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In this issue of EDCTP newsletter we are proud to welcome the new members of the EDCTP Partnership Board and of the EDCTP Developing Countries Coordinating Committee. You will read about the first EDCTP investigator meeting which will be held in Cape Town, South Africa on the 24 and 25 July and also about the 2006 EDCTP annual Forum which will be held in Stockholm, Sweden and will address the challenges and opportunities of partnership and leadership.

The collaboration with NEPAD and EDCTP is now in active phase, and joint actions on advocacy are planned for 2006. The announcement of the African health ministers to devote 2% for health research is a very encouraging signal for ensuring the long-term sustainability of research initiatives like EDCTP.

Last but not least, EDCTP's team has grown. We are pleased to welcome Bart Jordi, PhD as Project Officer. He brings great skills, experience and enthusiasm to our team.

News about the EDCTP Governance

*** The EDCTP Partnership Board Welcomes Five New Members and Nominates New Chair and Vice Chairs**



The Partnership Board (PB) designs the scientific and strategic framework of the EDCTP and advises the General Assembly on technical and scientific matters relating to the EDCTP programme.

The PB is charged with preparing proposals and recommendations to be submitted via the Secretariat to the Assembly, specifically with regard to:



- Strategic needs and priorities for new clinical interventions, training and capacity building
- Calls for project proposals and other procedures for implementing plans of action
- The annual action plans, including the calls foreseen for the year
- Recommendation for the funding of successfully evaluated proposals.

PB members are selected through an open competitive call, recommended to the General Assembly by a nomination committee and are appointed based on of their scientific expertise.

The PB is composed of 12 independent members. On 13 February 2006, EDCTP welcomed its new members; Prof. Richard Adegbola (The Gambia, tuberculosis expert), Prof. Juhani Eskola (Finland, Pharmaceutical industry experience), Prof. Bruno Kilunga Kubata (Kenya, malaria expert), Dr Peter Kreamsner (Germany, malaria expert) and Dr Sodiomon Sirima (Burkina Faso, malaria expert). They are joining Prof. Janet Darbershire (United Kingdom), Prof. Patrice Debre (France), Dr Michel Klein (Canada), Prof. Souleymane Mboup (Senegal), Prof. Peter Smith (United Kingdom) and Prof. Britta Warren (Sweden). One position is still vacant for a tuberculosis expert.

The partnership board members have elected their new chair (Prof. Debre) and vice chairs (Prof. Mboup and Prof. Smith), shown in the picture above.

* The EDCTP Developing Countries Coordinating Committee Nominates New Members

The DCCC is an independent 15-member advisory body comprising prominent African scientists and health professionals. Its general role is to ensure the commitment, ownership and leadership of the EDCTP programme by the participating sub-Saharan Africa countries. The senior scientific experts and health professionals are elected based on their experience in HIV/AIDS, malaria or tuberculosis in areas of capacity building, clinical trials, public health issues, fundraising and networking. Each member has a two-year tenure.

On 8 March 2006 the EDCTP Assembly approved the nomination of Dr Tumani Corrah (Gambia), Dr Walter Jaoko (Kenya), Dr Mathieu Ndounga (Congo) and Dr Peter Ndumbe (Cameroon) to join the DCCC. The four new members will join the continuing members, namely Dr Simon Agwale (Nigeria), Dr Aissatou Balde-Toure (Senegal), Dr Aderaye Getachew (Ethiopia), Dr Kobus Herbst (South Africa), Dr Jean-Paul Kashongwe (DRC) and Dr Lynn Zijenah (Zimbabwe).

* Appointment of new Project Officer

EDCTP welcomes Dr Bart Jordi as the new Project Officer in the Secretariat in The Hague.

Bart Jordi has ample experience in working with micro-organisms including ETEC (causing diarrhoea in infants in underdeveloped countries), Salmonella and corona viruses (such as SARS). Bart received his PhD from the University of Utrecht, The Netherlands and has worked for five years at the Weatherall Institute of Molecular Medicine,



EDCTP teambuilding (2006 retreat)

UK. After this period he worked as a researcher both in academic settings and in biotech companies. On accepting the challenge before him, Bart remarked, 'I am very happy to be appointed as a project officer at the EDCTP secretariat in The Hague. I hope that with my experience as a researcher in the field of bacterial infectious diseases, I can help EDCTP to achieve its objectives. I am convinced that Europe's contribution towards reducing poverty in developing countries by improving the health of the populations can best be done by a joint African and European effort like the one initiated by EDCTP'.

Events

* The EDCTP Investigator's meeting

24-25 July 2006, Cape Town, South Africa

EDCTP will hold an investigators' meeting at the Medical Research Council in Cape Town (South Africa) from 24 to 25 July 2006. The goal of the meeting is to establish a South-South network of researchers and institutions for coordinating and synergising activities related to clinical trials on the three major poverty-related diseases of HIV/AIDS, malaria and tuberculosis in Africa through the EDCTP partnership.

This meeting will bring together 10 African and European researchers that are funded by EDCTP. The meeting will also involve collaborating investigators from 14 African sites and their associates from 8 institutions from the north. The EDCTP grantees that are expected to attend the meeting include A. S. Alabi (Gambia), C. Chintu (Zambia), U. d'Allesandro (Belgium), A. A. Djimde (Mali), D. K. Ekouevi (Cote d'Ivoire), S. Gillespie (UK), W. A. Hanekom (South Africa), M. M. Mukhtar (Sudan), A. Nzila (Kenya) and P. Van Helden (South Africa). The involved African sites are in Gambia, Zambia, Burkina Faso, Gabon, Mozambique, Nigeria, Rwanda, Tanzania, Uganda, Mali, Cote d'Ivoire, South Africa, Kenya and Sudan. The collaborating European Institutions are from Italy, the Netherlands, the UK, Belgium, France, Germany, Spain and USA. Other participants expected to attend the meeting include NEPAD regional representatives, officials of a few selected regulatory authorities from African countries, EDCTP constituency members and secretariat staff.

At this meeting participants will be expected to:

- Share experiences and exchange information on existing projects
- Facilitate the establishment of South-South links (e.g. mentorship programmes, nodes of excellence, and sharing of facilities and expertise)
- Explore common grounds of interest such as possibilities of joint grant applications
- Define the research agenda and priorities as determined by the ongoing projects
- Discuss regulatory issues, establishing of clinical trial registry and the role of African institutions in clinical trials sponsorship.

For more information, visit our [website](#).

* Third Annual EDCTP Forum; Partnership and African Leadership: Challenges and Opportunities

8-11 October 2006, Stockholm, Sweden

The theme of the Third Annual EDCTP Forum is based on the fundamental goal of EDCTP to create an enabling environment for the European scientists to join forces through a structured network to work together in partnership with African scientists to fight HIV/AIDS, malaria and tuberculosis as a means of poverty reduction. A strong African leadership is essential for identifying research capacity gaps, prioritisation of research problems, setting up of the required appropriate research agenda, facilitation of translation of research findings into control measures and sustainability of the programme well beyond the current framework.

Furthermore, this will create a true sense of partnership, commitment and ownership, whereby all partners will offer strong contributions for the mutual interest of the programme.

The focus of this year's annual Forum will be on the following three sub-themes:

- Capacity building and networking for conducting clinical trials
- Regulatory issues and ethics in clinical trials
- Conduct of clinical trials

Format:

- Plenary sessions with invited speakers and topics on focus areas
- Short-electronic presentations. As means of sharing information short presentations in the form of 5-8 comprehensive slide shows on relevant subjects will be viewed and discussed continuously during breaks
- Round table discussions

Two hundred participants drawn mainly from EDCTP-supported projects and constituencies will attend the forum.

For more information please visit our [website](#)

Meetings and Visits

*** EDCTP and NEPAD agree on closer cooperation for poverty alleviation through health improvement**

EDCTP and the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) have agreed to work closely together in poverty alleviation through health improvement. EDCTP whose mission is to accelerate the development of new clinical interventions to fight poverty-related diseases will join hands with NEPAD to conduct joint activities of mutual interest. This agreement was reached after separate meetings between Dr Odile Leroy (EDCTP Executive Director), Prof. Charles Mgone (Head, EDCTP Africa Office) and Prof. Eric Buch (NEPAD Adviser); and between Dr Pascoal Mocumbi (EDCTP, High Representative), Prof. Charles Mgone and Prof. Firmino Mucavele (NEPAD, Chief Executive). This is part of the EDCTP strategy for fostering synergy with like-minded organisations and for ensuring sustainability of its programme through promotion of African ownership and leadership. To facilitate this process, the EDCTP Developing Countries Coordinating Committee (DCCC) membership will now include representation from NEPAD sub-regions. As a start, representatives from the West African Health Organisation representing West Africa and from Organisation de Coopération pour la lute contre les Endémies en Afrique Centrale (OCEAC), representing the Central Africa have been invited to join DCCC. DCCC comprising prominent African experts is a key constituent of EDCTP that is responsible for

lending the African voice and perspective to the programme. In addition, EDCTP and NEPAD have agreed to carry out joint advocacy activities including publication of joint communications on HIV/AIDS, malaria, tuberculosis and related issues. The two organisations will also endeavour to work towards close collaborative activities including joint fundraising and calls for proposals when the need arises.

Press Highlights

* African Ministers agree on 2% for Research Ministers meeting, 15 March 2006

Editorial comment from EDCTP Secretariat: At a three-day meeting of Ministers of Health that was attended by 39 delegates from 11 African countries in Abuja, Nigeria in March, the ministers agreed to spend 2% of their budgets on health research. The EDCTP secretariat congratulates the Health Ministers from Algeria, Cameroon, Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Malawi, Mozambique, Nigeria, Senegal, South Africa and Sudan for agreeing on this positive step in health research. EDCTP, established in 2003 and founded on article 169 of the statutes of the European Union states that calls for improved co-ordination and joint health research activities among European states in collaboration with sub-Saharan African countries to accelerate the production of new clinical interventions for HIV/AIDS, TB and malaria through funding clinical trials, concurrent capacity building and facilitating networking. Currently the EDCTP programme gets financial support from the European Commission and European National Programmes. More or increased financial contribution from African states is not just a positive step but it is a move that goes a long way in ensuring sustainability of the programmes that will be initiated by EDCTP in the fight against the three poverty related diseases.

Call for experts

EDCTP calls for independent experts to assist EDCTP in the implementation of the objectives set out in the Joint Programme

EDCTP is continuing to invite applications from individuals wishing to provide expert assistance for the following tasks:

- Assistance in the Scientific Review Committee (SRC) for the evaluation of the applications for grants received by the organisation in areas of HIV or TB or malaria clinical trials, capacity building and networking
- Assistance in the pre-evaluation of applications in the three disease areas
- Any other specific scientific expertise as might be required

Candidates are required to have experience in:

- Research in the relevant scientific fields
- Evaluation of projects
- Use of the results of research and technological development projects
- Technology transfer and innovation
- International collaboration
- Knowledge on the conduct of clinical trials (preferable)

The selected participants will be added to a database of EDCTP experts. Although individuals will be assigned tasks

according to expertise, some degree of flexibility should be expected to avoid conflicting schedules. For this reason, scientists interested in the programme should indicate their field of expertise and time availability. SRC members will be appointed for a three-year period. Ideally each sitting of SRC shall consist of seven experts including a chair, four specialists and two generalists. Subject to the timelines set out in the grant procedure the EDCTP secretariat will convene an SRC meeting in the EDCTP office in The Hague where the reviews of applications will be discussed. All logistics for the organisation of the SRC meetings will be facilitated by the EDCTP secretariat. Where pre-evaluation of proposals is required experts will be requested to perform their assignment electronically or telephonically from their own location.

EDCTP conforms to the legislation of The Netherlands concerning the Personal Data Protection Act.

For details of application procedures please visit the [EDCTP website](#).

Interested parties should send their application electronically (via email) to: proposals@edctp.org.



The EDCTP Secretariat team

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