

News Letter for the Post-Ebola Resilience Programme

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On the 14th of December 2015, several representatives of the Post-Ebola Resilience Consortium met informally at the KIT in the Netherlands. This two-year programme was launched during the first Consortium meeting in July 2015 at the Njala University (Sierra Leone). This is the first consultation meeting since the launch of the programme and included the representatives of each of the three Work Packages (WPs).

Informal Consultation

During the informal consultation on the 14th of December, Dr. Maarten Voors of the Wageningen University and Prof. Paul Richards of the Njala University represented WP1. WP2 was represented by Dr. Linda Oskam of KIT in name of the Noguchi Memorial Institute for Medical Research, while Dr. Jurrien Toonen of KIT represented WP3. Dr. Ankie van den Broek and Drs. Natalie Vinkeles Melchers, KIT advisors, facilitated the meeting in their role as Project Leader and Project Coordinator, respectively.

The team members of the Post-Ebola Resilience Consortium had the honour to receive Ger Steenberg (RNE Accra) during this meeting at KIT, which was endorsed by the presence of KIT Director, Mark Schneiders, and interim Head of Health, Egbert Sondorp.

An update of current activities in both Sierra Leone and Guinea was shared among the team members, as well as key challenges and opportunities such as potential partnerships with international NGO's and laboratories. In the past several weeks, contracts with each of the Consortium members have been signed; discussions with the Ministries of Health in Guinea and Sierra Leone have taken place, and an M&E framework has been agreed on by the WP team leaders. Off all WPs members have travelled to Guinea or Sierra Leone to start implementation of the programme!

Planned for the next quarter

The next several months will be in the light of acquiring documentation on the social histories of Ebola in communities for the Ebola archive and museum (WP1); construction and enhancement of the laboratories as well as training of newly acquired laboratory staff (WP2); and performing a Situation Analysis in Mamou District regarding health facilities and health staff of the Guinean Health system in order to develop the contextualised RBF+ approach (WP3).

The Programme

The programme has three Work Packages (WPs) with the following overall objectives:

1. To enlarge the effectiveness of prevention, preparedness, and resilience to Ebola and other infectious diseases with an epidemic potential, through active community engagement and increased communication for cross-border regions in Sierra Leone and Guinea.
2. To strengthen the laboratory services including their quality assurance systems for improved preparedness and resilience of Ebola and other emerging infectious diseases.
3. To develop an approach for Performance Based Financing (PBF), contextualised to the health system of Guinea, more specifically to the preparedness of the Guinean health system to outbreaks of epidemics of infectious cause such as Ebola: "RBF+".

Consortium Partners and trilateral approach

The programme is funded through the Royal Netherlands Embassy (RNE) in Accra (Ghana) and is developed and implemented by a consortium with KIT, Wageningen University (Netherlands) and Noguchi Memorial Institute for Medical Research (Ghana). A wide range of implementing partners participate in the project, i.e. Njala University (Sierra Leone), Health Focus (Guinea), HDP (Rwanda), and many others. The trilateral approach is rooted in the provision of technical expertise by countries from the region (Rwanda and Ghana) to organisations in Sierra Leone and Guinea.

This project aims by the containment of infectious diseases with an epidemic potential, including Ebola, to use the One Health Concept (collaboration of the veterinarian, agricultural and the health sectors (One Health Concept)).