Special Programmes:


The Joint Coordinating Board (JCB) of the Special Programme for Research and Training in Tropical Diseases Research (TDR) acts as the governing body of the Special Programme and is responsible for its overall policy and strategy. This Working Paper describes the background and composition of the JCB TDR.

At present, Maldives represents the WHO South-East Asia Region under paragraph 2.2.2 of the memorandum of understanding until 31 December 2018, and there are two Member States from the Region (India and Thailand) who represent a joint constituency and are members of JCB under paragraph 2.2.1 until 31 December 2017. The Seventy-first session of the WHO Regional Committee for South-East Asia in 2018 will be required to take a decision on the regional membership for a four-year period from 2019 onwards to step in for Maldives.

Currently, there is no representation from the SEA Region for JCB membership under paragraph 2.2.3.

The Thirty-ninth session of the Joint Coordinating Board for TDR (JCB TDR) was held at WHO headquarters in Geneva on 21–22 June 2016.

Recommendations

- The HLP Meeting recommended that the report be submitted to the Sixty-ninth Session of the Regional Committee for noting.
Definitions

1. The Special Programme for Research and Training in Tropical Diseases (TDR) is a global programme of international technical cooperation initiated by WHO and cosponsored by UNICEF, UNDP, the World Bank and WHO, and operates within a broad framework of intergovernmental and interagency cooperation and participation. The two interdependent objectives are developing improved tools for the control of tropical diseases and strengthening the research capability of affected countries themselves.

2. The TDR is governed by three bodies:
   - The Joint Coordinating Board (JCB);
   - The Standing Committee; and
   - The Scientific and Technical Advisory Committee (STAC).

3. The relevant governance documents are:
   - Memorandum of Understanding (MoU);
   - Resolutions of the World Health Assembly and the Executive Board of WHO; and
   - Procedures for the selection of members of the Joint Coordinating Board.

4. The Cooperating Parties are:
   - Those governments contributing to the Special Programme's resources; providing technical and/or scientific support to it; and those which are directly affected by the diseases dealt with by the Special Programme;
   - Those intergovernmental and other non-profit-making organizations contributing to the Special Programme's resources or providing technical and/or scientific support to it.

5. WHO is the Executing Agency.

6. Special Programme resources are the financial resources made available to it by governments and organizations through the Tropical Diseases Research Fund, an international fund administered by the World Bank, the WHO Voluntary Fund for Health Promotion, and other agency funds.

The Joint Coordinating Board

Composition

7. The JCB consists of 28 members. Originally, its membership was for a three-year period, but those selected for membership from 2009 onwards will serve for a period of four years.

8. Twelve members shall be representatives from governments contributing to the Special Programme resources, selected by the contributors themselves. Each such representative may also serve as a representative of a constituency established by:
   - Governments under this membership category. Each constituency will develop its own procedure to designate its representative to the Board. In the event a government intends to serve also as a representative of a constituency on the Board, it
shall indicate this in its application for membership, it being understood that each
government participating in that constituency shall be entitled to rotate as the
representative of that constituency at any session of JCB (Paragraph 2.2.1 of the
MoU).

- Six members shall be government representatives selected by the WHO regional
committees from among those countries directly affected by the diseases dealt with
by the Special Programme, or from among those providing technical or scientific
support to the Special Programme (Paragraph 2.2.2 of the MoU).

- Six members, designated by JCB itself, from among the remaining Cooperating Parties
(Paragraph 2.2.3 of the MoU).

- The remaining four members shall be drawn from the four co-sponsors of JCB
(UNDP, UNICEF, World Bank and WHO) that comprise the Standing Committee.

9. Members of the JCB shall serve for a period of four years and may be reappointed. Other
Cooperating Parties may, at their request, be represented as observers on approval by the JCB.

Functions

10. The JCB shall, for the purpose of coordinating the interests and responsibilities of the
Parties cooperating in the Special Programme, have the following functions:

- Review and decide upon the planning and execution of the Special Programme by
keeping itself informed of all aspects of its development, and consider reports and
recommendations submitted to it by the Standing Committee, the Executing Agency,
and STAC;

- Approve the proposed plan of action and budget for the coming financial period,
prepared by the Executing Agency and reviewed by the Standing Committee;

- Review the proposals of the Standing Committee and approve arrangements for the
financing of the Special Programme in that period;

- Review the proposed longer-term plans of action and their financial implications;

- Review the annual financial statements submitted by the Executing Agency, as well as
the audit report thereon, submitted by the external auditor of the Executing Agency;

- Review periodic reports that evaluate the progress of the Special Programme towards
the achievement of its objectives;

- Endorse the proposals of the Executing Agency and the Standing Committee for STAC
membership;

- Consider such other matters relating to the Special Programme as may be referred to
it by any Cooperating Party;

11. The guidelines for the JCB representatives selected by the WHO Regional Committee is
provided in Annex 1.

Membership of JCB from the South-East Asia Region

12. At present, the following three Member States from the South-East Asia Region are
members of JCB:
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*Joint constituency

- No government from the South-East Asia Region is a member under paragraph 2.2.3 of the Memorandum of Understanding (members selected by JCB itself from among the remaining Cooperating Parties).

13. The current and past representatives to the JCB from the South-East Asia Region from 2000 till date are provided in Annex 2.

The Standing Committee

Composition and functions

14. The Standing Committee shall comprise the co-sponsors, namely UNDP, UNICEF, the World Bank and WHO. It shall have the following functions:

- Review the plan of action and budget for the coming financial period, as prepared by the Executing Agency, in time for presentation to JCB not less than 45 days before the annual session of JCB;
- Take proposals to JCB for financing of the Special Programme for the coming financial period;
- Approve reallocation of resources between programme areas and scientific working groups of the Special Programme during a financial period, upon recommendation by STAC and the Executing Agency, and report such reallocations to JCB;
- Examine the reports submitted by STAC to the Executing Agency and the comments thereon, make necessary observations and transmit these, with comments as appropriate, to the JCB;
- Review particular aspects of the Special Programme, including those that may be referred to it by the JCB, and present findings and recommendations in the form of reports to the JCB;
- inform the JCB, as required, regarding Special Programme matters of interest to it.

Information on the Thirty-ninth JCB

- The Thirty-ninth session of the Joint Coordinating Board for TDR (JCB TDR) was held at WHO headquarters in Geneva on 21–22 June 2016.
- A summary report of the attendance of JCB members at the Thirty-ninth Session is attached, as Annex 3.
- Maldives, India and Thailand are members of the JCB TDR in 2016.
Dates and venues of future JCB sessions

15. At its Thirty-ninth session, the JCB confirmed that the Fortieth session of the JCB will be held in Geneva on 19–21 June 2017 and agreed to hold the Forty-first session in Geneva from 18 to 20 June 2018.

Scientific and Technical Advisory Committee (STAC)

Composition

16. The Scientific and Technical Advisory Committee (STAC) comprises 15 scientists and other technical personnel who serve in their personal capacities to represent the broad range of biomedical and other disciplines required for the Special Programme’s activities. Members of STAC, including the Chairman, are selected on the basis of scientific or technical competence by the Executing Agency, in consultation with the Standing Committee and with the endorsement of JCB.

17. Members of STAC, including the Chairman, shall be appointed to serve for a period of two years, and will be eligible for reappointment. To maintain continuity of membership, the expiration of the initial terms of office of members of STAC will be staggered.

Functions

18. The STAC shall have the following functions:

- Review, from a scientific and technical standpoint, the content, scope and dimensions of the Special Programme, including the diseases covered and approaches to be adopted;
- Recommend priorities within the Special Programme, including the establishment and dis-establishment of scientific working groups, and all scientific and technical activities related to the Programme; and
- Provide the JCB and the Executing Agency with a continuous independent evaluation of the scientific and technical aspects of all activities of the Special Programme.

19. For these purposes the STAC may propose and present for consideration such technical documents and recommendations as it may deem appropriate.
Annex 1

UNICEF/UNDP/World Bank/WHO Special Programme for Research and Training in Tropical Diseases (TDR) Joint Coordinating Board (JCB) Guidelines for JCB representatives selected by the WHO regional committees

Background issues

1. This document is intended to provide guidelines for those selected by the regional committees for JCB membership.

2. Regional representatives are encouraged to participate proactively in discussions at the JCB session. Representatives from disease-endemic countries and other regional representatives can contribute to TDR; to do this, they should play an active role during JCB sessions.

3. To facilitate participation of the regional representatives at JCB, they need to be briefed about TDR before arriving for their first JCB session. A regional representative should be well-versed not only with his/her country's relationship with TDR, but also know about TDR activities in the Region. A good briefing should enable representatives to participate in and contribute to discussions at the JCB session and benefit the cause of TDR.

4. The TDR Secretariat and WHO regional offices will assist with this briefing.

Guidelines on the role of representatives

5. A few guidelines on the roles of regional representatives are listed below. The regional representative must:

   • Recognize the importance of voicing the needs of the country, the Region, and disease-endemic countries in the Board's deliberations. The regional representatives represent both the country and the Region at the JCB session;

   • Familiarize themselves with the work of TDR and regional issues by:
      - reading background information provided by the Programme and/or the Regional Office (the TDR website is www.who.int/tdr)
      - contact (or visit):
         ▪ current and/or past representatives who have attended JCB sessions;
         ▪ key national or neighbouring country scientists familiar with the work of TDR (details to be provided by TDR); and
         ▪ the Regional Office.

   • Secure national briefing before the JCB session and provide feedback to the government after the JCB session;

   • Secure briefing from the Regional Office before the JCB session and provide feedback to it after the JCB session, with possible attendance at the Regional Committee session, at TDR's expense, if appropriate;
• Participate in the following meetings just prior to the JCB session:
  ▪ JCB briefing meeting, and
  ▪ meeting of regional representatives, aimed primarily at disease-endemic countries;

• Participate in the virtual network of regional representatives;

• Keep JCB dates free to ensure attendance for the whole term of office if nominated by the government for the full period; if not nominated for the full period or if changes occur, brief the successor and ensure the availability of suitable alternates in case of absence and brief them thoroughly; and

• Provide briefing to the next regional representative at the end of term of office.

6. It is recommended that all JCB representatives should possess the following qualifications:

• expertise in the field of one or more of the communicable diseases dealt with by TDR, preferably from the research side or with good knowledge of research issues;

• experience, preferably as a research coordinator in or linked to the Ministry of Health or Science and Technology, with experience in the overall coordination of national health research activities and collaboration with the Regional Office and TDR;

• fluency in English or French, the working languages of WHO as the Executing Agency for TDR;

• familiarity with the working of WHO or other UN specialized agencies and past experience related to their Governing Body and/or international scientific meetings; and

• knowledge of the work of TDR or willingness to rapidly acquire such knowledge.

7. Cooperating Parties participating as observers should preferably also meet the above-mentioned criteria.
### Annex 2

#### Past and present representatives to JCB from the South-East Asia Region (2000– till date)

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Annex 3

Summary report of the attendance of JCB members at the Thirty-ninth session of the Joint Coordinating Board (JCB)
Geneva, Switzerland, 21–22 June 2016

Decisions and recommendations

Decisions

- Dr Vic Arendt (representative of Luxembourg) was elected as Rapporteur for JCB39.
- The Agenda of JCB39 was adopted.
- Declarations of interests were accepted as presented to the Secretariat with no conflicts foreseen.
- The report of the Chair JCB was accepted.
- The report of the Standing Committee was accepted.
- Endorsed the report by the Chair STAC, including its recommendations.
- Endorsed the 2015 Annual Report.
- Endorsed the 2015 TDR Results Report.
- Endorsed the 2014-2015 financial report and outlook 2016-2019, recognizing that the financial outlook 2018-19 may require adjustment to align with the new strategy.
- Resource contributors elected for membership under paragraph 2.2.1 of the MOU the Governments of:
  - Mexico
  - Panama
  - Germany / Luxembourg
  - UK / USA
- JCB elected for membership under paragraph 2.2.3 of the MOU the Governments of:
  - Burkina Faso
  - Zambia
- Endorsed the report of the 6th External Review and TDR’s response.
- Endorsed the proposed membership of STAC.
- Accepted the nomination of the United Kingdom as the representative of the resource contributors group and Burkina Faso as the representative of the DEC group for the next 2 years.
- Confirmed that JCB40 will be held in Geneva from 19-21 June 2017.
  - Agreed that JCB41 will be held in Geneva from 18-20 June 2018
Recommendations

- Recommended that the report of Chair STAC include highlights of several important areas where significant developments have taken place in the past year.

- Recommended ensuring that the expertise of STAC members covers the areas of TDR’s activities, including social sciences.

- Recommended highlighting progress made in elimination of diseases for which TDR has engaged in research activities (including the cost and level of involvement of TDR).

- Recommended TDR increase its engagement with countries and stakeholders by organizing joint activities at country level in order to showcase the impact of research and mobilize country level resources.

- Welcomed the comprehensive updates from the co-sponsors, including collaboration with TDR, and requested that additional information on co-sponsor activities be shared as part of the JCB documentation.

- Recommended that the risk register include a risk trend (stable, increase or decrease).

- Recommended flexibility in allocation to the Strategic Development Fund (SDF) that provides an opportunity to support innovative or urgent new projects with high impact.

- Requested that future membership applications under paragraphs 2.2.1 and 2.2.3 include a short paragraph with background on the candidate and their interest in becoming a JCB member.

- Requested that the recommendations of the 6th External Review be implemented as soon as possible, wherever appropriate, and to report to future JCB meetings as relevant.

- Requested that the JCB agenda and documentation be prepared with indication of decision points to assist in preparation for the meeting.

- Welcomed the update on the Pooled Health R&D Fund and requested the Secretariat to be proactive in following developments in advance of the WHO Executive Board in January 2017.

- Welcomed the draft outline of the strategy and agreed to provide any additional comments to the Secretariat by the end of June 2016.

- Requested that the JCB DEC and RC groups and co-sponsors be engaged early in the review of various drafts of the strategy in an iterative manner.

- Recommended reiterating in the strategy the focus of TDR on research and capacity strengthening for infectious diseases of poverty.

- Recommended including advocacy and resource mobilization in the strategy.