



REGIONAL COMMITTEE

Provisional Agenda item 11.1

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Dhaka, Bangladesh
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SEA/RC67/26

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Special Programmes:

UNICEF/UNDP/World Bank/WHO Special Programme for Research and Training in Tropical Diseases: Joint Coordinating Board (JCB) – Report on attendance at JCB in 2014 and nomination of a member in place of Nepal whose term expires on 31 December 2014

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 paper describes the background and composition of JCB TDR.

At present, there are two Member States from the South-East Asia Region (India and Thailand) that are members of JCB under paragraph 2.2.1 until 31 December 2017.

The term of Nepal under paragraph 2.2.2 will expire on 31 December 2014. The Sixty-seventh Regional Committee for South-East Asia needs to nominate a member for a four-year period from 1 January 2015.

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

The High-Level Preparatory (HLP) Meeting held in the Regional Office in New Delhi from 14 to 17 July 2014 reviewed the attached report on attendance at JCB in 2014 and made the following recommendation:

Action by Member States

- (1) The HLP Meeting proposed to the Sixty-seventh Session of the Regional Committee for consideration that Maldives should be nominated from the SEA Region in the JCB for 2015–2018 in place of Nepal, whose term expires in December 2014.

The report on attendance at JCB in 2014 and the HLP recommendation are submitted to the Sixty-seventh Session of the Regional Committee for its consideration.

Introduction

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 Special Programme Resources; those governments providing technical and/or scientific support to the Special Programme; and those governments whose countries are directly affected by the diseases dealt with by the Special Programme;
 - those intergovernmental and other non-profit making organizations contributing to Special Programme Resources or providing technical and/or scientific support to the Special Programme.
5. WHO is the Executing Agency.
6. Special Programme Resources are the financial resources made available to the Special Programme by governments and organizations, through the Tropical Diseases Research Fund, an international fund administered by the Bank, the WHO Voluntary Fund for Health Promotion and other agency funds.

The Joint Coordinating Board

Functions

7. The Joint Coordinating Board (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. For this purpose it will keep itself informed of all aspects of the development of the Special Programme, and consider reports and recommendations submitted to it by the Standing Committee, the Executing Agency, and the Scientific and Technical Advisory Committee (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.

Composition

8. The JCB consists of 28 members. Its membership was earlier for a three-year period but those selected for membership from 2009 onwards will serve for a period of four years. The JCB members may be reappointed.

- Twelve representatives from governments contributing to the Special Programme Resources, selected by the contributors to the Special Programme. Each such government representative shall serve as a representative of his or her government and 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 on the Board also as representative of a constituency, 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 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 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 upon approval by the JCB.

Membership of the JCB from the South-East Asia Region

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

Member State	Period	Selected by	Paragraph of MoU	Remarks
India*	2014–2017	TDR contributors	2.2.1	
Thailand*	2014–2017	TDR contributors	2.2.1	
Nepal	2011–2014	Regional Committee	2.2.2	The Regional Committee to decide on a new member or re-selection of Nepal to represent the Region for a period of four years from 1 January 2015

*Joint constituency

The Standing Committee

Composition and functions

11. The Standing Committee shall comprise the cosponsors, 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 JCB's annual session;
- 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 the recommendation of STAC and the Executing Agency, and report such reallocations to JCB;
- examine the reports submitted to the Executing Agency by STAC and the Executing Agency's comments; make the necessary observations thereon, and transmit these, with comments as appropriate, to JCB;
- review particular aspects of the Special Programme, including those that may be referred to it by JCB, and present findings and recommendations in the form of reports to JCB;
- inform JCB, as required, regarding Special Programme matters of interest to it.

Information on the Thirty-seventh session of JCB

- The Thirty-seventh session of the TDR Joint Coordinating Board (JCB) was held at WHO headquarters, Geneva, 23–25 June 2014.
- A summary report of the attendance of JCB members at the Thirty-seventh Session is attached, as Annex 2.
- The Member Governments in 2014 are: India, Nepal and Thailand.
- *Paragraph 2.2.2 of the Memorandum of Understanding (governments selected by the WHO Regional Committee)*
 - Nepal is a member until 31 December 2014 under paragraph 2.2.2. Re-selection of Nepal or selection of a new member in its place whose membership ends on 31 December 2014 must be decided by the Regional Committee.

- *Paragraph 2.2.3 of the Memorandum of Understanding (members selected by JCB itself from among the remaining Cooperating Parties)*
 - No government from the South-East Asia Region is a member under paragraph 2.2.3. Myanmar applied for the vacancy under paragraph 2.2.3 opening up from January 2015.

Membership of the Scientific and Technical Advisory Committee (STAC) (*)

12. Dr Rajitha Wickremasinghe, Professor of Public Health and former Dean of the Faculty of Medicine, University of Kelaniya, Sri Lanka, has been a member of STAC since 2012.

Dates and venues of future JCB sessions

13. At its Thirty-sixth Session, JCB decided to hold its thirty-seventh and thirty-eighth sessions at Geneva from 23 to 25 June 2014 and from 22 to 24 June 2015, respectively.

The Scientific and Technical Advisory Committee (STAC)

Functions

14. 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 disestablishment of Scientific Working Groups, and all scientific and technical activities related to the Programme.
 - 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.
15. For these purposes the STAC may propose and present for consideration such technical documents and recommendations as it may deem appropriate.

Composition

16. STAC shall comprise 15 scientists and other technical personnel who will serve in their personal capacities to represent the broad range of biomedical and other disciplines required for Special Programme activities. Members of STAC, including the Chairman, will be 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.

- 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.

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; in order 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 the 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:
 - recognizing the importance of voicing the needs of the country, the Region and disease-endemic countries in the Board's deliberations, represent both the country and the Region at the JCB session;
 - familiarizing 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.
 - contacting (or visiting):
 - 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.

- securing national briefing before the JCB session and providing feedback to the government after the JCB session;
 - securing briefing from the Regional Office before the JCB session and providing feedback to it after the JCB session, with possible attendance at the Regional Committee meeting, at TDR's expense, if appropriate;
 - participating in the following meetings just prior to the JCB session:
 - JCB briefing meeting, and
 - meeting of regional representatives, aimed primarily at disease-endemic countries.
 - participating in the virtual network of regional representatives;
 - keeping 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, briefing the successor and ensuring the availability of suitable alternates in case of absence and briefing them thoroughly; and
 - providing briefing to the next regional representative at the end of the 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 the Ministry of 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.
 - Cooperating Parties participating as observers should preferably also meet the above-mentioned criteria.

Annex 3

Summary report of the attendance of JCB members at the Thirty-seventh session of the Joint Coordinating Board (JCB) Geneva, Switzerland, 23 to 25 June 2014

Forty JCB members from all Regions of WHO, co-funding agencies, partners and institutions attended the meeting. The Thirty-seventh Session of the JCB meeting was attended by the following members from the South-East Asia Region: Dr K K Singh from India and Dr Baburam Marasini from Nepal.

The JCB Meeting reviewed the proposals submitted by the Secretariat and provided guidelines and recommendations. The major issues discussed were as follows:

- Professor Hannah Akuffo of Sweden was elected Chair of the JCB for a term of three years.
- Statutory business
- Report of the Chair and Standing Committee
- 2012–2013 financial report accepted
- JCB membership
- JCB approved the proposed scenario for the 2016–2017 budget, with initial implementation at a budget level of US\$ 45 million, moving towards a level of US\$ 55 million as funds become available.

JCB endorsed the following:

- report by the Chair STAC;
- annual report for TDR's 2013 and risk management report; and
- proposed pilot plan for project site financial audits.

Key recommendations made by the thirty-seventh session of the JCB are as follows:

- TDR to explore ways to mainstream gender equity as applied to the entire portfolio of projects and start mapping the contribution of projects to gender equity issues.
- Secretariat to clarify with the ADG/HTM the issue of a ceiling for TDR in the 2016–2017 budget.
- Conflict of interest document was approved.
- Terms of reference for STAC and Scientific Working Groups approved.

- TDR Portfolio Prioritization Model as presented was approved.
- JCB approved the selection of the United Kingdom as the representative of the resource contributors group and Zambia as the representative of the Disease Endemic Countries (DECs) group on the TDR Standing Committee for a period of two years.
- JCB recommended moving forward with discussions with WHO on the possibility of TDR hosting the funding mechanism for R&D as per the decision of the Sixty-seventh World Health Assembly.

At its thirty-seventh session, the JCB decided to hold its thirty-eight and thirty-ninth sessions at Geneva, during 22–24 June, 2015 and 20–22 June 2016, respectively.