidemics

TDR participated in an investigation to understand the resurgence of yellow fever in Cameroon, respond early to outbreaks and work towards eliminating epidemics by 2026.

This root cause analysis will inform efforts to strengthen the routine immunization programme and ensure vaccination with a high coverage rate.
IMP priorities for 2024-2025

- Expand reach of EWARS-csd and strengthen surveillance systems, with a One Health approach in response to outbreaks of climate-sensitive diseases such as dengue, in collaboration with WHO (Global Arboviral Initiative)
- Support testing of the Sterile Insect Technique in the Pacific islands
- Roll-out of malaria vaccine: optimization of delivery with Seasonal Malaria Chemoprophylaxis
- Delivery of paediatric praziquantel for schistosomiasis
- Democratize research through support to disease programme networks, use of generic research tools, national dialogues
- Support IR on understanding and mitigating vulnerabilities to climate change, building on ongoing projects in Africa
- Engage with key stakeholders on climate change and health, including with hard-to-reach communities
- Roll-out of malaria vaccine: optimization of delivery with Seasonal Malaria Chemoprophylaxis
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- Support IR on understanding and mitigating vulnerabilities to climate change, building on ongoing projects in Africa
- Engage with key stakeholders on climate change and health, including with hard-to-reach communities
- Assess and showcase the impact of published research and lessons learnt on AMR
- Build on critical mass to promote IR on marginalized and key populations
- Support countries to move AMR research recommendations to actions through WHO country offices
- Integrate a One Health approach across TDR-supported studies
- Collaborate with One Health initiatives in low- and middle-income countries
RCS key achievements: 2023

8 universities in low- and middle-income countries affiliated with TDR’s research capacity strengthening programmes have co-developed a curriculum on implementation research for integration within Master of Public Health programmes.

8 TDR-supported regional training centres managed 8 sessions of the TDR Massive Open Online on implementation research, delivered in English, French, Russian and Spanish, to more than:

486 students have obtained Master of Public Health degrees through TDR’s postgraduate training scheme, focused on implementation research.

4300 registered participants

1257 students; 64% were women

They also conducted 40 in-person scientific courses for:
Foundations of implementation research: a lecture series for global health impact

New standardized curriculum co-developed by eight universities in low- and middle-income countries affiliated with TDR’s research capacity strengthening programmes. 15 self-paced online lectures cover topics such as:

- addressing barriers to implementation
- measurement of IR outcomes
- research for scaling up interventions and
- translating results from IR into policy and action.

Accessible at irfoundations.org
RCS priorities for 2024-2025

Promote and support dissemination of new research training materials:

**IR MOOC modules:**
- Case examples: Chagas disease in Ecuador, trachoma in Ethiopia, visceral leishmaniasis in Nepal
- **AI-based app** on schistosomiasis, skin NTDs

**MOOC modules:**
- IR ethics in epidemics
- Case example: Rapid scale-up of COVID-19 vaccination

**IR toolkit module:**
- IR on climate change’s impact on infectious diseases

**IR MOOC module:**
- Case example: Resistance / AMR in the WHO Western Pacific Region

- Developing IR leadership: comprehensive, strategic programme for piloting.
- Postgraduate training scheme: to equip researchers and implementers with knowledge and skills to approach four global health challenges from One Health perspective.
- IR toolkit and MOOC: new One Health modules in English and French.
Global engagement key achievements: 2023

27 implementation research projects were awarded Impact Grants in collaboration with WHO regional offices.

TDR provided technical assistance to WHO-led priority-setting exercises, including those pertaining to One Health, antimicrobial resistance in human health, health and migration and a research roadmap for NTDs.

Through a collaboration with HRP, a virtual repository of resources has been launched to support efforts to incorporate sex and gender in health research.
TDR Global: Women in Science compendium (Second Edition)

Updated compendium, to be published this year, includes 4 additional profiles:

• Professor Yasmine Belkaid: President, Institut Pasteur

• Professor Juntra Laothavorn: Professor Emeritus, Mahidol University, Thailand

• Professor Rose Leke: Professor of Immunology and Parasitology, Faculty of Medicine and Biomedical Sciences of the Université de Yaoundé, Cameroon

• Dr Francine Ntoumi: Founder, President and Executive Director of the Congolese Foundation for Medical Research, Republic of Congo
Global Engagement priorities for 2024-2025

Engage globally and with cross-cutting issues to address:

- TDR input into research priorities technical reports
- Impact grants in selected regions
- Community engagement research for control and elimination
- Communicating research findings for impact, including MOOC training.
- Revise and implement the TDR Global strategy.
- Integration of SIHI and gender/intersectionality.
- Support for research management in LMICs under the leadership of ESSENCE initiative.
- Develop a TDR led ethics guidance for ERCs to incorporate an intersectional gender approach in their review processes.

- TDR input into research priorities technical reports
- Impact grants in selected regions
- Mainstream social innovation research in countries’ climate change research

- TDR input into research priorities technical reports
- Impact grants in selected regions
- Strengthen Ethics Review Committees in outbreaks

Infectious Diseases of Poverty

01 02 03 04
A total of 30 episodes have been produced over the last three years. The podcast has been downloaded more than 60,000 times by listeners in 204 countries, with a growing audience in low- and middle-income countries.
Positive trends in core values: Key Performance Indicators

Proportion of open/free access publications

Proportion of funding going to women
2022-2023 Financial overview

- **Staff UD**: 14.6, 9.1, 9.0
- **Staff DF**: 1.7, 3.9, 4.0
- **Ops support UD**: 3.5, 1.8, 1.1
- **Ops support DF**: 0.5, 1.3, 1.2
- **Operations UD**: 10.0, 12.7, 10.9
- **Operations DF**: 9.9, 11.2, 9.3

40m budget scenario...

Revised planned costs at Sept 23

Funds utilized at 31 Dec 23

- **Operations DF**: 9.9, 11.2, 9.3
- **Operations UD**: 10.0, 12.7, 10.9
- **Ops support DF**: 1.3, 1.8, 1.2
- **Ops support UD**: 3.5, 1.8, 1.1
- **Staff DF**: 1.7, 3.9, 4.0
- **Staff UD**: 14.6, 9.1, 9.0

**US$ millions**
2024-2025 budget scenarios and funding

40m budget scenario
- DF 12.0
- UD 28.0

Revised planned costs at February 2024
- DF 12.0
- UD 28.0

Revenue forecast (June 2024)
- DF forecast (70%) 2.5
- DF confirmed 2.4
- DF received 4.0
- DF carry over 1.8
- UD forecast (70%) 7.5
- UD confirmed 2.8
- UD received 7.1
- 2023 savings 2.7
- UD strategic reprogramming 11.0
- Interest back payment 2.3

Revenue forecast (June 2024) summary:
- UD 34.0
- DF 11.3

Budget scenarios and funding:
- Revised planned costs at February 2024
- 40m budget scenario
- Revenue forecast (June 2024)
2026-2027 budget scenarios and revenue forecast

- **40m budget scenario**
  - UD 23.0
  - DF 17.0

- **50m budget scenario**
  - UD 28.0
  - DF 22.0

- **Revenue forecast**
  - UD low 16.0
  - UD high 23.0
  - DF low 7.0
  - DF high 17.0
Budget scenario levels proposed

- **40m budget scenario**
  - 2024-2025: UD 28.0, DF 12.0
  - 2026-2027: UD 23.0, DF 17.0

- **50m budget scenario**
  - 2024-2025: UD 33.0, DF 17.0
  - 2026-2027: UD 28.0, DF 22.0

US$ millions
HR Changes

Farewell to: Dr Abraham Aseffa – Retiring as IMP Unit Head this month.

Abraham joined TDR in February 2020 as the Unit Head for Implementation. Before TDR, Abraham served as Director of the Armauer Hansen Research Institute in Ethiopia between 2010-2016.

Welcome to: Dr Christine Halleux - Returning 1 August

Christine originally joined TDR in March 2009 as Scientist in Research Unit. In June 2020, she was promoted to the department of Quality Assurance, Norms and Standards where she leads the quality assurance process to strengthen the normative function of the Organization.

Before joining TDR, Christine worked for several years in the field with Médecins Sans Frontières, leading medical programmes and implementation research in various countries in Africa and Latin America. She also worked for a few years in the pharmaceutical industry in Latin America, focusing on knowledge management and research quality.
HR Changes

Retiring:
Christine Coze –
Retiring in September after 29 years in WHO, 19 years with TDR and 19 Joint Coordinating Boards.
Chris has been instrumental in organizing and facilitating TDR governance meetings. She has also been a great asset in maintaining donor relations, working closely with the manager for partnerships and global engagement.
Recruitment of new Director (JR end date May/June 2025)

**TIMELINE FOR RECRUITMENT OF DIRECTOR TDR**

1. **Standing Committee creates subcommittee for recruitment**
   - Jan – Mar 2024

2. **WHO Chief Scientist Memo to HR requesting approval for 1) exceptional selection panel and 2) external executive search firm**
   - Start on the job (double encumbrance on post)
   - May-June 2025

3. **SC Subcommittee and Hiring Manager (WHO Chief Scientist) review Post Description / Propose changes**
   - April-June 2024

4. **RFP to select executive search firm**
   - June-July 2024

5. **Interview and selection of firm by panel**
   - Aug-Sept 2024

6. **Opening the position for candidates to apply in Stellis**
   - Sept-Oct 2024

7. **SC subcommittee e to define candidate profile in discussions with executive search firm**
   - Selection and Appointment
   - 1 May 2025

8. **Contract with firm signed**
   - Selection and Appointment
   - 1 May 2025

9. **Approval by DG of Special Selection panel**
   - Shortlist of applicants by external firm
   - Sept-Oct 2024

10. **Candidates, including presellected, apply in Stellis**
    - Interviews by Selection panel
    - Aug-Sept 2024

11. **Interview and selection of firm by panel**
    - Selection and Appointment
    - 1 May 2025

12. **Start on the job (double encumbrance on post)**
    - May-June 2025

13. **Handover and transition**
    - May-June 2025
TDR is 50!

EVENTS

• April: symposium at Multilateral Initiative on Malaria in Rwanda
• May: reception during World Health Assembly
• June: 50th anniversary panel and celebration event at JCB
• June: TDR Golden Jubilee organized by Armauer Hansen Research Institute in Ethiopia
• July: Virtual celebration event organized by Oswaldo Cruz Foundation in Brazil
• October: joint symposium with MMV at ASTMH in USA

COMMUNICATION PRODUCTS / SOCIAL MEDIA CAMPAIGNS

• Series of advocacy videos
• Interactive posters of key achievements – themes linked to Strategy
• Video diaries from TDR Global members
• Photo contest engaging TDR Global members
• Interactive map showing TDR’s impact across the world
Summary

• Strong operational achievements in 2023
• Good progress towards results targets
• Good project implementation rate (90%)
• Despite difficult funding environment, TDR was able to start 2024–2025 with the full US$ 40 million funding scenario as approved by JCB
• Clear and achievable workplan for 2024–2025 targeting new strategy
• Happy 50th Birthday TDR!