Report on the Second Postgraduate Scheme Workshop
31 May to 2 June 2017, Geneva
TDR Research Capacity Strengthening and Knowledge Management
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Report on the Second Postgraduate Scheme Workshop, 2017

Introduction

The Special Programme for Research and Training in Tropical Diseases (TDR), hosted by the World Health Organization (WHO) in Geneva, Switzerland, supports postgraduate training at Masters and PhD level as part of its range of activities to strengthen capacity in implementation research (IR) on infectious diseases of poverty. Within TDR, the postgraduate training scheme is administered by the Research Capacity Strengthening and Knowledge Management (RCS/KM) team. Prior to 2015, TDR provided direct individual fellowships to support low- and middle-income countries (LMICs) researchers to undertake postgraduate degree training in their home country, another LMIC, or in a high-income country. In reorienting its postgraduate training scheme in 2015, TDR has decentralised the management of the scheme to seven participating universities in the disease-endemic regions: BRAC University, Bangladesh; Universidad de Antioquia, Colombia; University of Ghana; Universitas Gadjah Mada, Indonesia; American University of Beirut, Lebanon; University of the Witwatersrand, South Africa; and University of Zambia.

The aims of the postgraduate training scheme in relation to capacity strengthening are to:

- Strengthen the capacity of the selected universities in LMICs to select and manage postgraduate trainees who are undertaking courses relevant to IR;
- Support postgraduate training in IR for nationals of LMICs in their local regional settings and increase the number of researchers in LMICs with skills in IR;
- Enhance visibility of the selected universities through participation in a TDR international training programme;
- Improve access of LMICs researchers to support for postgraduate training; and
- Strengthen capacity of disease endemic countries to identify public health needs, develop appropriate solutions and translate them into policy and practice.

In consultation with all the seven universities, TDR has developed and pilot-tested a framework for monitoring and evaluation (M&E) and its implementation plan. The main purpose of the M&E framework is to identify the causal relationships between the scheme’s objectives and the related outcomes and outputs and to track progress toward achieving expected results. In addition, since each of the universities has different strengths and weaknesses when it comes to providing training relevant to IR and managing international scholarship programmes, the framework will be utilized as a continuous shared learning tool.

In its first phase from 2015-2017, the reoriented training scheme was established and provided funding support to the participating universities. In the next phase of the scheme from 2018-2019 TDR will provide a further round of funding to the universities. The workshop held from 31 May – 2 June 2017 in Geneva provided the opportunity for joint review and planning in preparation for the second phase of the scheme from 2018-2019. A progress report for 2015-2017 was made available at the meeting to inform discussions.
Objectives and outcomes

The objectives of the workshop were:

- To review progress and share results with the current and potential stakeholders
- To develop implementation plan for each participating university
- To promote the networking and collaboration amongst seven universities and various partners.

The expected outcomes were:

1. Agreed plan (milestones and timelines) for implementing the next round of scheme (2018-2019)
2. Review/harmonize procedures for implementation of M&E framework and identify networking and collaboration activities between the universities (e.g. cross-learning, exchange of short courses and faculty)
3. Discuss needs in harmonizing IR curricula
4. Discuss opportunities to share best practices towards complementary partnerships amongst various schemes

N.B. On day 3 of the workshop, a parallel meeting was held for the postgraduate student participants.

Report on proceedings

Welcome and introduction

After self-introduction of all participants, John Reeder, TDR Director, gave a short welcome speech. Dermot Maher presented an overview of TDR and the Postgraduate Scheme, outlined the workshop agenda and reminded participants to confirm their declaration of interests. In addition, he indicated that there will be a focus on master’s degree and greater linkage between Regional Training Centres supported by TDR and the universities participating in the scheme.

Key discussion points included the following: Financial constraints, cost-efficiency, cost sharing, sustainability, complementarity and collaboration with national disease control programmes to achieve maximum benefits. TDR Global was highlighted as a platform for tracking fellows and the distinction and complementarity of the three TDR technical units clarified.
Presentations by each participating university (faculty and student)

**BRAC University, Dhaka, Bangladesh**

Professor Malabika Sarker

The Programme is run through the James P Grant School of Public Health. The training programme utilizes several learning approaches: formative, informative (field experience) and transformative (to produce a summative learning project). Master of Public Health (MPH) focused on implementation research and includes seminars, workshops and field work. A pre-MPH course is provided to expose individuals to culture and language. With support from UNICEF, a 3 day intensive course on implementation research for implementers has been developed. BRAC sees a role for region-specific implementation course.

Challenges and opportunities: How to attract a wider diversity of students in terms of gender and background (rural/urban, medical/non-medical). There is a need for immediate utilization of skills after training and keen interest to establish structured South-South collaboration between the different institutions in the scheme. In the absence of TDR funding, BRAC would continue offering the course, but there would be less students (currently, there are other students funded from different sources).

Thinley Dorji, cohort 1 master’s student

Master’s project sought to establish nutritional status and extrapulmonary patients receiving DOTs in Dhaka. The findings highlighted is the issue of gender inequity and patients, the most affected being women. Observations: No institution that offers MPH degree in Bhutan. The programme provided an opportunity to access training in IR. Recommendations: Increase the number of fellowships, add student’s exchange (network) between universities and add support for post MPH graduation (PhD).

**Universidad de Antiquoia, Medellin, Colombia**

Professor Carlos Rojas

The Programme is a Master’s in Epidemiology, and TDR supported cohort is separate from others at the same school. Students have formed close network- producing small network of future collaborators. The course includes IR contents embedded in regular courses and a key resource is the TDR IR toolkit.

Challenges and opportunities: Few regional applicants, potentially due to application fee for international students, incorporating IR into the curriculum and follow-up with graduates. Lessons learned: implementation research is gaining recognition and is providing students with a new learning experience. Improve collaboration with CIDEIM for enhanced IR skills in the faculty. The current cohort is for TDR supported fellows because the institution didn’t want to introduce disparity within the programme.
Jhon-Edwin Polanco, current MPH student

The ongoing Master’s project is based in Cauca state of Colombia and is investigating the barriers to TB interventions for the indigenous population. Recommended improvements: more international representation in the scheme and specific support for applicants from the Ministry of Health, establish better networks (South-South). There was concern about the project objectives as they seem very ambitious for a Master’s thesis.

School of Public Health, Accra, Ghana

Professor Richard Adanu

The University of Ghana School of Public Health (UG-SPH) programmes are MPH, MSc applied health social science and MSc Occupational Health and Hygiene. TDR supported fellows are registered for both Master’s and PhD degrees. However, the second and third cohorts have Master’s students only.

Challenges and opportunities: The Regional Training Centre (RTC) supported by TDR in the WHO African region is based at the University of Ghana School of Public Health, which allows for close collaboration. The RTC offers the IR Implementation Research short course. All TDR fellows took this course. First batch took the course with some international fellows that had come to visit, but found the course to be a challenge due to difference in career levels.

Lessons learned: Great advantage also being the RTC supported by TDR and working closely with National Malaria and TB Control Programmes.

Challenges: Changing the call so that individuals will apply for the scholarship and the university simultaneously rather than scholarship after university admission. Challenge with implementing students’ research projects as it takes longer to fully conduct IR than a one-year Master’s course allows looking to begin research earlier and seeking for South-South collaboration to enhance the learning experience and promote the course widely in West Africa.

Richard Akuffo, current PhD student

The research project is ongoing and will identify the role of insecticide-treated nets ITNs for controlling cutaneous leishmaniasis in Ghana. Study will occur in south-west region of Ghana. The aim is to demonstrate to the community that it works while also assessing issues that may arise in the local settings. Challenges: A mismatch between IR (e.g. immediate feedback) and standard academic requirements that govern thesis defense and findings dissemination.

Universitas Gadjah Mada, Yogjakarta, Indonesia

Dr Yodi Mahendradhata

2 years MPH in English. Only change for TDR fellows is addition of IR course. First cohort was entirely supported by TDR. Second cohort had 4 students supported by national scholarship schemes. Third cohort, only 3 students in the TDR budget, but will admit students funded from other sources or combine them with those that will be funded in the 2018-2019 biennium. <5% of students at the university are foreign, this includes TDR fellows. The University is also the RTC supported by TDR in the WHO South-East Asia Region (SEAR).
Lessons learned: Provision of guest lectures for the students, participation in national and international conferences, and training in RTC (optional); imbed IR into different courses and group fieldtrip participation.

Challenges and opportunities: Budget cut (only 3 scholarships this year), dissemination of calls for the scholarship is difficult to reach people beyond the capitals; complexity of visa and residency permit because student visa is not easily granted? for Indonesia; 2 year master’s degree is still not very long (especially for IR thesis when they are expected to engage with their home country); timing of ethical review process in home country and the ethics board’s unfamiliarity with IR which can cause delays; supervision of thesis in home country as there are limited IR networks and expertise in the region.

Ways forward: systematic marketing of programme, accreditation to allow for credit exchange, more guest lectures, improved coordination with the regional office, enhanced collaboration and processing of ethics approvals and identification of co-supervisors through TDR-Global in students’ home country.

Joshi Basant, current MPH student

Masters’ project on TB diagnosis in Nepal is ongoing and aims to assess Gene X-Pert MTB/RIF assay for diagnosis while identifying barriers and enablers of implementation. Group field trip to Viet Nam helped to enrich practical knowledge on IR and opportunity to experience diverse settings. Improvements: Involvement of TDR fellows in IR projects during and after study and using TDR graduates as mentors for subsequent cohorts.

American University of Beirut, Lebanon

Professor Jocelyn Dejong

MPH and MSc courses are taught in English but most of the work in the region is in Arabic. First cohort had funding for English classes, second cohort lost this funding- a real loss but hoping to find alternative funding. The University is not strong in infectious diseases focus, but expertise and collaboration has grown with support from the WHO Regional Office for the Eastern Mediterranean Region (EMRO) and the RTC supported by TDR.

The IR course is introduced and open to all students in the programme. TDR fellows are expected to focus on infectious diseases within this programme. Additionally, a 3 month practicum spend in a public health institution doing applied while meeting learning objectives specific to concentration and also benefiting the host organization.

Good pool of applicants from broader region, good relationships with infectious diseases programmes, has formed new networks but wish for more networking opportunities across the different institutions.

Challenges: finding diverse and suitable practicum sites, overcoming technical challenges (internet), ethical clearance and research supervision in countries where students are researching, conflict in the region. Want to focus specifically on nations that are in conflict for applicant pool.
Yussra Mohammed, graduating MPH student (unable to attend due to visa delay but represented by Professor Jocelyn Dejong)

The research project is on analysis of the Guinea worm awareness campaign in Sudan. No reported cases since 2014 but not certified as eradicated. Low public awareness of guinea worm in Sudan; why is this and how is it being assessed? Project done in collaboration with WHO CO focused on health communication including audience, channel, messages and evaluation. Used evidence based checklist to assess different aspects of the programme.

To improve programme: integrate international students with the Lebanese community and enhance opportunities for being hired at the practicum host organization.

University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, South Africa

Dr Latifat Ibisomi

TDR supports fellows for both masters and PhD degrees. The 18 months masters’ programme includes 12 taught courses on campus and research project in the students’ home country. PhDs do five implementation research core courses, participate in professional development activities (scientific writing, project management and publications) and undertake a research project.

Challenges and opportunities: Expand the pool of supervisors and examiners. Need for continued engagement with the grantees. Need to address delayed ethics approval in home country. Have MSc and PhDs supported by Fogarty. Has collaboration with University of Zambia, University of North Carolina, USA, and Kings College, London, UK.

Abdu Adamu, current MPH student

The master’s project is assessing implementation fidelity of community-based integrated multidrug administration (MDA) for neglected tropical diseases (NTDs) in Kano state, Nigeria. There is lack of information on the fidelity of these MDA in the community due to inadequate data routinely collected during M&E.

Improvements suggested: support MSc newly graduated fellows to get work experience; increase number of PhD slots; create a forum for students to meet and share their research findings in detail.

University of Zambia

Choolwe Jacobs

This is a 2 year MPH programme (Promotion and Education or Policy and Management) or MSc (Epidemiology) programme. IR course provided to all students, additional implementation science module with focus on policy, health promotion and epidemiology. Grantees are required to publish an article (systematic review).

Challenges and opportunities: Working in collaboration with ministries of health in Malawi, Zambia and Rwanda; IR course is based on TDR IR toolkit. The University is exploring other research partners within the region.
Lessons: selection process is difficult, huge demand; arrangement for study permits; manuscripts and systematic reviews have worked; preparation for practicum, need to attach student to ongoing projects for expediency.

Challenges: administrative handling of international students with study permits and organizing practicum, technical issues such as refining and embedding IR approaches (in faculty members) and ethical considerations; to diversify to PhD programme, other financial options, more South-South collaborations.

Patricia Maritim, current MPH Student

Master’s project to evaluate the appropriateness of trachoma health education provided as part of a campaign for MDA in Zambia. A multiphase mixed-methods study focusing on district officials involved with MDA programme implementation, health worker and community member surveys. Improvement: Collaboration with Ministry of Health disease control programmes.

General discussion on common themes raised in the presentations

Key Issue: IR project back in student’s home country is a common problem. Most ethics boards aren’t familiar with IR projects.

Specific comments: Provide IR training/workshop to local ethics committees on IR. Understand the ethical standards of the home country and explain the research project comprehensively.

Key issue: Field experience and home country supervisors.

Specific comments: Identify research problems that are more specific to the home country, likely to have expertise. Establish relationships with home-country institutions and ensure students interact with supervisors before field placement, explore use routine data collected by programmes as part of their M&E activities. Previous TDR-grantees could act as mentors.

General comments: TDR has piloted a course on ethics in implementation research which will be ready within the next 2 months and will be run through the RTC.

Key issue: Student admission and course duration.

Specific comment: While the focus of the programme is IR, there needs to be emphasis on basic research training including qualitative and quantitative methods. There is limitation in a 1-year master’s course especially when students may not have a research background.

Key issue: Are the selection criteria picking the best candidates from the pool?
Specific comments: Employ stepwise selection process. Be aware of diverse backgrounds with different experiences. Anticipate that some fellows could be interested in other research areas not covered by TDR infectious diseases of poverty (IDP) focus. Sequence courses to ensure systematic knowledge acquisition and application. Identify other subject areas (such as mathematics) that enhance students’ learning experience. Make the calls for applications more specific.

Key issue: Age specificity of fellows.

Specific comments: Requirement to recruit younger people, yet leave some flexibility for individuals taking time off their career. Initial agreement was that master’s should be under 35 and PhDs under 40. If the focus is to build IR capacity in the ministry of health, then very few are younger than 35 and may need some flexibility. Explore short courses to introduce IR, aimed at this category of learners.

Key issue: Examination of research projects reports.

Specific comments: Some universities require both internal and external examiners and this may present difficulties in identifying external examiners as IR is not well understood.

M&E Framework: progress and results
Dr Edward Kamau
The presentation focused on the justification and development process of the M&E framework, the proposed monitoring tools, the implementation plan, key dashboard indicators and progress results covering the first (2016) year of postgraduate training scheme for the seven participating universities.

General discussion points: TDR support for PhD Training
There are constraints due to biennium funding cycle. A significant number of master’s are being funded and less number of PhDs. PhDs provide research leadership and improve research environment, it takes longer but is much more effective at producing long term change. There is a need for PhD programmes to help define the field; they will be the trainers of PhD research into the future. What is the most efficient use of PhDs? If faculty is built, they can train across institutions. Exploring complementarity of programmes, where TDR funds masters and other organizations support of PhDs. This situation can change if more funding becomes available.

Gender balance in the postgraduate scheme
Aim at 50%, but variable across universities. Aim at the same proportion in enrolment as in eligible applications. Some women may not want careers in IDP. The problem is systemic as fewer women have opportunity for earlier education or may not be able to be away from home for long. Strong push to address the gender gap at all levels.
Panel discussion

Dr Rohit Ramaswamy (University of North Carolina, USA) Professor Jane Sandall (King’s College, London, UK) and Dr Anna Thorson (Reproductive Health Programme, WHO)

Issues are similar between TDR PGS and UNC despite the focus on IDP. Reproductive Health Research support will focus on sexual and reproductive rights at University of Ghana and will also involve two knowledge transfer hubs (1 anglophone and 1 francophone) in the WHO African Region to develop degree programmes and short courses. The programme will be open for students with multidisciplinary background and skills. There is potential to collaborate and promote training at higher levels and ensure sustainability. A follow up question was for IR how best to capture impact and provide feedback to the programmes?

Responses and comments

Track individuals who have to make annual report through platforms, but requires (the annual report?) the need for right metrics and funding. It requires a systematic and structured way of documenting the process and is context specific and may require unique approaches that promote specific tracks within established journals. Long term engagement between research and knowledge transfer hubs would establish links to track if research becomes policy and practice over time.

Revised TDR financial reporting

TDR has developed a simplified Microsoft Excel report form with in-built formula and specific fields to enter data. The universities are looking forward to using the form once it is finalized.

Development of 2018-2019 biennium budgets and implementation plans

Facilitated by the TDR secretariat, breakout sessions were held for each institutional team to develop their implementation plan and budget for the 2018-2019 biennium. The plans will be externally reviewed by members of the TDR Scientific Working Group and will form part of the Letter of Agreement (LoA) between TDR and each university.
TDR Global: what will the platform bring to universities and grantees?

Dr Pascal Launois gave a demonstration of TDR Global, an online platform (not a network) designed for tracking TDR grantee careers and experts and build collaboration. The platform allows identification of experts in IR in a country and may enable assessment of TDR’s impact in supporting career development in health research. Grantees will be required to update their profile regularly with publications and career progression. The universities agreed to ensure all fellows are registered in the platform.

PRESENTATIONS OF BUDGET AND IMPLEMENTATION PLANS

Representatives from each university gave a presentation on their proposed budget and implementation plan for the 2018-2019 biennium.

BRAC University, Bangladesh

- Proposed numbers of master’s: 4 international and 2 national, to start in January 2018.
- Summative learning process: broader research question, team of 5-7 student assigned to one research project, allows group work then individual data analysis
- Also have scholarships for African students at BRAC- will request African colleagues to send/share relevant information.
- Clear that BRAC and UNICEF are involved with cost sharing. Very important for TDR to be able to demonstrate this to funders. A few members of the scientific working group will review all the budget proposals and implementations plans for approval.

Universidad de Antiquoia, Colombia

- 5 master’s students (3 international and 2 national, to start in February 2018.
- Possible that individuals could do their research projects in Medellin so that there is no cost for their travels to the host countries and for their supervisors
- Considering involving other students funded from other sources but cannot guarantee but will explore this in order to have a larger cohort size.

Suggestion: A 2-step call for application. Step one, expression of interest followed by the second step of full application submission. Explore potential use of appropriate social media.

University of Ghana

- 8 master’s students (3 national and 5 international)
- Plan for recruitment: put out call December 2017, February 2018 review applications, and May 2018 award fellowships so that school may begin in August 2018
- Students are part of the regular MPH course; also have RTC workshop on IR - working on how to transfer this information into the general MPH course.

Suggestion: Link student research projects to existing studies to decrease current unit cost for research project.
Universitas Gadjah Mada, Yogjakarta, Indonesia

- 3 master’s students funded by first LoA and 7 master’s students funded by second LoA.
- Call for applications will close on 31 August 2017.
- Selection results to be announced on 30 September 2017 and fellowships awarded by 31 October 2017.
- Local language course will be provided from 15 January 2018
- Academic courses start in February 2018.

Observations: Local language course helps integrate foreigners into the community and notable increase in the number of students from developed countries seeking training in LMICs.

American University of Beirut, Lebanon

- Highest tuition costs since AUB is a private university.
- 4 students international MPH only in next cohort, English language course will not be offered due to cost.
- Practicum in their home country in order to build IR capacity.
- Call for applications in November and would have to wait if LOAs were delayed, consider applications until 1 April 2018, would have to be accepted into university and receive proficient English language results. Selection outcome by June 2018.
- No field work support for students. Will propose to use stipend to fund time in home country.

University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, South Africa

- Cohort 3 application deadline: 31 July 2017
- For 2018/2019, plan for 7 TDR fellows (2 in 2018 and 5 in 2019). To reach minimum number for the course, students funded from other sources (in particular, from Fogarty D43 grant) will be enrolled in 2018.
- Research project support (US$ 2000 for Master’s).
- Assumptions made: political situation and student unrest in South Africa; very little direct government funding for the University of the Witwatersrand, so fees are higher.
- Colour coded cohort outline: useful template for other universities.

Suggestion: Explore and inform TDR how to best utilize any balance funds under the current LoA.
University of Zambia

- Cohort 3 will commence studies in September 2017 with 4 national students not funded by TDR.
- Cohort 4 (TDR fellows) will target 2 international and 2 national students, with the call for applications March 2018, start of academic course September 2018 and graduation in October 2020.

Suggestion/observation: For cohort 3, clarify the issue of partial fellowship. Focus on full cost per student but explore value addition.

Optimization of current M&E process

Dr Edward Kamau

The presentation highlighted the importance of acting upon M&E data, analysing causes and impacts of deviations from the program plan and getting the balance between M&E activities and implementing the program. In addition, key areas of concern including tracking implementation details, identifying tension points, documenting and sharing best practices were proposed.

GENERAL DISCUSSION POINTS: HOW OFTEN WILL M&E REPORTS BE SUBMITTED?

SWG meeting in November will need a comprehensive M&E report. This will require adequate time to receive the report from all universities by 30 September 2017 so that clarifications/corrections are done before analysis.

Observation: Annual M&E reports from all universities will be submitted at the same time despite the different academic timelines.

IR core competencies: TDR will produce and share a template (IR learning objectives) for key IR competencies and how they should be developed, including a timeline to take this forward.

Observations: Competencies must take into account content coverage and depth of teaching and clearly distinguish masters’ programme from PhD training.

- TDR to work with the 7 universities and external experts to develop and disseminate IR competencies, this will require time and funds.
- BRAC will share the competencies they have developed.
- All universities to share ideas on objectives and competencies by the end of June 2017.
Next steps
Dr Dermot Maher

- Completion and return of meeting evaluation sheet for each institution.
- Universities to finalize and submit their budget and implementation plan by 15 June 2017.
- TDR/RCS to ensure the proposed budget and implementation plan is externally reviewed.
- LOA to be negotiated and finalized after the approval of 2018-2019 work plans by JCB.
- Date and venue for the next workshop TBD.

Postgraduate fellows parallel meeting, 1 June 2017.

Participants:

Students
- Maritim Patricia, MPH student, University of Zambia (from Kenya)
- Dorji Thinley, cohort 1 MPH Student at BRAC - Bangladesh, (from Bhutan)
- Joshi Basant MPH Student, Universitas Gadjah Mada - Indonesia, (from Nepal)
- Polanco Pasaje Edwin, MPH Student at Universidad de Antioquia, (from Colombia)
- Adamu Abdu, MSc Student at University of Witwatersrand, (from Nigeria)
- Akuffo Richard, PhD Student, University of Ghana (from Ghana)

Other participants
- Dr Pascal Launois, TDR – Moderator
- Dr Aftab Uddin, Faculty at BRAC/JPGSPH (Bangladesh)
- Dr Ramaswamy Rohit, Faculty at UNC, Chapel Hill, USA
- Dr Ncayiyana Jabulani, Faculty at University of Witwatersrand, South Africa
- Dr Dako-Gyeke Phyllis, coordinator, Regional Training Centre supported by TDR at the University of Ghana School of Public Health
- Dr Olumide Ogundahunsi, TDR
- Dilani Logan, intern, TDR
- Dr Min He, Director of Graduate Institute, Shanghai Institute of Materia Medica, Chinese Academy of Sciences.
- Mr Wu Yongzheng, Office for Graduate Education, Shanghai Institute of Materia Medica, Chinese Academy of Sciences.
Summary Notes

STUDENTS AND PARTNERS’ PERSPECTIVE ON THE IR CONTENT OF PROGRAMMES OFFERED BY EACH UNIVERSITY.

Prior knowledge about Implementation Research
- Generally, students have limited and diverse perspectives about what IR is and had misconceptions regarding its distinction from other or related research types such as operational research.
- Most students’ preferred an interdisciplinary programme that would allow them to apply their previous skillsets and enable them to develop competencies in related fields (i.e. monitoring, evaluation, etc.).
- Many of the students had worked in related fields prior to beginning their respective masters, which gave them some perspective on types of work to look for following their graduation.

Job prospects following graduation
- Among the participating fellows, only two had jobs waiting for them once they complete their training programmes.
- Amongst the group, many students cited that both themselves and other students within their cohorts were required to resign from their jobs to pursue the master’s which they could go back to or were granted leaves of absence from their institutions.
- Regardless of whether students had a job lined up following graduation or not, the majority of students felt confident in their ability to find a job in their fields because of their degrees, status at a TDR fellows, presence at a reputable school and previous work experience.
- While the faculty does not directly help students to find jobs, many are active in assisting them to build skills and connections to possible employers through referrals, encouragement to take on particular opportunities, and attendance at particular meetings.

Suggestion to TDR: A few students suggested that it would be helpful to them and other students if TDR implemented fellowships in IR. Additionally, students suggested that TDR logo be incorporated in their master’s programme by giving scholarship recipients a certificate of attendance for ‘TDR implementation research.’

Student experience outside of the classroom (challenges)
- Between different universities, issues with accommodations varied.
  - The University of Witwatersrand and University of Zambia provided accommodation to students.
  - The University of Ghana took some time at the beginning of the year to find adequate housing and put students in guest houses for the first couple of weeks.
  - At the Universidad de Antioquia, students stayed in hotels for a while until they found adequate housing, but the university kept in touch with them.
  - Universitas Gadjah Mada gave money to students and students are responsible for finding their own housing.
  - At BRAC, secure accommodation is provided to all international students.
- While universities were helpful with providing housing for students, students with families faced difficulties in terms of receiving visas and accommodations for themselves and their families because universities could not provide support to the families of students.
FIELDWORK EXPERIENCES

- Fieldwork experiences differed based on universities and programme structure. The diverse programme structures are as follows:
  - University of Zambia – Most students returned home to pursue research under a supervisor. It could be difficult to get in touch with stakeholders and supervisors occasionally.
  - BRAC – Following a year of course work, students spend 6-months doing implementation research in groups.
  - University of Ghana – Students are required to pursue research in a TDR recognized research area.
  - Universitas Gadjah Mada – Students went back to respective countries and found supervisors on their own.
  - University of the Witwatersrand – About two months after starting the programme, students are assigned supervisors. The supervisors are identified by the university.
  - At the Universidad de Antioquia, the student research project (abstract) is reviewed as part of the admission requirement.

ETHICS APPROVAL

- Ethics approval varied amongst universities. In South Africa and Indonesia, ethics approvals are done online.

CHALLENGES FOR WOMEN APPLYING TO THE FELLOWSHIPS

- The challenges for women applying to these fellowships are often associated with starting a family. A couple of women that applied at the University of Ghana, asked to defer their acceptances to have children because they were pregnant.
- Most women in the programme are older than men, often coming back to school around age 37 to 35. At the University of Zambia, the TDR female fellows coming in are at the cut-off age (34/35).
- In South Africa, there are more female domestic applicants than male, but more international male applicants than females.
- Group discussed the fact that females who are applying to these fellowships and who are attracted to these universities are those that are likely in the health field already confident and empowered.

Suggestions to TDR: Find ways to recruit and empower the women who may not have the confidence to apply in these programs. The group argued that in order to facilitate an environment of equality, the age cut-offs for fellowship applications should be older for women because many have had to take breaks to have and tend to children, and follow-through with family responsibilities.

IR CORE COMPETENCIES

Presently the institutions do not approach IR the same way, but require a common understanding of what students who go through the programme have accomplished. There is an urgent need to harmonize IR content and skills among the different universities. TDR and external experts will develop and share a template with IR learning objectives for institutions to match their programme with the learning objectives, look for gaps and address them. However, institutions may achieve the learning objectives differently.
Annex 1: List of participants

CHAIR
Dr Pascale ALLOTEY, Professor of Public Health, Director of Research Training & Head Global Public Health, Jeffrey Cheah School of Medicine and Health Sciences, Monash University, Selangor Darul Ehsan, Malaysia

UNIVERSITIES
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Professor Jocelyn DEJONG, Professor and Associate Dean, Department of Epidemiology and Population Health, Faculty of Health Sciences, American University of Beirut, Beirut, Lebanon

Ms Yussra MOHAMMED, Student at Department of Epidemiology and Population Health, Faculty of Health Sciences, American University of Beirut, Lebanon

BRAC University, BANGLADESH
Dr Koushik AHMED, Programme Coordinator, James P Grant School of Public Health BRAC University, Dhaka, Bangladesh

Mr Thinley DORJI, MPH student at BRAC University, Dhaka, Bangladesh

Professor Malabika SARKER, Director, Research & Principle Lead, TDR International Postgraduate Training Scheme, James P Grant School of Public Health (JPGSPH)

Dr Aftab UDDIN, Senior Manager, Technical Training Unit, icddrb & Adjunct Faculty, James P Grant School of Public Health & Co-Lead, TDR International Postgraduate Training Scheme, JPGSPH

Universitas Gadjah Mada, INDONESIA
Dr Yodi MAHENDRADHATA, Department of Health Policy and Management, Gadjah Mada University, Yogyakarta, Indonesia

Dr Basant JOSHI, MPH Student at Gadjah Mada University, Yogyakarta, Indonesia

Universidad de Antioquia, COLOMBIA
Professor Carlos Alberto ROJAS ARBELAEZ, Associate Professor, National School of Public Health, University of Antioquia, Medellin, Colombia

Mr Jhon Edwin POLANCO PASAJE, student at the National School of Public Health, University of Antioquia, Medellin, Colombia
University of Ghana, GHANA

Professor Richard ADANU, Dean School of Public Health, University of Ghana, Legon Accra, Ghana

Mr Richard Adjei AKUFFO, student at the University of Ghana, School of Public Health, Legon-Accra, Ghana

Dr Phyllis DAKO-GYEKE, Project Coordinator, University of Ghana, School of Public Health, Legon-Accra, Ghana

University of the Witswatersrand, SOUTH AFRICA

Dr Latifat Dasola GBONJUBOLA IBISOMI, Senior Lecturer/Academic Coordinator, Division of Epidemiology & Biostatistics, School of Public Health, University of Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, South Africa

Dr Abdu ADAMU, MPH Student at School of Public Health, University of Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, South Africa

Dr Jabulani NCAYIYANA, Senior Lecturer , Division of Epidemiology and Biostatistics, School of Public Health, University of the Witwatersrand, Education Campus, Johannesburg, South Africa

University of Zambia, ZAMBIA

Professor Charles MICHELO, University of Zambia, School of Medicine, Department of Public Health, Lusaka, Zambia

Ms Patricia MARITIM, MPH student at University of Zambia, School of Medicine, Department of Public Health, Lusaka, Zambia

Ms Choolwe JACOBS, University of Zambia, School of Medicine, Department of Public Health, Lusaka, Zambia

Partners to participate on first day of the meeting:

Dr Min HE, Director of Graduate Studies, Shanghai Institute of Materia Medica, Chinese Academy of Sciences, Shanghai, China

Mr Yongzheng WU, Program Manager, Shanghai Institute of Materia Medica, Chinese Academy of Sciences, Shanghai, China

Professor Jane SANDALL, NIHR Senior Investigator, King’s College London, United Kingdom

Professor Rohit RAMASWAMY, Faculty Director, Global Online, Co-Director, Consortium for Implementation Science , Associate Director Global Practice, Gillings Global Gateway®, Clinical Associate Professor, Public Health Leadership Program and Maternal and Child Health, Gillings School of Global Public Health, Chapel Hill, NC, USA

Ms Judith MANDELBAUM-SCHMID, Consultant writer, JMS Communications sarl, 1201 Geneva, Switzerland
Other WHO Departments

Dr Anna **THORSON**, Research Manager, Maternal Perinatal Health, Prevent Unsafe Abortion (RHR), World Health Organization, Geneva, Switzerland.

Secretariat

Dr John **REEDER**, Director, Special Programme for Research and Training in Tropical Diseases

Dr Garry **ASLANYAN**, Manager, Partnerships and Governance, Special Programme for Research and Training in Tropical Diseases (TDR)

Mrs Elisabetta **DESSI**, Assistant Team, Research Capacity Strengthening and Knowledge Management, Special Programme for Research and Training in Tropical Diseases

Mrs Caroline **EASTER**, Programme and finance officer, Special Programme for Research and Training in Tropical Diseases

Ms Jamie **GUTH**, Communications Manager, Special Programme for Research and Training in Tropical Diseases

Mrs Najoua **KACHOURI**, Assistant Team, Research Capacity Strengthening and Knowledge Management, Special Programme for Research and Training in Tropical Diseases

Dr Eddy **KAMAU**, Scientist, Research Capacity Strengthening and Knowledge Management, Special Programme for Research and Training in Tropical Diseases

Dr Pascal **LAUNOIS**, Scientist, Research Capacity Strengthening and Knowledge Management, Special Programme for Research and Training in Tropical Diseases

Dr Dermot **MAHER**, Coordinator, Research Capacity Strengthening and Knowledge Management, Special Programme for Research and Training in Tropical Diseases

Ms Terra **MOREL**, Intern at RCS/KM, Student at Trinity College, University of Toronto, Canada

Dr Olumide **OGUNDAHUNSI**, Scientist, Research Capacity Strengthening and Knowledge Management, Special Programme for Research and Training in Tropical Diseases

Dr Robert **TERRY**, Scientist, Research Capacity Strengthening and Knowledge Management, Special Programme for Research and Training in Tropical Diseases

Dr Mahnaz **VAHEDI**, Scientist, Research Capacity Strengthening and Knowledge Management, Special Programme for Research and Training in Tropical Diseases

Mrs Flore **WAGNER**, Assistant Team, Research Capacity Strengthening and Knowledge Management, Special Programme for Research and Training in Tropical Diseases
Annex 2: Workshop Agenda

Second Workshop on the TDR Postgraduate Training Scheme

Background

In 2015 following an open competitive call, review of applications by an external expert panel, and site visits, TDR selected seven universities for the postgraduate training scheme:

- BRAC University, Dhaka, Bangladesh
- Universidad de Antioquia, Medellin, Colombia
- University of Ghana, Accra, Ghana
- Universitas Gadjah Mada, Jogyakarta, Indonesia
- American University of Beirut, Lebanon
- University of Zambia, Lusaka, Zambia
- University of Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, South Africa

The scheme is approaching the end of the first phase that involved two cohorts of student intake in six of the seven universities. In preparation for the next phase, this second networking and planning workshop will be held in Geneva with representatives from each university and the TDR secretariat to review the progress thus far and plan for next rounds (2018-2021) of intake of PhD and Master’s training relevant to implementation research.

Objectives of the workshop

- To review progress and share results with the current and potential stakeholders
- To develop implementation plan for each participating universities
- To promote the networking and collaboration amongst seven universities and various partners

Expected outcomes

By the end of the meeting, it is expected that the following will be available for each university:

1. Agreed plan (milestones and timelines) for implementing the next round of scheme (2018-2021)
2. Review/harmonise procedures for implementation of M&E framework and identify networking and collaboration activities between the universities (e.g. cross-learning, exchange of short courses and faculty)
3. Discuss needs in harmonising IR curricula
4. Discuss opportunities to share best practices towards complementarily partnerships amongst various schemes
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Presenter(s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>09:00-09.30</td>
<td>Welcome and Introduction</td>
<td>Chair: Pascale Allotey</td>
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<tr>
<td>09.00-09.15</td>
<td>Welcome and introduction of the participants</td>
<td>John Reeder</td>
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<tr>
<td>09.15-09.50</td>
<td>TDR Research Capacity Strengthening strategy and activities</td>
<td>Dermot Maher</td>
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<td>and an overview of TDR postgraduate training scheme</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Declarations of interest</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Agenda</td>
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<tr>
<td>09.50-10.30</td>
<td>Presentations by the universities and their students</td>
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<td></td>
<td>The universities and students will present an over view on their</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>progress, opportunities and lessons learnt: Bangladesh and Colombia</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Ten minutes will be allocated for each presentation.</td>
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<tr>
<td>10.30-11.00</td>
<td>Coffee break</td>
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<tr>
<td>11.00-12:45</td>
<td>Continued presentations by the universities and their students</td>
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<td></td>
<td>The universities and students will present an over view on their</td>
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<td></td>
<td>progress, opportunities and lessons learnt: Ghana, Indonesia, Lebanon,</td>
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<td></td>
<td>South Africa and Zambia</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Ten minutes will be allocated for each presentation.</td>
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<tr>
<td>12.45-14.00</td>
<td>Lunch Break</td>
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<tr>
<td>14.00-14.30</td>
<td>Discussion on common themes arising from above presentations</td>
<td>Chair and participating universities: Bangladesh, Colombia, Ghana, Indonesia,</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Key issues:</td>
<td>Lebanon, South Africa and Zambia</td>
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<td></td>
<td>IR relevance of course and research projects</td>
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<td>Research project selection and outcome</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Fieldwork/placement</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Mentorship</td>
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<tr>
<td>14.30-15.30</td>
<td>M&amp;E Framework: Progress and Results</td>
<td>Edward Kamau</td>
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<tr>
<td>15.30-16.00</td>
<td>Coffee break</td>
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<tr>
<td>16.00-17.00</td>
<td>Panel discussion to share panel members experience and potential</td>
<td>Panel members: Dr Rohit Ramaswamy (University of North Carolina)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>opportunities to interact with TDR regarding this scheme.</td>
<td>Prof. Jane Sandall (King’s College London)</td>
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<td>Anna Thorson (WHO/RHR)</td>
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<tr>
<td>17.00-17.15</td>
<td>Close for the day</td>
<td>Dermot Maher</td>
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## Thursday 1 June 2017

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Presenter(s)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>09.00-10.30</td>
<td><strong>Breakout session</strong> (facilitated by TDR secretariat). Each institutional team will prepare a draft implementation plan (activities, timelines and resources required) using the template provided</td>
<td>All</td>
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<tr>
<td>10.30-11.00</td>
<td><strong>Coffee break</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>11.00-11.30</td>
<td>Revised TDR financial reporting form</td>
<td>Caroline Easter</td>
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<tr>
<td>11.30-12.30</td>
<td>Breakout session-continued</td>
<td>All</td>
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<tr>
<td>12.30-13.30</td>
<td><strong>Lunch Break</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>13.30-15.00</td>
<td><strong>Breakout session</strong> (facilitated by TDR secretariat) Each institutional team will finalise their implementation plan and budget</td>
<td>All</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15.00-15.30</td>
<td><strong>TDR Global: what will TDR global bring to the universities and grantees</strong></td>
<td>Pascal Launois</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15.30-16.00</td>
<td><strong>Coffee break</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>16.00-17.00</td>
<td>Breakout session-continued</td>
<td>All</td>
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<tr>
<td>17.10</td>
<td>Close for the day</td>
<td>Dermot Maher</td>
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<tr>
<td>19:00</td>
<td>Dinner (optional) N.B. at own expense</td>
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## Friday 2 June 2017

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Presenter(s)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>09.00-10.30</td>
<td>Presentation of implementation plan and budget by each university: Bangladesh, Colombia and Ghana Thirty minutes will be allocated for each presentation.</td>
<td>All</td>
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<tr>
<td>10.30-11.00</td>
<td><strong>Coffee break</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.00-12.30</td>
<td>Continued- Presentation of implementation and budget plans by each university, Indonesia, Lebanon, South Africa &amp; Zambia Thirty minutes will be allocated for each presentation.</td>
<td>All</td>
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<tr>
<td>12.30-13.30</td>
<td><strong>Lunch Break</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>13.30–14.30</td>
<td>Optimisation of current M&amp;E process: Feedback received from universities.</td>
<td>Edward Kamau</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14.30-15.30</td>
<td>Sharing best practices towards complementary partnerships amongst universities and RTCs</td>
<td>Mahnaz Vahedi</td>
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<tr>
<td>15.30-16.00</td>
<td><strong>Coffee break</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>16.00-16.10</td>
<td>Outline of next steps and closure</td>
<td>Dermot Maher</td>
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Parallel meeting for students and partners

**Thursday 1 June 2017**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
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<th>Moderator / Presenter</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>09:00 - 10:00</td>
<td>Students and partners perspective on the IR content of program offered by each university, identify gaps and discuss harmonisation</td>
<td>Pascal Launois</td>
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<tr>
<td>10:30 - 11:00</td>
<td>Coffee break</td>
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<tr>
<td>11:00 - 12:30</td>
<td>Development of IR core competency framework Harmonisation of IR curricula across universities: role of TDR and partners</td>
<td>Pascal Launois, Rohit Ramaswamy, Jane Sandall, Min He</td>
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<tr>
<td>12:30 - 13:30</td>
<td>Lunch break</td>
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<tr>
<td>13:30 - 15:00</td>
<td>Demonstration on TDR Global Development of students network, field network, faculty network</td>
<td>Pascal Launois</td>
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<tr>
<td>15:00 - 15:30</td>
<td>Coffee break</td>
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<tr>
<td>15:30 - 16:00</td>
<td>Session continued</td>
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<tr>
<td>19:00</td>
<td>Dinner (optional) N.B. at own expense</td>
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**Friday 2 June 2017**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>09:00 – 10:00</td>
<td>The role of TDR-supported regional training centres in supporting IR courses</td>
<td>Phyllis Dako-Gyeke</td>
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<tr>
<td>10:00 – 10:30</td>
<td>Coffee break</td>
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<tr>
<td>10:30 – 12:30</td>
<td>WHO/TDR visit</td>
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<tr>
<td>12:30 – 13:30</td>
<td>Lunch break</td>
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<tr>
<td>13:30 – 16:10</td>
<td>Students and partners to join the main meeting in room Moscow</td>
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