The Road Traffic Injuries Research Network (RTIRN)

Request for Proposals for Hosting the Secretariat

Deadline: 17 September 2004

The Road Traffic Injuries Research Network

The Road Traffic Injuries Research Network (RTIRN) is a partnership of individuals and institutions – government, academic, and nongovernmental – that collaborate to further research on the impact, causes and strategies for the prevention of RTI in low- and middle-income countries. Collaborating partners have been meeting to exchange ideas and develop a research agenda on RTI and to develop capacity for RTI research in low and middle-income countries. The development of a research agenda includes defining research priorities; promoting appropriate investments for research; conducting strategic research; and facilitating the utilization of research results for national policies on RTI.

The RTIRN evolved from work done to address the “10/90 disequilibrium” (i.e., of the estimated 70 billion US dollars spent on health research annually, less than 10% is spent on addressing the health problems relevant to 90% of the world’s population), and the recognition that the neglect of research on Road Traffic Injuries in low and middle-income countries significantly contributes to this disequilibrium. The RTIRN is supported by the Global Forum for Health Research, the World Bank and the Department of Violence and Injuries Prevention of the World Health Organization.

This Request for Proposals invites institutions in low- or middle-income countries (LMIC), to express their interest in hosting the Network’s Secretariat for an initial period of two years, renewable by the Network’s Board.

Background

Road traffic injuries are currently among the top 10 leading causes of death and disability in LMIC, and projections indicate that they will be the 2nd leading cause of death and disability in 2020 unless there is appropriate and prompt intervention. Injuries are increasingly recognized as a global public health epidemic and approximately 16,000 people die every day worldwide from injuries. Road traffic injuries alone killed an estimated 1,171,000 people in 1998, qualifying these types of injuries as the ninth leading cause of death worldwide.¹ Road traffic injuries account for 2.2% of global mortality, resulting in a heavy death toll for people from all age categories. According to the Global Burden of Disease report, deaths from injuries are projected to rise in future years, and road traffic injuries are the primary cause of this anticipated increase.² The rate of fatalities resulting from road traffic injuries varies across income groups. Of those killed during 1998, 1,029,000 people were from low- or middle-income countries and 142,000 people were from high-income countries, corresponding to 20.7 and 15.6 deaths per 100,000 inhabitants respectively.

Road traffic injuries are the ninth leading cause of disease burden in low- and middle-income countries. Although all age groups are affected, young adults, particularly male adults, are most at risk of loss of life. Children are also affected by road traffic injuries, making a walk to school potentially life threatening. Of those killed in 1998, 844,700 people were aged 45 years or younger. Since this age group corresponds to the most economically productive segment of the population, this results in serious implications for the economy.

Since road traffic injuries have only fairly recently been recognized as a major public health problem, science is lagging behind with regard to providing solutions. Although high-income countries have had success in implementing and evaluating interventions, few have been tested in the developing world, and even fewer are currently in place. Interventions implemented in high-income countries may not be relevant to the reality in LMIC. This inequity due to

poverty has caused concern, and further emphasizes the critical need for research and development on road traffic injuries in LMIC.

**Objectives of the RTIRN**

The Network’s goal is to establish mechanisms of collaboration and to facilitate the establishment of partnerships between road traffic injury researchers and institutions internationally that will support the development and strengthening of research agendas and research capacity in low and middle income countries.

The specific objectives of the network are:

- To advocate for research to reduce the burden of road traffic injuries in low and middle income countries
- To set priorities for road traffic injury research in low and middle income countries
- To help develop capacity for road traffic injury research in low and middle income countries
- To promote investments for road traffic injury research in low and middle income countries
- To facilitate communication between partners involved in road traffic injury research in low and middle income countries
- To conduct strategic research on road traffic injuries in low and middle income countries
- To disseminate and promote the application and utilization of research for policy and intervention development to reduce the burden of road traffic injury in low and middle income countries

**Governance of the RTIRN**

Network activities are carried out by three main organizational components: the RTIRN partners, the Board, and the Secretariat.

“Partners” are defined in the broadest and most inclusive sense of the word; all actors working to reduce the 10/90 gap in road traffic injuries research are partners in the process.

The Secretariat provides cohesion between the Network’s activities and ensures coordination through frequent exchange of information between various parts of the RTIRN. However, the Secretariat is the operational arm of the Network.

Governance is the main function of the Board. The members of the Board represent Organizations/Groups with a central interest in road traffic injuries; donors/funding agencies; public sector/networks; academia/research organizations in low/middle income countries and from high income countries; the Global Forum for Health Research, WHO and the World Bank. The Secretariat reports to the Board, through the Secretary who will be an ex-officio member of the Board.

**Terms of reference of the Secretariat**

The Secretariat of the RTIRN

- maintains coherence, collaboration and communication among different RTIRN activities in compliance with the Board guidance.
- serves as the spokesperson for RTIRN activities
- supports the Board and partners generate funds for RTIRN activities
- rotates among partners at a regular interval, approximately every two years or as decided by the Board, to maintain the equitable nature of the RTIRN and to represent all partners of the Network.
- communicates RTIRN activities to all constituents through the RTI email listserv
- updates the RTIRN web site
- collaborates with the communication units of supporting organizations.
- helps raise the profile of the RTIRN by publicizing its activities, especially for fund raising efforts
- helps organize and conduct Board and partner meetings at specified times of the year
- reports to the Board, both financially, scientifically and administratively
- provides regular feedback to all Network partners.
Review criteria

Proposals will be reviewed by the Board. Organizations/institutes/agencies will be considered for hosting the RTIRN Secretariat that can demonstrate their capacity to

- maintain international communication, including easy e-mail access
- organize and manage international road traffic injury programmes and projects
- manage and coordinate international research, preferably in the fields of road traffic injuries
- develop a work-plan for proposed activities to be carried out by the Secretariat over a 2 year period
- develop and manage a budget for the Secretariat and its activities
- be able to receive and disburse funds in major international currencies
- certify funds through an appropriate accounting system
- support workshops, meetings and symposia to promote research and networking of the RTI RN
- maintain the infrastructure necessary for providing support to the Board.

The institution should have an RTI mandate from any public, private or academic sector in a low- or middle-income country.

The Secretary will lead the secretariat and should

- be a national of a developing country
- be a recognized road traffic injury researcher and manager
- have international experience in networking.

Budget of RTIRN activities

Support for the functioning and activities of the RTIRN Secretariat are expected to be available for some staff costs, administrative help, communications, and small meetings. The support will come from several sources:

- from the host organization as a sign of their commitment (funds, resources, materials)
- seed support not exceeding US$ 30,000 annually for core functions from the budget of the RTIRN, approved by the Board and managed by the Secretariat.
- other partners or fund raising efforts initiated by the secretariat under guidance of the Board.

Schedule of work

The deadline for applications is 17 September 2004. Review of proposals will take place immediately thereafter, and the selection will be announced by mid October 2004. To aid the transfer of knowledge and enable the Secretariat to become functional as soon as possible after the transfer, it is envisaged that the current Secretariat will work with the newly elected Secretariat for a 2-3 month time period.

Application process

Applicants are requested to send in a proposal of no more than 10 pages (excluding cover letter and appendices which should also not exceed 10 additional pages) covering the following sections:

- Description of the organization/institute/agency, including its national and international roles
- Description of internal management processes (e. g. governing bodies or processes, financial control, reporting and approval requirements)
- Capacity and experience of the institution to manage funds and budgets
- Experience in the field of road traffic injuries, especially research
- Proposed method of work if selected as a secretariat
- Institutional/government support for the functions of the Secretariat (attach a letter of support)
- Estimated budget for one annual year
- Résumé of the proposed secretary.

Proposals should be submitted electronically in MS-Word format, attached to a covering email.

Deadline for receiving applications is 17 September 2004.

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Please note: institutions are cautioned that there will be no further extension on the above-stated time-frames. Applicants should carefully consider their capacity to deliver the products on time.