

117th meeting of the TDR Standing Committee

Virtual, MS Teams

6-7 May 2025

Summary of decisions and recommendations

<i>Agenda item</i>	<i>Decisions, Recommendations</i>
Welcome and opening remarks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dr Jeremy Farrar, Chair of the Standing Committee, WHO Chief Scientist / TDR Special Programme Coordinator was not able to attend the meeting. Dr Garry Aslanyan, TDR Partnerships and Global Engagement Manager, moderated the session in his absence.
Follow-up to the recommendations of the 116th and special sessions of the Standing Committee (SC)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dr Aslanyan provided an update on the progress made regarding the recommendations previous meetings. The SC held two separate special informal meetings in April and May 2025 to discuss current developments in global health.
Update on TDR activities and recommendations from STAC47 Update on recruitment of TDR's new Director and transition plans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Welcomed progress made and recent achievements in implementing the current strategy. Welcomed Director's approach to plan and budget conservatively for 2026-2027 biennium considering the uncertainties and evolving global health landscape. Welcomed a comprehensive update from Chair STAC on the recent meeting of STAC and expressed its appreciation to STAC for ensuring that the programme is implementing strong and scientifically sound activities. Acknowledged the update on current changes to WHO's organizational structure. Welcomed the recent update that, within the new structure, TDR will remain under the leadership of the Chief Scientist. Agreed to monitor developments regarding the final structure and leadership team of WHO, which will be announced imminently. Welcomed the extension granted by WHO to the current Director until the end of June 2025 but expressed concern that the appointment of the Director of TDR has not yet been made. Strongly recommended, to ensure a stable transition upon the departure of the current Director, that the Manager of Partnerships and Global Engagement and the Unit Head of Programme Innovation and Management act as interim director from July 2025, with major decisions (kept to a minimum) agreed upon with the Chief Scientist. This is to ensure continuity in TDR governance and financial implementation moving forward.

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Requested WHO leadership, to facilitate appointment of a new Director using the list of top candidates identified through a rigorous process, adhering to WHO policies and procedures. This process was conducted by a Special Panel comprising the Chair of JCB, SC members, and TDR co-sponsor representatives. • Requested the WHO leadership that the appointment is made in time to announce the new TDR Director at the JCB meeting in June 2025 and that the new Director begins as soon as possible to prevent instability and risk to donor commitments. • Requested the outgoing Chief Scientist to follow up on this request and that the incoming Chief Scientist is briefed before 16 June and attends the JCB meeting in June. • Recommended reiterating TDR's stable position to implement its 2025 and 2026-2027 workplans. Emphasized that the appointment of the new Director carries no financial liability for WHO but benefits WHO, and strengthens TDR's independence in financing and governance.
Financial and Programme management update	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welcomed the financial and programme performance update and endorsed TDR preliminary financial management report 2024-2025 and outlook 2025-27, TDR results 2024 and TDR Risk Management 2024 and 2025 outlook reports.
Programme budget and workplan 2026–2027	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welcomed and endorsed programme budget and workplan 2026-2027 with its two scenario levels and the contingency plan. • Reiterated the recommendation made at the SC116 meeting to carry over to 2026-2027 the undesignated funds that are not programmed for the current biennium to allow a smooth start of the next biennium's implementation.
Brainstorming on future of global health and global health research and possible scenarios for TDR's role – preparing for JCB discussion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recommended that time is set aside during the June meeting of the JCB to hear from members and observers. It is recommended that this session follow the update from TDR co-sponsors to benefit from the trends in the co-sponsoring agencies and to ensure the presence of co-sponsors during this discussion within the wider JCB.
News from the TDR co-sponsors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acknowledged and thanked for the updates from all four co-sponsors, appreciating their sharing of current developments and rich interactions with TDR. It is recommended that the Secretariat continues to closely interact with each co-sponsor to expand the mutually beneficial relationship.
TDR governance and partnerships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welcomed the update on the JCB call for nominations and upcoming elections. Acknowledged that existing members requested a short extension of the deadline to allow them to submit their application. Acknowledged the possible vacancies under paragraph 2.2.1, resource contributors. Recommended maintaining existing constituencies to allow new contributors to apply next year. Recommended that

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	<p>resource contributors group allows the Government of Switzerland to apply for JCB later in 2025 and recommended a decision by JCB to be made to that effect. Requested Secretariat to inform WHO Legal Office in advance of JCB.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thanked Dr Sunil de Alwis for his work as the Chair of JCB and acknowledged the end of the tenure of the Chair at the end of the JCB meeting in June. Recommended the nomination of Dr Dirk Mueller as the new Chair of the JCB for a three-year term. • Thanked Dr Daniel Eibach for his work as the Vice Chair of JCB and acknowledged the end of the tenure of Vice Chair at the end of JCB meeting in June. Recommended the nomination of Dr Iris Cazali as the new Vice-chair of the JCB for a two-year term. • Welcomed the results of open call for STAC membership. Endorsed the proposed STAC membership for final approval by the JCB, including the new members recommended by the Director. • Agreed that a STAC member who is not part of the SWG will co-chair the SWG until the end of March 2026, and concurred that the second co-chair should be a member of the SWG who is not a STAC member. • Requested that arrangements be made to facilitate virtual participation at the JCB meeting in June. While recognizing potential limitations, this will enable key stakeholders who are unable to attend in person to connect virtually.
Any other business	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agreed to meet on 18-19 November, in person (for those able), in Geneva, hosted by WHO, chair of SC in 2026.

Participants

Members

Dr Karin Källander, UNICEF (Chair)

Dr Mandeep Dhaliwal, UNDP

Dr Fatima Barry, World Bank

Dr Jeremy Farrar, WHO*

Dr Sunil De Alwis, Chair, JCB

Dr Daniel Eibach, Vice-Chair, JCB

Dr Dirk Mueller, Representative of the JCB
resource contributor group

Dra. Iris Lorena Cazali Leal, Representative
of the JCB disease endemic countries group

Professor Margaret Gyapong, Chair, STAC

Special Programme (TDR)

Dr John Reeder, Director

Dr Garry Aslanyan, Manager, Partnerships
and Global Engagement

Dr Michael Mihut, Unit Head, Programme
Innovation and Management

*Unable to attend