

109th Session of the TDR Standing Committee

13-14 April 2021, virtual

Summary of decisions and recommendations

<i>Agenda item</i>	<i>Decisions, Recommendations</i>
Welcome and opening remarks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dr Toomas Palu welcomed everybody to the virtual meeting.
Follow-up to the 108th session of the Standing Committee (SC)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All follow-ups from the previous session were addressed and some further discussed during this session. Thanked TDR Secretariat for diligently addressing all follow-up issues.
Update on TDR activities and recommendations from STAC43	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Welcomed the update and congratulated Director TDR on the progress made, despite the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic. Welcomed TDR's quick adaptation to the circumstances and learning through the process that allowed for strong performance and is generating opportunities to innovate TDR operations in the future. Noted the outcomes of STAC43 and recommendations made and noted that the final report of the meeting would be shared with JCB in due time.
Financial update and outlook 2021-2023 and performance overview	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Welcomed and endorsed the financial update and outlook 2021–2023. Commended TDR on continued strong performance and value for money in delivering the results. Congratulated TDR on launching the eTDR grants management system and agreed to close the risk associated with its introduction. Welcomed plans being made to continue monitoring donor funding and potential risks to funding sustainability. Suggested that communication with TDR donors and acknowledgement of funding refer to the importance of undesignated funding by reinforcing TDR's model that allows for support to be directed to the most neglected areas.
Draft Programme Budget 2022-2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Endorsed the draft programme budget 2022-2023.
News from the TDR co-sponsors including how they can collaborate with TDR on COVID-19	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Welcomed the updates from TDR co-sponsors. Welcomed substantial progress made in the collaboration between TDR and UNICEF on implementation research and research capacity building, between TDR, UNDP and UNICEF on private sector engagement and current discussions between TDR and the World Bank on possible joint collaborations in key areas, especially focusing on the resilience of public health systems.

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TDR Governance and partnerships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welcomed plans for governance meetings in 2021. Noted the need to review the options for JCB elections at the end of May 2021, in line with advice obtained from the WHO legal office. • Seventh External Review: Welcomed the plans and timeline for the 7th External Review of TDR, with the aim of using it in the process of developing TDR's next six-year strategy 2024–2029 and endorsed its presentation to the JCB for final approval. Reiterated the need for the consultant engaged in the review to have a good understanding of TDR and how it functions, but also mitigate the risk of copy/paste reports by entities that have done similar assignments in the past. Agreed to provide the Secretariat with additional names of potential consultants/firms to be added to the list of those invited to submit a bid. Recommended reiterating and adding the following areas to the Terms of Reference: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Review of the changing global health architecture considering the pandemic and how any change will affect areas of research and the role TDR should play in the new environment. - Assessment of global and country level impact by TDR. - Assessment of how TDR contributes to research priorities at country level. - Assessment of how TDR's results are used at policy level, particularly in countries.
Administrative matters	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Noted the anticipated departure of the Unit Head, Programme Innovation and Management, and welcomed the solid plan put in place to ensure a smooth transition. Appreciated the contributions by the Unit Head to TDR operations and wished her the best for the future.
Any other business	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agreed to hold the next session of the SC virtually on 16 and 17 November 2021, "hosted" by the World Bank, chair of the Standing Committee in 2021.

Participants

Members

Dr Toomas Palu, World Bank (Chair)

Dr Mandeep Dhaliwal, UNDP

Dr Robert Scherpbier, UNICEF

Dr Soumya Swaminathan, WHO

Dr Vic Arendt, Chair JCB

Dr Ning Xiao, Vice-Chair JCB

Professor Hannah Akuffo, Representative of the JCB resource contributor group

Professor Babatunde Salako, Representative of the JCB disease endemic countries group

Professor Charles Mgone, Chair STAC

Special Programme (TDR)

Dr John Reeder, Director

Dr Garry Aslanyan, Manager, Partnerships and Governance

Dr Beatrice Halpaap, Unit Head, Programme Innovation and Management

Dr Michael Mihut, Programme, Monitoring and Evaluation Officer