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CHALLENGE > **TB**

Challenge TB - Transmission Project:
Quantifying effect of interventions on transmission of
Mycobacterium tuberculosis

Year 1

Quarterly Monitoring Report
October-December 2015

Submission date: January 30, 2016

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1. Quarterly Overview

Project	Core Transmission Project (Tanzania and Indonesia)
Lead Partner	KNCV
Other partners	ATS
Workplan timeframe	APA1: January 2015- December 2015
Reporting period	October - December 2015

Summary progress report:

A major technical achievement during this reporting quarter was holding the meeting of the Strategic Advisory Group of Experts (SAGE). The first meeting of the SAGE was held in Cape Town on 1 December 2015. Useful input was given on the main community based protocol for Tanzania, by 12 scientific experts, three of whom attended virtually and gave their suggestions on paper. Minutes have been distributed. Inputs have been taken into consideration and adjustments have been made to the protocol. The SAGE also advised to add repeat tuberculin surveys to the evaluation methods. A draft protocol has been developed for those. Prior to the first SAGE meeting, the first face to face steering committee meeting was held.

Tanzania

Outlines for 3 studies have been developed, of which 1 (main communitywide study applying whole genome sequencing (WGS)) was accepted by USAID and further developed in detail as draft 1 described above. The second draft of the protocol was shared by respective technical advisors for concurrence and additional feedback in November 2015. Further, a sole source waiver from the usual competitive bidding process was requested for the preferred local partner, National Institute of Medical Research (NIMR). In addition, an illustrative multiyear budget for Tanzania has been developed and discussed. Preparations were made for a second site visit in January 2016 to finalize the protocol for submission to ethics committees of NIMR and UCSF.

Indonesia

A request for proposal (RFP) has been developed for tendering the subcontract to potential local partners (research institutions), and was approved by USAID. The RFP process (not content) is currently awaiting NTP approval. A transparent set of selection criteria for tendering the local research partner has been developed.

Some activities in the period October – December 2015 have been described already in the Year 1 Annual Report, such as development and discussion of proposals on 3 new countries besides Tanzania and Indonesia. These new countries have been put on hold.

Technical/administrative challenges and actions to overcome them:

The main challenges of the project are administrative delays.

Firstly in Tanzania we await USAID/W approval of the subcontract with NIMR. Until formal approval we may not be able to assign NIMR staff as Principal Investigator. This may delay approval by the institutional ethics board. Also we cannot fund NIMR to start preparatory activities such as staff hire and purchasing. These delays reduce the evaluation period and therefore chances to find an effect of interventions on transmission in this project. We all collaborate to obtain the approval [21 January 2016 the USAID mission has given their verbal concurrence].

Secondly in Indonesia, formal government project approval is pending, due to ongoing administrative discussions between USAID, MoH/NTP and KNCV, among others about work permit. The Core Transmission team together with the Indonesian KNCV country team has explored all avenues to accelerate the approval; at this point the team must wait for the NTP approval process. If the approval takes too long, we are considering a plan B; for example Bangladesh.

The smaller challenge during this reporting period was the alignment with country workplans. Although the core project has budgeted for additional staff in Challenge TB (CTB) country offices,

initial steps still require some input from the Challenge TB country director and other crucial staff. Since they are all occupied with implementing and reporting country activities, little time is available for core activities. We have budgeted a local project officer in the core project to relieve the burden on the country office.

Further selection of the region to be evaluated by the core project should be in agreement with the country workplan. In Tanzania the USAID Country mission has decided to change the Challenge TB supported regions, and Dar es Salaam may on the long term no longer be covered by CTB. However, early December there was verbal communication that multiple partners may work in Dar es Salaam, and therefore we can continue preparing for Kinondoni. The NTLP supports requests for continuation of Challenge TB in Dar es Salaam till at least end 2018, in order to align with Global Fund funding cycles. USAID mission has not given written confirmation yet.

2. Year 1 activity progress

PLEASE NOTE THE BELOW TABLES ARE FROM APA1 WORKPLAN SINCE THIS WORKPLAN WAS APPROVED IN JULY 2015 AND BUDGET RUNS TILL END 2015.

Planned Key Activities for the Current Year	Activity #	Planned Milestones	Milestone status	Milestone met? (Met, partially, not met)	Remarks (<i>reason for not meeting milestone, actions to address challenges, etc.</i>)
		Oct-Dec 2015	Oct-Dec 2015		
Startup meetings	5.3.1	n/a	Done in Feb 2015	Met	
site assessments done in 5 countries including gap analysis	5.3.2	N/A	Done in Sept 2015	Met	Agreed to only do Tanzania and Indonesia
protocol development for each country	5.3.3	detailed protocol review done and ws held	Tanzania ongoing	Partly met	Plan to finalize in January 2016 during visit For Indonesia protocol outlines are included in the tender to select local implementing partner. There have been many administrative delays in Indonesia to send out this tender. Protocol can only be finalized after selection of local partner. Other alternative countries are being considered.
strategic advisory board (SAGE) formalized and training staff conducted	5.3.4	members to review, staff hired and trained by subcontractor	SAGE meeting held 1 December.	Partly met	Training postponed till local implementing partner approved.
External quality assurance	5.3.5	Subcontracts in place		Not met	Not decided yet. May decide to do internally.

3. Challenge TB-supported international visits (technical and management-related trips)

#	Partner	Name of consultant	Planned quarter				Specific mission objectives	Status (cancelled, pending, completed)	Completion date
			Q 1	Q 2	Q 3	Q 4			
1	KNCV	S Verver	X				2 days Start Up meeting in Washington	status	3-5
2	KNCV	F Cobelens	X				2 days Start Up meeting in Washington	completed	3-5
3	WHO	M. Zignol	X				2 days Start Up meeting in Washington	completed	3-5
4	IRD	A. Khan					tentatively for SAB meeting	completed	could com
5	KNCV	Data Manager				X	Two weeks travel to Tanzania for data base technical input for protocol development	canceled	
6	KNCV	Data Manager				X	Two weeks travel to Indonesia for data base technical input for protocol development	pending	
7	KNCV	TBD				X	Two weeks travel to Indonesia by one consultant TBD for protocol development	pending	
8	KNCV	S Verver				X	Two weeks travel to Indonesia for protocol development	pending	
9	KNCV	E Tiemersma				X	Two weeks travel to Indonesia for protocol development	pending	
10	KNCV	Genotyping Specialist				X	Two weeks travel to Indonesia for protocol development	pending	
11	KNCV	F Cobelens				X	One week travel to Tanzania for protocol development	canceled	
12	KNCV	S Verver				X	Two weeks travel to Tanzania for protocol development	pending	
13	KNCV	Genotyping Specialist				X	Two weeks travel to Tanzania for protocol development	pending	
14	KNCV	F Cobelens				X	One week travel for Site Assessments including gap analysis Tanzania	canceled	
15	KNCV	S Verver				X	One week travel for Site Assessments including gap analysis Tanzania	completed	6-12 Sept 2015
16	KNCV	F Cobelens			X		One week travel for Site Assessments including gap analysis Indonesia	completed	2-10 2015
17	KNCV	S Verver			X		One week travel for Site Assessments including gap analysis Indonesia	pending	
18	KNCV	E Tiemersma			X		One week travel to Jakarta for site assessments including gap analysis	pending	
19	KNCV	TBD Kyrgyzstan				X	Two weeks travel to Kyrgyzstan for site assessment by a consultant	canceled	

20	KNCV	Sub contract				X	A new staff Tanzania will be trained for 7 days in US on the country projects and USAID related projects	pending	
21	KNCV	Sub contract				X	A new staff Tanzania will be trained for 7 days in US on the country projects and USAID related projects	pending	
22	KNCV	Sub contract				X	A new staff Indonesia will be trained for 7 days in US on the country projects and USAID related projects	pending	
23	KNCV	Sub contract				X	A new staff Indonesia will be trained for 7 days in US on the country projects and USAID related projects	pending	
24	KNCV	Project Manager				X	8 days travel from Indonesia to KNCV offices in the Hague to familiarize with the colleagues and country projects	pending	
25	KNCV	Project Manager				X	9 days travel from Tanzania to KNCV offices in the Hague to familiarize with the colleagues and country projects	pending	
26	ATS	P Hopewell		X			2 days meeting in the Hague on work plan development	completed	8-11 2016
27	ATS	F Du Melle		X			2 days meeting in the Hague on work plan development	completed	8-11 2016
28	ATS	B Djojonegoro			X		6 days travel for Site Assessment including gap analysis Indonesia	pending	
29	ATS	P Hopewell				X	7 days travel for Site Assessment including gap analysis Tanzania	completed	6-12 Sept 2016
30	ATS	E Fair				X	7 days travel Site Assessment including gap analysis Tanzania	pending	
31	ATS	M Kato Maeda				X	7 days travel for Site Assessment including gap analysis	pending	
32	ATS	P Hopewell				X	A total of 18 days travel to Tanzania on protocol development	pending	17-2 Janu 2016
33	ATS	M Kato Maeda				X	A total of 18 days travel to Tanzania on protocol development	pending	17-2 Janu 2016
34	ATS	E Fair				X	A total of 18 days travel to Indonesia on protocol development	pending	
35	KNCV	Various				X	2 days Strategic Advisory	completed	30 N Dec.

							Board meeting		
36	KNCV	PO/PM				X	7 days travel to monitor the project progress	Pending	
37	KNCV	PO/PM				X	7 days travel to monitor the project progress	pending	
38	KNCV	TBD DRC				X	Two weeks travel to Congo for site assessment by a consultant	canceled	
39	KNCV	TBD Nigeria				X	Two weeks travel to Nigeria for site assessment by a consultant	canceled	
Total number of visits conducted (cumulative for fiscal year)								8 (but SAGE meeting	
Total number of visits planned in approved work plan								39	
Percent of planned international consultant visits conducted								21%	