

# Global Health EDCTP3

## Joint Undertaking

### Summary Report of the 6th meeting of the Scientific Committee

10 October 2024

Online

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## Introduction

The purposes of the Sixth meeting of the Scientific Committee of the Global Health EDCTP3 Joint Undertaking were:

1. **To conclude the strategic and scientific** input from the Scientific Committee (SC) towards the proposed call topics (Annex 1A) of **the draft 2025 Work Programme**, considering feedback from the Global Health EDCTP3 Governing Board (GB) and Joint Undertaking Committee (JUC) of the EDCTP Association.
2. **To provide updates and seek advice** on the preparations for the **12th EDCTP Forum** to be held in Kigali, Rwanda in June 2025
3. **To seek advice on any other themes the Scientific Committee would like to address**, considering its mandate and tasks as defined in the Council Regulation establishing the Joint Undertakings under Horizon Europe.

The meeting was held on the 10 October 2024 online.

## Agenda

The agenda included the following sessions:

Session 1 - Welcome, Agenda Adoption, Fifth meeting report

Session 2 - Updates on WPs 2023, 2024

Session 3 - Discussion and feedback on the 2025 WP draft Call topics

Session 4 - Other Updates

## Summary - updates, discussion, outcomes, follow-up and agreed actions

### Session 1 – Welcome, Agenda and 5<sup>th</sup> meeting report adoption

The Chairperson of the Scientific Committee (SC) welcomed all SC Members, the Executive Director and the Programme Office (PRO) staff members.

The Executive Director gave a few opening remarks, including introduction of the new Head of Unit for the Scientific Operations team (HoU).

With no further comments from the members, the Chairperson confirmed adoption of the agenda.

## Session 2 – Updates on Work Programmes 2023, 2024

The Chairperson introduced the next agenda item and gave the floor to the Senior Scientific Officer (SSO) and the Scientific Project Officer (SPO). As part of the Work Programmes 2023 and 2024 update, the SPO presented various statistics, such as disease scope and Intervention type as well as budget of the signed grants, grants currently under the Grant Agreement Preparation (GAP) stage, and shared the progress of the ongoing 2024 WP Calls evaluations.

Questions from SC Members were related to specifics of projects and comments included the value of having funding metrics considering the earlier EDCTP programmes in addition to EDCTP3. The Executive Director (ED) commented that the team plans to work on a more robust and complete portfolio analysis to be shared with the SC in 2025.

The SSO presented an update on the Mpox Call, projects which have been evaluated in an expedited process and grant agreements signed as a priority to allow a fast response the Mpox public health emergency. Data on types of interventions, populations, and locations of the ongoing studies were shared.

The committee made a request for data on funding distribution per country (as a visual map), and clarification on regulatory capacity aspects in countries hosting the studies. The requested data will be provided and discussed during the next meeting.

## Session 3 – Discussion and feedback on the 2025 WP draft Call topics

The Chairperson introduced the agenda item and gave the floor to the HoU and SSO.

The HoU Introduced the WP2025. The SSO went through the summary of the general comments and questions that were made by the SC Members during the consultation on the draft WP2025 in August-September 2025.

Discussing Equity issues and the related language used in the topic texts, SC members advised to emphasize on the need to partner with countries from less privileged areas, or to request a certain number of fellows to be included from disadvantaged countries. The Executive Director pointed out that the issue of inclusivity (equity) is weaved in through all WP2025 calls. Members also commented that indicators measuring equity and diversity in the Programme should be analysed and presented at future SC meetings. Members working on this offered to share knowledge on the equity and diversity indicators they have been developing in the respective groups or institutions.

The SSO introduced and opened the WP 2025 discussion. This session went through each draft topic in the proposed Work Programme 2025. Each topic was presented, describing the latest version of the topic text, including the expected outcomes and scope as well as comments earlier submitted by SC Members, followed by discussions.

Overall, it was commented that respiratory infections (including RSV in children) and as STIs would be important topics to consider. The ED added that these areas may be considered for the next work programmes.

**HORIZON-JU-GH-EDCTP3-2025-01-01-two-stage: Strategic action for the development of vaccines for reducing the disease burden of Tuberculosis in sub-Saharan Africa**

This call focuses on TB vaccines, and it has been suggested to launch it as a "Strategic Action", allowing applicants to raise cofunding in addition to what they request as EU contribution. The topic background, expected outcomes and scope of the topic were outlined and discussed.

The following suggestions from SC Members were raised:

Encourage comparison with BCG where appropriate;

Encourage the assessment of overall health outcomes.

The ED indicated that the wording in the topic text will be adapted to capture these suggestions, without being too prescriptive.

**HORIZON-JU-GH-EDCTP3-2025-01-02-two-stage: Strategic action for research on existing Malaria therapeutics and clinical development of new antimalarial candidates**

This call focuses on existing Malaria therapeutics and clinical development of new antimalarial candidates, and it has suggested to launch it as a "Strategic Action", allowing applicants to raise cofunding in addition to what they request as EU contribution. The topic background, expected outcomes and scope of the topic were outlined and discussed.

Following a few questions by SC Members and clarification by the ED, the following suggestions were made:

Clarify wording to ensure phase 3 trials can be included;

Include promising transmission blocking agents as part of combination therapy when relevant.

The ED indicated that the wording in the topic text will be adapted accordingly.

The SC suggested to include low costs long-acting mAbs, but the ED confirmed exclusion of this for this topic, and this will be considered for future work programmes.

**HORIZON-JU-GH-EDCTP3-2025-01-03-two-stage: Accelerating development of prophylactic vaccines against Neglected Tropical Diseases (NTDs) in sub-Saharan Africa**

This call focuses on prophylactic vaccines against Neglected Tropical Diseases (NTDs). The topic background, expected outcomes and scope of the topic were outlined and discussed.

The following suggestion were made by SC Members:

Clarify if the wording in the "out of scope" section is applicable to implementation research for all or specific diseases only.

Clarify that efforts are to be made to ensure that funding is not fully clustered in the one disease area, to encourage portfolio diversification.

The ED clarified that "out of scope" refers to implementation research for all pathogens. The ED also indicated that the topic text can be adapted to clarify the intent to diversify.

**HORIZON-JU-GH-EDCTP3-2025-03-01-two-stage: Strategic action for preparedness & response: Strengthening Regional Networks of Excellence and Epidemic Preparedness Consortia**

This call focuses on Strengthening Regional Networks of Excellence and Epidemic Preparedness Consortia, and it has suggested to launch it as a "Strategic Action", allowing applicants to raise cofunding in addition to what they request as EU contribution. The topic background, expected outcomes and scope of the topic were outlined and discussed.

The following suggestions and/or comments were made by SC Members:

Clarify the recognition of the existing networks while setting up new institutions; there should be no exclusion of previous networks solely because they have already received funding through previous EDCTP programmes;

Inclusion of research for repurposing of antivirals and screening of new combinations, without conducting trials as this call is a CSA, not RIA;

The intention should be to secure cross- regional coverage as opposed to funding one single region;

Clarification should be made in the text to ensure that expected proposals will capture work on disease identification for new emerging pathogens but also cover epidemiology activities on both new and already known pathogens;

The inclusion of surveillance and diagnostic strategies should be considered;

The ED indicated that the topic text will be adapted accordingly if this was not yet done.

#### **HORIZON-JU-GH-EDCTP3-2025-02-01: Strategic action for Global Health EDCTP3 JU, Africa CDC, CEPI and BMGF Fellowships for Biostatisticians, Epidemiologists and modellers**

This call focuses on Fellowships for Biostatisticians, Epidemiologists and modellers, and it has suggested to launch it as a "Strategic Action", allowing applicants to raise cofunding in addition to what they request as EU contribution. The topic background, expected outcomes and scope of the topic were outlined and discussed.

SC members raised the following suggestions:

Clarify whether it would be possible to fund fellows that come from ineligible countries as long as they are assigned to institutions from an eligible country;

Include in the topic text that training offered must be relevant to improving health outcomes in SSA.

The ED welcomed the suggestions to clarify in the topic text if not yet done, and clarified that the EDCTP Association will play a role as a coordinator in future grants under this topic.

It was clarified that the partners in the draft topic title are engaged in still ongoing contributing partnership discussions.

#### **HORIZON-JU-GH-EDCTP3-2025-04-01-two-stage: Tackling Diarrhoeal Diseases in the of context Climate and Health**

This call focuses on Diarrhoeal Diseases, as opposed to the "Climate and Health" previously shared with the SC members. The topic background, expected outcomes and scope of the topic were outlined and discussed.

The following suggestions from SC Members were raised:

To extend the list of pathogens in the scope;

To including vaccines;

There were suggestions to keep a topic text more focused on research on climate change beyond diarrheal diseases only

To remove any mention of climate change if the focus of this call topic is now to be on the specified Diarrheal diseases.

The ED clarified that Climate and Health are important for the EU and EDCTP3 and need to be reflected in all calls as appropriate. The ED clarified that for the focus of this call will be on diarrheal diseases (specific pathogens listed in the topic text -rotavirus, Shigella, cholera, enterotoxigenic E. coli, Cryptosporidium, and norovirus). The ED clarified that vaccines can be included as part of

implementation research combining interventions with current standard of care. The ED added that the Programme Office team has ongoing discussions with partners for future work on climate and health.

#### **HORIZON-JU-GH-EDCTP3-2025-04-02-two-stage: Disruptive innovations advancing global health**

This call focuses on disruptive innovations advancing global health. The topic background, expected outcomes and scope of the topic were outlined and discussed.

The following suggestions were raised by SC Members:

The call text could challenge existing dogmas in treatment and prevention;

It needs to be established whether going beyond the proof of concept of the development technology readiness level 3 (TRL3) is to be the purpose of the call;

To encourage SMEs and spin-offs participation in applying consortia;

Chronic diseases potentially caused by infections should be included in the scope;

Including the idea of repurposing existing treatment and solutions;

A potential title change suggestion to for example: "Challenging current boundaries in medical thinking and practice" or adding "groundbreaking" in the title.

The ED Indicated that the topic text will be matured and adapted considering, where relevant, the SC suggestions, including the possible revision of the title

#### **2025 Emergency Call**

The SC Members agreed with including the Emergency call in the WP2025. The €1M budget was considered too low to address an emergency response, but the ED clarified that funding amount of €1M is a placeholder, which can be revisited and increased in case of a public health emergency, this to avoid underusing the allocated yearly budget in absence of an emergency call.

### **Session 4 – Other Updates**

The Communications Team Leader presented updates on the EDCTP Forum In Kigali in 2025, including the proposed Programme of the Forum, the Organising Committee, and the Programme Committee.

The following comments were made:

SC members can and will help with suggestions of speakers.

Gender balance needs to be taken into consideration for each session.



Considering the important concern of carbon footprint, there is need to have hybrid conferences for participants to join online.

The organisation should consider the inclusion of as many young researchers from African countries as possible.

The organisation should consider including a capacity building workshop on scientific writing for young researchers.

The representation of African speakers as keynote speakers should be considered separately to panellist to increase diversity.

An "idea-development workshop" was suggested where young researchers can bring their bold ideas to a panel, present them, and get feedback.

Advice to include a session with The Lancet, or other editors.

The Programme Office indicated that next steps include signing a contract with the venue, finalising the visual identity of the Forum before launch of the website and inviting speakers. Before end of 2024, the forum roadmap includes the launch the Forum website and publication of calls for abstracts, calls for scientific symposia and calls for prizes' nominations. Start of registrations is expected in January 2025, and abstracts review will take place in February-March 2025.

The SSO announced that the next confirmed in-person meeting of the SC will be held In Kigali on the 13th of June during the EDCTP Forum 2025. There is also a possibility of an online meeting in early 2025, or the launch of a written consultation to advise on the draft WP2026. This will be followed in separate communications.

The Chairperson thanked all participants and closed the meeting.

## Annex 1: Adopted agenda



Global Health EDCTP3 Joint Undertaking:

Agenda of the 6<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Scientific Committee

10 October 2024

### Purpose of the meeting

1. **To conclude the strategic and scientific** input from the Scientific Committee (SC) towards the proposed call topics (Annex 1A) of **the draft 2025 Work Programme**, considering feedback from the Global Health EDCTP3 Governing Board (GB) and Joint Undertaking Committee (JUC) of the EDCTP Association.
2. **To provide updates and seek advice** on the preparations for the **12th EDCTP Forum** to be held in Kigali, Rwanda in June 2025
3. **To seek advice** on **any other themes the Scientific Committee would like to address**, considering its mandate and tasks as defined in the Council Regulation establishing the Joint Undertakings under Horizon Europe<sup>1</sup>

### Expected Outcome

- Input into the draft call topics, contributing towards the final version of the 2025 Work Programme
- Input into the 2025 Forum and clarification on expected SC members involvement before and during the Forum

### Timing & location of the meeting

The meeting is scheduled to be held online (via the Webex link below) from 10.00 to 17.15 (CET) on Thursday 10 October 2024

[\[Link to Meeting\]](#)

Meeting ID: 2743 164 0665

Passcode: 524bN4UDgBf

<sup>1</sup> <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32021R2085&qid=1647607319587&from=en>

AGENDA			
Time (CET)	Item	Doc.	Chair or Speaker(s)
10.00-10.20	<b>SESSION1 - Welcome, Agenda Adoption, Fifth meeting report</b>		
	1.1. Opening remarks		M. Makanga
	1.2. Draft agenda & expected outcomes - for adoption		J. Gyapong, All
	1.3. Fifth Meeting report adoption	1	J. Gyapong, All
10.20-11.00	<b>SESSION 2 - Updates on WPs 2023, 2024</b>		
	2.1. WP2023, 2024 – Projects, Grant Agreements in Preparation, and ongoing Calls	2	JMV. Habarugira A. Conversano
	2.2. WP2024 - R&D response to MPox outbreak	3,2	L. De Cock JMV. Habarugira
	2.3. Questions and discussion		All
11.00-15.30	<b>SESSION 3 - Discussion and feedback on the 2025 WP draft Call topics</b>		
11.00-11.20	3.1. Summary of proposed 2025 WP call topics, with explanation of the newly introduced “strategic actions”	4,5	L. De Cock JMV. Habarugira
11.20-11.30	<b>Coffee Break</b>		
11.30-13.00	3.2. Discussion and feedback per call topic <b>(part 1)</b>  <i>Each topic to be briefly introduced by the Programme Office, before a consensus discussion which is <b>moderated by the SC Chair</b></i>		
	3.2.1. Tuberculosis vaccines	4,6	JMV. Habarugira; All
	3.2.2. Malaria therapeutics	4,6	JMV. Habarugira; All
	3.2.3. Vaccines against Neglected Tropical Diseases	4,6	JMV. Habarugira; All
	3.2.4. Networks of Excellence and Epidemic Preparedness	4,6	JMV. Habarugira; All
13.00-14.00	<b>Lunch Break</b>		
14.00-15.30	3.2. Discussion and feedback per call topic <b>(part 2)</b>  <i>Each topic to be briefly introduced by the Programme Office, before a consensus discussion which is <b>moderated by the SC Chair</b></i>		

3.2.5. Fellowships for Biostatisticians, Epidemiologists and Modellers	4,6	JMV. Habarugira; All
3.2.6. Tackling Climate Sensitive infectious diseases	4,6	JMV. Habarugira; All
3.2.7. Disruptive innovations	4,6	JMV. Habarugira; All
3.2.8. Emergency Call	4,6	JMV. Habarugira; All
<b>15.30– 15.45 Coffee Break</b>		
<b>15:45 – 17:15 SESSION 4 – Other Updates</b>		
4.1. 12 <sup>th</sup> EDCTP Forum: <b>updates from the Programme and Organising Committees</b>	7	L. Pandya
4.2. Planning for the next SC meeting		SC Chair
4.3. AOB		All
<b>Meeting Closure</b>		

**Documents (for reference or review) shared via TEAMS: [Sixth meeting SC – Oct 2024](#)**

- **Document 1** – 5<sup>th</sup> SC meeting report
- **Document 2** – Slide deck for the 6<sup>th</sup> SC Meeting
- **Document 3** – Summary Note on SC Comments & Follow up actions (based on the WP draft Sep. Version, V1)
- **Document 4** – The draft 2025 Work Programme (Annex 1A) V2 – Most Updated Version
- **Document 5** – The draft 2025 Work Programme (Annex 1A) V1 – September Version
- **Document 6** – Update Note on Mpox Research Response
- **Document 7** – Draft 12<sup>th</sup> Forum Programme

## Annex 2: Attendance list

### 1. List of Participants (*ALL online*)

#### 1.1. Scientific Committee (SC)

- 1) Prof. John Gyapong, **Chair**
- 2) Prof. Marleen Temmerman, **Vice-Chair**
- 3) Prof. Electra Gizeli
- 4) Prof. Halidou Tinto
- 5) Prof. Nicki Tiffin
- 6) Prof. Christine Stabell Benn
- 7) Prof. Keymanthri Moodley
- 8) Prof. Martin Meremikwu
- 9) Dr Claudia Filippone
- 10) Dr Juliet Nabyonga-Orem
- 11) Prof. Paulo Ferrinho
- 12) Dr Xavier Anglaret
- 13) Prof. Meta Roestenberg (*apology*)
- 14) Prof. Pablo Rojo

#### 1.2. Global Health EDCTP3 Programme Office

- 1) Dr Michael Makanga, Executive Director
- 2) Ms Liesbet De Cock, Head of Unit Science Operations
- 3) Dr Jean Marie Vianney Habarugira, Senior Scientific Officer
- 4) Dr Lydia Boudarene, Senior Scientific Officer
- 5) Ms Aleksandra Conversano, Scientific Project Officer
- 6) Ms Claudia Gutierrez-Arbizu, Events Officer & Assistant Calls Coordinator
- 7) Mr Vincent Declerfayt, Head of Unit Finance and Administration (*apology*)
- 8) Mr Laurent Schell, Legal Officer (*on stand-by for questions*)
- 9) Ms Lara Pandya, Communications & Strategic Partnerships Team Leader (*for Session 4*)

#### 1.3. Observers

- 1) Dr Neeraj Mistry, SG Chair Global Health EDCTP3 (*apology*)
- 2) Dr Vaseeharan SATHIYAMOORTHY, Word Health Organisation (*apology*)