WHO strategy on research for health

A talk recorded for the Geneva Foundation for Medical Education and Research (GFMER)

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Research Policy and Cooperation

World Health Organization

Training Course in Sexual and Reproductive Health Research
Geneva 2012
Overview

Context and the need for a strategy

Process of development

Overview of the strategy

Implementation

Linkages
Context need for a strategy - sustained global interest

1990: Commission on Health Research for Development

1996: Ad Hoc Committee on Health Research Relating to Future Intervention Options

2000: International Conference on Health Research for Development (Bangkok)

2004: Ministerial Summit on Health Research (Mexico)

2008: Bamako Ministerial Forum
The need for a strategy - complex array of initiatives
Mandate

Resolution WHA60.15 at 60th World Health Assembly

requesting the DG…

"to submit to the Sixty-Second World Health Assembly (2009) a strategy on the management and organization of research activities within WHO"
Strategy development - a participatory process

Who strategy on research for health | August 2010

Rolling Dialogue: Virtual & Face-to-Face

SharePoint

Emergent Themes Working drafts

Regional offices Special Programmes, HQ CCs

IGWG Public health and innovation

100 Stakeholder Interviews

Online & Face to face workshops

Strategy+ annexes

Implementation Planning

Evaluation Framework

External & Internal Reference Groups

Advisory Committee for Health Research

Executive Board

WHO Research Strategy – WHA 2010

Stakeholder Interviews Online & Face to face workshops

World Health Organization
**WHO’s role in research…..**

**and the role of research in WHO…**

- Recognizes research as central to progress in global health
- Identifies how WHO can work with Member States and partners to harness knowledge, science and technology to produce research evidence and tools to improve health outcomes.
**Principles**

**Quality** - high-quality research that is ethical, expertly reviewed, efficient, effective, accessible to all, and carefully monitored and evaluated.

**Impact** - priority for research with greatest potential to improve global health security, health-related development, redress health inequities and attain MDGs.

**Inclusiveness** - work in partnership, Member States and stakeholders, multisectoral approach, support and promote the participation of communities and civil society in the research process.
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Summary: implementation to date and next steps

- Roll out to Regional Offices
- Reference/use of strategy by WHO departments
  - TB/HIV, H1N1, food borne disease, radiation safety
- Overview of research at WHO
  - Paper in preparation + research classification
  - research portal
  - Online database
- Joint work with PHI
  - Mapping R&D priorities
  - Establishment of joint M&E framework GSPA, MTSP and RfH
- Policy development
  - Good research practice
  - Public (open) access
- Collaboration WHO + COHRED and GFHR
  - GSPA
  - Health systems research
  - World Health Report 2012 – research for health
- Coordination mechanism in WHO – gr8
  - What should it be
  - How should it be funded
Roll out to WHO Regional Offices
1 approved, 2 in development, 3 subject to personnel changes
A framework for describing the priorities in WHO programmes

WHO seeks to position itself so that:

- it adds value to the activities of other stakeholders.
- acts to catalyse support for research (through funding or advocacy) not adequately addressed by others.

 strategic spread of the research response in an individual WHO programme

A specific response highlighted by the department
Reference/use of strategy by WHO departments

- Referenced in setting priorities in the following research agenda:
  - TB/HIV research priorities in resource limited settings Lancet paper in preparation
  - Identifying Research Priorities for Child Health Research to achieve MDG4
  - Social Determinants of Change - priorities for research in equity and health
  - 2nd WHO Meeting on A Prioritized Research Agenda for Prevention & Control of Noncommunicable Diseases
  - FERG (the WHO Foodborne Disease Burden Epidemiology Reference Group) translating burden estimates and research findings into food safety policy-making.
  - WHO Public Health Research Agenda for Influenza (see subsequent slide)
Research strategy – TDR 2006/07

Neglected priority needs

Measurement of the problem – diagnosis

Understand causes of the problem – determinants

Evaluation of the impact of the solution

Translation and delivery of the solution

Development of solutions

TDR Research business lines

Lead discovery for drugs
(screening/optimizing drug leads for tropical diseases

• Selected drug development and field interventions (TB/HIV, helminths, other NTD)
• Innovate vector control interventions
• Evidence for antimalarial policy and access
• Visceral leishmaniasis elimination
• Integrated community-based interventions

World Health Organization
Research strategy - Foodbourne Disease group 2006/07

Priority No 1
No global burden of FBD estimates currently exist.

Priority No 2
Determinants of burden partially known but not synthesized.

Priority No 3
Food Safety standard setting, control and interventions are well described but impact often not known.

Priority No 4
Solutions often not linked to evidence – this requires re-examination and new application.

Research on neglected priority needs

Measurement of the problem – diagnosis

Understand causes of the problem – determinants

Development of solutions

Translation and delivery of the solution

Evaluation of the impact of the solution

Solutions fairly well described but not always evidence-based – this might have to be revisited after strategy has been executed in its entirety.
Global consultation on public health research agenda for influenza November 2009

Stream 1. (Determinants)
Reducing the risk of emergence of a pandemic influenza

Stream 2. (Solutions)
Limiting the spread of pandemic, zoonotic and seasonal epidemic influenza

Stream 3. (Solutions)
Minimizing the impact of pandemic, zoonotic and seasonal epidemic influenza

Stream 4. (Delivery / Evaluation)
Optimizing the treatment of patients

Stream 5. (Translation)
Promoting the development and application of modern public health tools

Overview of research at WHO 2006/07

- Paper in preparation describes research at WHO 2006/07.
- Mainly commissioned secondary (synthesis) research.
- Developing a high level research classification
  - priority pentagram x ICD. Paper submitted to HRSR
- WHO research portal & online database under development

I COMMUNICABLE DISEASE, MATERNAL, PERINATAL, AND NUTRITIONAL DISEASES

II NONCOMMUNICABLE DISEASES

II INJURIES, WAR AND VIOLENCE

CAPACITY

DALY classification by group

- including IARC
- excluding IARC
- DALY

0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90%

64% 40% 84% 48% 12% 6% 8% N/A
Priorities – meeting health needs

Working with Member States and partners:

• Synthesize data and develop comprehensive research agendas on gaps in research challenges at national and global levels. Element 1 of GSPA

• WHO - establish mechanisms for reviewing the portfolio of research agendas including exit strategies of programmes.

R&D Mapping with PHI:

Review WHO exercises since 2005

⇒ 200+

⇒ Interview WHO departments & research partners (COHRED, Global Forum) key aspects of health research priority setting.

Develop a checklist for health research priority setting 10 themes to consider
Classification of research at a strategic level

http://www.ukcrc.org/researchcoordination/classificationsystem/
Setting research priorities - 9 themes to consider

1. Inclusiveness
2. Context
3. Information
4. Implementation
5. Approach
6. Criteria
7. Ranking/Consensus
8. Evaluation
9. Transparency

Research Priorities
Setting research priorities - 9 themes to consider

1. Inclusiveness
2. Context
3. Information
4. Implementation
5. Approach
6. Criteria
7. Ranking/Consensus
8. Evaluation
9. Transparency
Every exercise is different, and there are no universal methods or standards that apply to all.

This checklist is meant to elicit discussion about 10 topics that are essential elements of health research priority setting.
Standards — good research practice

- **Policy development for WHO**
  - Good research practice
  - Public (open) access

- **Guidelines Review**
  - Strengthened committee and procedure

- **Review of Ethical guidelines for operating RECs**
  - Revision of Handbook for research ethics review committees

- **International Clinical Trials Registry Platform**
  - Standards in trial registration (ICTN), improved transparency links with regulation bodies e.g. Africa
Collaboration: Joint work with Public Health Intellectual Property and Innovation

- Elements 1, 2 & 3 Global Strategy and Plan of Action
- Establishment of joint M&E framework for:
  - GSPA
  - MTSP
  - Research for Health
- Collect data once use for many purposes
- Inform Member States on what can be monitored: innovation, capacity, IP.
Coordination

- Calls for greater harmonization and coordination in global research: Bamako Call to Action, Expert Working Group on R&D financing and Coordination (GSPA), Research for Health consultation.

- Collaborative group 5 WHO (GSPA, RFH, TDR, RHR, AHPSR, IVR) + COHRED and GFHR. Three areas of work:
  - Implementing GSPA
  - Health systems research
  - World health Report 2012 – research for health
http://www.healthresearchweb.org
Many thanks

Further information can be obtained from:


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http://www.who.int/rpc

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