

G7 follow-up workshop on mapping, coordination and joint activities in the field of NTDs and PRDs

- Recommendations to the G7 science ministers meeting in Tsukuba, 15-17 May, 2016

Preamble

The G7 Science Ministers have recognised the need for constructive R&D cooperation in the global fight against poverty-related infectious diseases (PRDs) and neglected tropical diseases (NTDs)¹ and declared in the communiqué of their meeting on October 8 & 9, 2015 in Berlin:

- *to comprehensively and continuously map and coordinate publicly funded research on poverty-related infectious diseases and neglected tropical diseases (.....) and share the results of the research with relevant stakeholders.*
- *Building on today's announcements on the topics of poverty-related infectious diseases and neglected tropical diseases, (....) we plan to use and strengthen existing coordination mechanisms and action programmes and encourage further research activities.*
- *In addition to our national efforts and based on better coordination, we aim to develop a pilot joint research activity (....)*

To this end, the G7 members held a follow up workshop in spring 2016 aimed at implementing the actions decided upon at the 2015 Science Ministerial and deciding on the next concrete steps. The workshop took place on March 23, 2016 in Berlin and was preceded by a technical preparatory meeting on January 27 and 28, 2016 in Brussels. During the workshop, the G7 delegates decided upon a series of actions to present to the G7 Science Ministers during their meeting on May 15-17, 2016 in Tsukuba.

I) Recommendations to the G7-science and technology ministers with regard to better mapping of global health R&D on PRDs/NTDs as a basis for informed policy-making and coordinated research activities

Currently, it remains a challenge to keep up with the latest data on R&D activities and funding. The G7 Science Ministers have recognised the need and benefits of sharing information and data on national R&D activities and public financing of such R&D activities. Analysis of data should enable the G7 to identify R&D gaps and needs, capacities and expertise, and in turn facilitate informed policy-making. Current limitations include insufficient data availability and insufficient ability to compare across platforms and datasets. Additionally, data collection and analysis mapping of R&D activities and financing may be driven by different objectives (e.g., for informed policy-making and priority setting, for coordinated research activities, for exploiting synergies and creating critical masses).

To enable better mapping of global health R&D on PRDs/NTDs the G7 members should:

- make information and data on their relevant national R&D activities and public R&D financing publicly available and accessible;
- where required, further develop and improve their national information systems in terms of coverage, completeness, consistency, and ease of use, with the goal to report the significant majority of their national, publicly funded R&D activities on PRDs/NTDs to the G-Finder and the WorldRePORT by 2018;

¹ NTDs in the scope of this document are the 17 neglected tropical diseases as prioritized by WHO
PRDs in the scope of this document are HIV/AIDS, Tuberculosis, and Malaria as well as lower respiratory infections and diarrheal diseases which constitute high disease burdens to low and middle income countries.

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- work closely together with these mapping initiatives and with the *WHO Global Observatory for Health R&D* to increase efficiency by improving completeness, consistency, ease of use and interoperability of data. Where needed, G7 members should seek expert advice to facilitate data entry and usage including through improved interoperability of databases, and where possible identification of common data fields and/or processes that can be implemented by data collection mechanisms to improve the ease of information/data acquisition, processing and sharing.
- invite other interested countries and stakeholders to commit to this endeavour.

II) Recommendations to the G7 science and technology ministers with regard to better coordination of R&D efforts and joint research activities on PRDs/NTDs

The G7 delegates recognized that R&D for PRDs/NTDs is supported and coordinated through a number of technical and policy fora.

To improve coordination of R&D within the G7, G7 members should:

- share among themselves and with other interested countries their respective national planning of activities at an early stage, to allow rapid tackling of important research questions on PRDs/NTDs;
- share information on lessons learned, best practices and proven high impact interventions;
- consider mechanisms that allow for trans-border collaborations, not duplicating but complementary to other initiatives;
- envisage linking existing national networks to those of their partners in order to complement their operational activities; this may also include networks of academic and/or NGOs researchers;
- examine ways to support capacity building for R&D in endemic countries according to their needs, through existing programmes wherever possible;
- confer with multilateral organizations which are currently covering and funding research for the fight against these PRDs/NTDs and in which G7 members are represented (e.g., EDCTP);
- collaboratively or individually examine existing mechanisms for any shortcomings for R&D coordination and consider improvements. The examination should focus on data availability, transparency and interoperability, to enhance coordination among G7 members. Moreover, the examination should consider research related to social, educational, health systems, environmental drivers and impacts, and behavioural aspects of NTDs, as well as traditional biomedical research issues.

III Recommendations to the G7 science ministers for implementation of the actions arising from the recommendations above.

The G7 members should maintain the focus on mapping, coordination and joint actions in the field of PRDs and NTDs. To this end, the working group that informed the March 23, 2016 workshop and January 27 and 28, 2016 technical preparatory meeting should continue to meet.

The *working group* should:

- focus its consideration on NTDs and PRDs, in a tiered approach starting with NTDs;
- be composed of representatives of G7 members;
- monitor the progress made on Recommendations I and II and regularly report to the G7-science ministers;
- examine options for G7 members to participate in joint R&D initiatives, such as a G7 award or similar innovative mechanisms;

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- meet periodically and call in other relevant stakeholders (e.g. private foundations, industry representatives, representatives of low and middle income countries) as needed;
- organise expert/stakeholder meetings to facilitate priority setting for joint actions as needed;
 - seek to convene meetings, as needed, e.g. as satellite events of existing international conferences in the field or close in time to the respective preparatory G7-meetings (SOM, health experts meeting) to reduce extensive travelling;
 - be established for four years (until 2019) or as determined by the *working group* participants.

For 2017/18 Germany and the European Commission volunteer to take the task to assure operability of the *working group* in cooperation with the respective presiding country by providing secretarial support. The next meeting is planned for autumn 2016.