



**Roll Back Malaria Partnership (RBM)**

## **Vector Control Working Group (VCWG) Terms of Reference**

**Revised Terms of Reference based on review of Accountability Framework and cross-comparison of TORs and best practices of other organizations**

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**Adopted in January 2014 following the 25<sup>th</sup> RBM Partnership Board meeting**

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## **I. Purpose / Rationale**

### **Purpose**

The purpose of the RBM Vector Control Working Group (VCWG) is to align RBM partners on best practices to reach and maintain universal coverage with effective vector control interventions. The VCWG disseminates the normative and policy-setting guidelines of the World Health Organization (WHO) by helping to translate these norms and standards to international and country-level partners. Moreover, aiming at coordinating the support to countries with regard to implementing WHO guidelines, the VCWG provides an essential forum where diverse partners of the vector control community, from the public sector, the private sector and civil society, can come together, reach a common understanding of the threats and opportunities, learn from each other and develop the necessary networks and activities to overcome these challenges.

### **Rationale**

Malaria control efforts over the past decade have shown remarkable success. According to the 2012 World Malaria Report, between 2000 and 2010, malaria mortality rates fell by 26% globally and by 33% in the WHO Africa region; an estimated 1.1 million malaria deaths were averted, in large part due to the scale up of vector control, especially the deployment of insecticide treated mosquito nets (ITNs) and indoor residual spraying (IRS). These fragile gains are now seriously threatened by insecticide resistance in the mosquito vector, by diminishing financial support, by our inability to prevent transmission beyond the reach of our traditional treated mosquito nets and indoor spraying, and by the capacity needs of national programs to implement entomological monitoring and optimize their scant resources for vector control. This is a critical time for global malaria control efforts and for communities that are now at greater risk for a resurgence of malaria illness and death.

In meeting these challenges, the VCWG also sees opportunities. While WHO provides the norms and standards, and the Global Malaria Action Plan (GMAP) provides the broad strategies for control, there is a growing recognition that malaria control cannot be a “one size fits all”. There is a great diversity of transmission ecologies and program capacities, demanding innovation and adaptation of these norms and standards to local contexts.

The diversity of the VCWG is its strength. Whether it is long-lasting insecticidal nets (LLINs) distribution or durability monitoring, IRS capacity building or the global plan for insecticide resistance management (GPIRM) implementation, the diversity of VCWG members allows for a rich dialogue and mutual learning developing more robust and adaptive responses. There are two opportunities in this diverse partnership especially important to the VCWG. First is the place of the commercial sector. Through individual company membership, through participation of consortia such as GBCHealth and CropLife, and through product development partnerships, such as the Innovative Vector Control Consortium (IVCC), the VCWG provides a forum where all the constituencies, including the commercial sector, can come together to build consensus on the challenges and opportunities in vector control. The second, emerging opportunity of particular importance to the VCWG, is through the recently launched United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)-RBM Multisectoral Action Framework for Malaria Control, providing a roadmap for engaging an even broader range of partners from the agriculture sector, infrastructure, education, housing and urban development, etc. on mosquito and vector control.

## II. Functions of the Working Group

The VCWG recognizes the heterogeneity of malaria transmission ecology and national health system capacities. There is no single formula for how malaria interventions such as ITNs and IRS should be brought to scale and sustained, and how these can evolve to meet emerging biological, programmatic and financial threats. The VCWG's scope of work concentrates on the following types of actions:

**Convene:** Convene stakeholders through meetings, workshops and electronic fora to debate and develop consensus on adaptation and implementation of WHO norms and standards, and to share innovations and experiences on how collectively we can overcome challenges and take advantage of emerging opportunities for vector control.

**Co-ordinate:** Manage fora for building consensus on vector control implementation, including partnerships with the vector control product manufacturers to understand each other's needs and constraints and to work together to find innovative solutions and stimulate appropriate research and development.

**Facilitate Communication:** Assemble evidence on best practices and ensure flow of information from the field to the working group and vice versa. Work through the Sub-Regional Networks (SRNs) and in collaboration with other RBM mechanisms to coordinate with partners in mobilizing technical and financial resources and providing support to national control efforts.

## III. Roles and Responsibilities

### a) Members

Participation in the VCWG is open and non-exclusive. The VCWG encourages broad involvement of individuals, institutions and countries representing the range of experience and disciplines necessary to fulfill its functions and create a forum for rapid exchange of experience and diffusion of innovation.

The VCWG can consist of two types of members: (1) Core Member and (2) Observer. The VCWG is a willing assembly of RBM Partners; as such, membership is open to all interested institutional partners, provided that they meet the criteria for one of the membership types.

#### Core member status

Core members represent their institutions. Every interested institutional partner can become a core member of the VCWG if s/he meets the following criteria:

- Expertise and experience in relevant field for VCWG.
- Appropriate level of seniority and credibility.
- Ability to fund their own participation/attendance at VCWG meetings, unless they qualify for financial support for participation via the RBM Partnership Secretariat or other RBM partners.

The group of core members should ideally meet the following criteria:

- Balanced geographic representation.
- Balanced representation of constituencies.
- Representation of key organizations/institutions relevant for functions of VCWG.

Institutional partners who wish to become core members and who meet the criteria are approved for membership by the Chair/Co-Chair. The VCWG Chairs may actively approach and encourage individuals/organizations to join the VCWG to mirror the ideal composition.

Roles and responsibilities of core members include:

- Participation in each ordinary VCWG meeting (or determine alternate if participation not possible).
- Participation in at least 80% of conference calls.
- Active participation in the implementation of the VCWG work plan.
- The role is a voluntary role - there is no remuneration for participating.

A core member will maintain its status until:

- S/he resigns.
- S/he is unable to perform the agreed upon responsibilities as defined above and agreed upon tasks.

### **Observer status**

Interested individuals/organizations that cannot commit to the same degree as core members are allowed to participate in VCWG meetings at the discretion of the (Co-) Chairs as observers and contribute as possible. Observers have no voting power (see below).

### **b) Chair/Co-Chair**

Election process:

- Two Co-Chairs or one Chair and one Co-Chair are elected by the VCWG members prior to the mid-year meeting of the RBM Board from different constituencies. (Co-) Chairs are elected for a two year term with potential renewal.
- The election procedure shall be transparent and secret and open to all core members of the VCWG with one vote per core member.
- The Secretariat shall send out notifications one month prior to the election, soliciting nominations. Each core member has the right to nominate one person or self-nominate.
- Two weeks prior to the election the Secretariat shall obtain a confirmation from the nominees that they are interested and willing to run for election.
- Prior to the (Co-) Chair's endorsement by the Board, the Secretariat shall obtain an explicit assurance from their employer agreeing to the additional travel and workload related to assuming the role as Chair of a RBM Working Group.
- The election should be carried out through a secret ballot and can either take place during one of the VCWG meetings or through the use of electronic vote. A simple majority decides.
- The (Co-) Chairs are endorsed by the RBM Board at the mid-year Board Meeting.

Roles and responsibilities include:

- Preparation and Chairing of VCWG meetings.
- Preparation of annual work plan and budget in collaboration with the RBM Secretariat (see below).
- Responsibility for stewardship of the working group, including authorizing expenditures by the working group secretariat.
- Review of meeting minutes.
- Representation of VCWG to all RBM mechanisms.

### **c) Secretariat**

The VCWG is supported by staff of the RBM Secretariat to act as Secretariat for VCWG.

Roles and responsibilities of the Secretariat include:

- Coordination and organization of VCWG meetings in collaboration with (Co-) Chair.
- Provision of facilities for meetings (rooms, conference call facilities etc.)

- Preparation and dissemination of meeting minutes.
- Preparation of monthly progress reports to RBM Secretariat and Executive Committee (see below).
- Maintenance of VCWG homepage, at a minimum updating membership list and uploading meeting minutes and progress reports.
- Other supporting functions as appropriate.

The RBM VCWG is supported by its own Working Group Secretariat with the support of the RBM Partnership Secretariat in Geneva. The VCWG Secretariat reports to the RBM Partnership Secretariat through its Co-Chairs. The VCWG reports to the RBM Partnership Board through the Executive Director.. Presently, the Working Group Secretariat is located at Swiss TPH in Basel, Switzerland and supported by Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC).

#### **d) Sub-Working Groups/Taskforces/Work Streams**

Sub-Working Groups/Taskforces/Work Streams may be established to work on specific issues of the VCWG work plan. Responsibilities are dependent on Sub-Working Group/Taskforce/Work Stream tasks. (Co-) Chairs propose the creation of Sub-Working Groups/Taskforces/Work Stream and the Executive Committee endorses the Sub-Working Group/Taskforce/Work Stream at its meeting.

### **IV. Working procedures**

#### **a) Annual Work Plan and Funding**

##### **Planning**

- The RBM Secretariat supports the development of the annual work plan and budget to ensure consistency across Working Groups.
- Annual work plans must be follow the SMART objectives:
  - S – specific
  - M – measurable
  - A – accountable
  - R – realistic
  - T – time related
- Facilitated by the (Co-) Chairs and the VCWG Secretariat following consultation with the Core members, the VCWG must develop a biennium work plan and budget, guided by the GMAP strategic implementation plan commissioned by the RBM Board.
- A distinction is made between the first and second year work plan and budget. The first year work plan and budget must match the funds identified at the mid-year Board Meeting and are fixed for the following 12 months after the Board's approval. The second year work plan and budget are indicative, based on funding projections and revised after the first year.
- The biennial work plans and budgets are approved in November by the Board and are subsequently implemented by the VCWG.

##### **Preparation**

- Action items should be matched with budget line items to clearly link the activities of the work plan with funds.
- Work plans should highlight the necessary interaction with other RBM Partnership bodies (e.g. other Working Groups, Sub-Regional Networks, and individual Partners).

- Annual work plans should specify funding raised and clearly assign this funding to specific tasks.
- Dependencies between action items should be recognized and activities prioritized.
- The work plan and budget should be ready 40 days prior to the end year Board Meeting for the RBM Secretariat to compile a Partnership Work Plan that will be reviewed by the Executive Committee.
- The Executive Committee can suggest changes in the work plan if required by the financial situation or to better reflect RBM priorities.

Resource Mobilization:

- Mobilizing resources for Working Group activities is the responsibility of the Working Group.

## **b) Meetings**

### **Convocation of meetings**

- Ordinary Meetings: The VCWG Chairperson will call the VCWG meetings supported by the VCWG Secretariat in line with the programme of work, and following informal consultation with the RBM Secretariat and other VCWG members on the suitability of proposed meeting dates.
- Ad Hoc Meetings: Meetings on issues requiring the urgent review of the VCWG will be organized on an ad hoc basis if called for by the Partnership Board or Secretariat.

### **Types of meetings**

In the interest of efficient use of time and limiting costs associated with meetings, the VCWG will complement face-to-face meetings as held at a host partner's site with virtual meetings (i.e. teleconferences and videoconferences) of the VCWG as a whole or its Work Stream (s) as necessary.

### **Frequency of meetings**

- Ordinary Meetings: The VCWG meets once a year. Meetings can be held at a host partner's site. The work of the VCWG is however an ongoing process and not only centered on annual meetings.
- *Ad Hoc* Meetings: Satellite groups can meet on an *ad hoc* basis to address special issues. Such meetings will be organized as stated above (see Convocation of meetings).
- Any member of the VCWG Core Group or other partners can call special/emergency meetings on the basis of clearly identified needs. Such requests, however, will need to be endorsed by the RBM Partnership Secretariat.

## **c) Conduct of Business**

The quorum of the Working Group for adopting recommendations and the work plan will be 80% of the core members. Observers have no voting rights. Recommendations of the Working Group will be made on the basis of consensus and communicated to the Board.

## **d) Minutes**

The VCWG Secretariat will draft the minutes on the proceedings of the VCWG meetings, including those of Work Stream Groups. The Chairperson, and other selected members depending on the subject matter, will review these minutes within two weeks of a meeting. The VCWG Co-Chairs circulate the meeting minutes no later than two weeks after the meeting to the RBM Secretariat and the Executive Committee.

## **V. Reporting and Performance Review**

The VCWG is accountable to the RBM Board through the Executive Director. The VCWG Secretariat shall report to the Executive Director on quarterly basis on progress in achieving the work plan objectives, including a financial report. The semi-annual reports to the Board summarize progress of the previous six months.

## **VI. Dissolution of the Working Group**

The TORs for the VCWG will be reviewed by the Board on a biannual basis. The review process will be based on specific performance criteria the VCWG. In other words, the VCWG will be measured on how well the VCWG accomplishes the activities and meets the goals and targets defined in annual work plans. If a majority of targets cannot be met in the two year time period of the work plan and there is a low rate of participation among members, if the mandate of the VCWG has been completed, or if the Board no longer feels the mandate of the VCWG is relevant to the new Partnership Work Plan, the Board can decide to dissolve the VCWG.