Vacancy Notice: WHO Target Product Profiles (TPPs) Consultant, WHO R&D Blueprint and Antimicrobial Resistance

BACKGROUND

The WHO research and development (R&D) Blueprint for action to prevent epidemics is a global strategy and preparedness plan that allows the rapid activation of R&D activities during epidemics. Its aim is to accelerate the development of effective diagnostic tests, vaccines and treatments and reduce the time between the declaration of an outbreak or public health emergency and the availability and use of these medical tools. The development of the Blueprint was informed by the lessons learned during the West Africa Ebola epidemic, as well as by the recommendations of the broad global coalition who experts and independent panels, in particular those related to the question of how to improve R&D preparedness and response to public health emergencies. The Blueprint is an innovative high profile cross-cutting collaboration between different WHO clusters and programmes. It works on the basis of a list of identified priority diseases that pose a public health risk because of their epidemic potential and for which there are no, or insufficient, medical countermeasures (MCMs).

In May 2015, the Sixty-eight World Health Assembly adopted the global action plan on antimicrobial resistance (AMR). Antimicrobial resistance happens when microorganisms (such as bacteria, fungi, viruses, and parasites) change when they are exposed to antimicrobial drugs (such as antibiotics, antifungals, antivirals, antimalarials, and anthelmintics). Systematic misuse and overuse of these drugs in human medicine and food production cause the medicines to become ineffective, hence infection persist in the body, increasing the risk of spread to others. New resistance mechanisms are emerging and spreading globally, threatening the effective prevention and treatment of an ever-increasing range of infections and the sustainability of an effective, global public health response to the enduring threat from infectious diseases. Few replacement products are in the pipeline. Greater innovation and investment are required in the R&D of new antimicrobial medicines, vaccines, and diagnostic tools. Following the blueprint model, WHO published a global priority pathogen list of antibiotic-resistant bacteria of greatest public health significance to guide R&D investments by Member States, philanthropic funders and private investors. WHO is reviewing the clinical antibiotic development pipeline, matching it against the identified priority pathogens and tuberculosis (TB), and is expanding this exercise to the pre-clinical area.

For the Blueprint priority diseases and the AMR pathogens identified, WHO is committed to develop Target Product Profiles (TPPs) on the basis of a WHO harmonized methodology on TPPs development and in consultation with key stakeholders in the public health and scientific communities. The TPPs will tackle the identified priority pathogens to guide investment decisions of public R&D funders and private investors. Work has already started in the area of diagnostics and therapeutics where WHO will develop a series of TPPs over the next two years.

PURPOSE OF THE CONSULTANCY

A qualified and experienced consultant is sought to assist both the Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR) and the R&D Blueprint teams on defining the therapeutic and diagnostic needs for selected Blueprint priority diseases and AMR priority pathogens, including the development of target product profiles (TPPs).

Working closely with staff in the WHO Antimicrobial Resistance (AMR) and the R&D Blueprint teams, and with input from technical partners, the consultant will be responsible for:

1. Preparing the necessary background documentation and coordinating the development of consensus-based diagnostic and therapeutic TPPs for selected Blueprint priority diseases and for AMR priority pathogens;
2. Drafting the respective TPPs in compliance with the WHO harmonized methodology for TPPs development;

3. Supporting the preparation and management of related expert meetings and stakeholders input;

4. Contributing to the mapping of existing or near term technologies that could be adapted for
   a. novel therapeutic products and
   b. diagnostics tests;

5. Contributing towards the development of R&D Blueprint Roadmaps for diseases as prioritized by WHO and other stakeholders; including review of technical documents as appropriate;

SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS

Qualifications and experience
1. Master’s degree in a health-related field;
2. At least 7 years of relevant professional experience working in the field of diagnostics and therapeutics research and development - with specific experience in R&D targeted towards use in low and middle income countries;
3. Experience working with multiple stakeholders, including health authorities, academic institutions and industry.

Skills and knowledge
1. Capacity to interact with technical experts in public health organizations, governments, academia, and industry with respect to R&D for diagnostics and therapeutics;
2. Knowledge and experience in therapeutics and diagnostics research and development including development of target product profiles;
3. Excellent oral and written communication skills in English, intermediate knowledge of French language desirable;

DATES AND DUTY STATION
The position will begin on 15 June 2018 and will run through 15 June 2019 (subject to confirmation). The consultant will not be expected to work at any given location, but to travel at least monthly to WHO Headquarters in Geneva. Travel to meetings will be required. All travel arrangements will be made by WHO as per WHO travel policy.

HOW TO APPLY
Please submit applications by e-mail to embayer@who.int, “WHO R&D Blueprint and Antimicrobial Resistance Target Product Profiles (TPPs) Consultant” in the subject line.

Please include:
(1) a letter of motivation and
(2) a current curriculum vitae.

All applications will be acknowledged. The closing date for applications is 18 June 2018.