

Conference Report: Meeting of Partners for the Global Drug Facility-led Letter of Intent to UNITAID

**WHO Headquarters
Geneva, Switzerland**

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Trip Report

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Executive Summary

Various partners of the Global Drug Facility (GDF) met in Geneva to discuss the development of a Letter of Intent (LoI) to be submitted to UNITAID for funding. Jennifer Derry attended the meeting to provide information on how PQM activities may support GDF in increasing the availability of quality assured second-line tuberculosis medicines.

Presentations were given by several partners, and ideas for interventions to be included in the LoI were proposed, discussed, and agreed upon. The LoI will be submitted by UNITAID's deadline of May 22, 2012.

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About PQM

The Promoting the Quality of Medicines (PQM) program, funded by the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), is the successor of the Drug Quality and Information (DQI) program implemented by the United States Pharmacopeia (USP). PQM is USAID’s response to the growing challenge posed by the proliferation of counterfeit and substandard medicines. By providing technical assistance to developing countries, PQM helps build local capacity in medicine quality assurance systems, increase the supply of quality medicines to priority USAID health programs, and ensure the quality and safety of medicines globally. This document does not necessarily represent the views or opinions of USAID or the United States Government. It may be reproduced if credit is given to PQM and USP.

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ACRONYMS

CHAI	Clinton Health Access Initiative
GDF	Global Drug Facility
GMP	Good Manufacturing Practices
IDA	International Dispensary Association
IQA	International Quality Assured
LoI	Letter of Intent
MDR-TB	Multi-Drug Resistant Tuberculosis
MSF	Medecins Sans Frontieres (Doctors Without Borders)
MSH	Management Sciences for Health
PQM	Promoting the Quality of Medicines Program
SLAII	Second-line TB Drug Access Improvement Initiative
TB	Tuberculosis
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USP	United States Pharmacopeia
WHO	World Health Organization

Background

Despite efforts by the World Health Organization (WHO) Prequalification (PQ) program, Global TB Drug Facility (GDF), and the Green Light Committee (GLC) to increase access to essential anti-tuberculosis medicines (ATBs), there are not enough WHO-prequalified second-line ATBs and an inadequate supply of products to treat patients with multi-drug resistant TB (MDR-TB).

Purpose of Conference

The purpose of this meeting was to gather all partners to discuss and develop a Letter of Intent (LoI) to request funding from UNITAID.

Conference Deliberations

Opening Statements

- Denis Broun from UNITAID spoke about how UNITAID was formed and how they derive their funding. He discussed what a strong LoI would entail and touched on some of the strengths and weaknesses of the GDF.
- Lucica Ditiu from GDF gave a short opening speech on the expected outcomes from the two-day meeting, including points of discussion and potential achievable end results.

Highlights of Conference Deliberations and Presentations

- Presentations were given by staff from GDF, Clinton Health Access Initiative (CHAI), and Management Sciences for Health (MSH)
 - GDF: presentations on forecasting, country targets, product targets, strategic rotating stockpile (SRS), expert review panel process, and bidding process
 - MSH: presentation on first-line medicine grants and lessons learned
 - CHAI: presentation on co-payment analysis (from the India market) and the second-line TB product to be targeted

In-depth discussions were held over proposed interventions to be included in the LoI. The number of proposed interventions to be included was decreased to five (Reconfiguration of Stockpile; Advance Purchase Commitment; Volume Guarantee; Co-Payment; and Cost-Share Grants) with five proposed supporting activities (Manufacturer Engagement; Procurement Mechanisms; Forecasting; Country Scale-Up; and Regulatory Streamlining).

Next Steps and Conclusion

Small working groups/teams were assigned for each activity. The teams for the interventions are to develop analysis and a case for each intervention. The teams for the supporting activities are to describe current activities and future plans and then tie the activities to the interventions. This LoI will be led by GDF as the prime organization with support from the partners. Regular communication (via email and phone) will be conducted with a strict timeline set to meet the UNITAID deadline for LoI submission of May 22, 2012.

List of Participants and Affiliation

Lucica Ditiu, WHO
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