Recommendations to Improve Operations of the Stop TB Partnership Working groups

Background

These recommendations were developed in response to concerns voiced by the Coordinating Board at Its meeting in Osaka in February, 2002. The minutes of the meeting state, “The Board noted that more cross-talk is needed between the control and research groups. In scaling-up and adapting DOTS, the supporting role of research and tools needs to be clarified (e.g. diagnostics for TB/HIV detecting latent TB infection, etc.).” The action steps from this section of the Coordinating Board meeting read as follows: “Annual measurable targets are requested from each working group

a. DOTS Expansion. ---

b. MDR-TB DOTS Plus. ---

c. Research (New drugs, Vaccines, Diagnostics) The Board requested that the three research groups convene before the next meeting of the Board, and to present at this meeting a summary on short-term results, progress indicators, and support needed from the Stop TB Partnership.”

In response to this concern the three research working group chairs met in Washington at the time of the World Congress on TB in June, and the chairs of all six working groups met at the IUATLD meeting in Montreal in October. In these meetings it was generally recognized that the processes by which the working groups functioned and interacted among themselves required considerably more thought than would be provided by short ad hoc meetings and that a more comprehensive examination was needed. This examination was begun in late January.

Process

The working group terms of reference and work plans were reviewed. Individual discussions were held with the working group secretariat focal points and with the Partnership secretariat. The information obtained from these discussions was incorporated into a draft paper that was reviewed by the working group secretariat focal points, and the draft revised and served as the focus of a meeting of the working group chairs in Brasilia April 5. The recommendations that follow were agreed to by consensus of those attending the meeting.

Recommendations

- The potential contributions of new tools and approaches should be incorporated into the descriptions of the overall strategies to meet global targets. Where feasible estimates of the impact of new tools and approaches should be included in projections of disease trends**.**
- Progress toward reaching targets for development of new tools should be included in annual Partnership reports.
- Advocacy by the Partnership should include advocacy for research activities, ranging from basic investigations through operations research.

- To inform the advocacy activities the new tools working groups should develop work plans that include estimates of overall resource needs.
- The new tools working groups should work with the Partnership secretariat to develop approaches to advocacy.
- Within the Partnership secretariat there should be a full time staff person with a science background to serve as the focal point for the 3 new tools working groups.
- There should be an annual meeting of the chairs and focal points of all 6 working groups.
- Criteria and mechanisms should be developed for creating and dissolving working groups.