Global genomic surveillance strategy for pathogens with pandemic and epidemic potential 2022–2032

Partners Coordination Group: Terms of Reference 15 July 2022

Purpose

The purpose of the Partners Coordination Group (PCG) for the Global genomic surveillance strategy for pathogens with pandemic and epidemic potential 2022-2032 (hereon, the ‘Strategy’) is: (1) to serve as the stakeholder voice for the Strategy in the development, alignment and implementation of short-term and long-term action plans in the line with its five objectives; and (2) to foster greater engagement among interested partners with the objective of utilizing their capacities and capabilities to ensure the Strategy can reach its 10-year target that all 194 World Health Organization (WHO) Member States have, or have access to, timely genomic sequencing for pathogens with pandemic and epidemic potential.

Scope

WHO is convening the PCG to facilitate the coherent implementation of the Strategy. The PCG will enable partners to exchange information on planned activities, lessons learnt, gaps and needs, reviews and other developments relating to genomic surveillance for pathogens with pandemic and epidemic potential. The PCG will focus on pathogen-agnostic elements within genomic surveillance. The PCG does not advise WHO or have any norm or standard-setting role.

Key functions of the PCG include:

1. Share information about the implementation of the Strategy, discuss progress made and challenges experienced with view to maximize coherence and efficiency.
2. Track progress, risks and gaps with a view to identifying areas for further action, intervention or course correction.
4. Interact, as needed, with different stakeholders on the Strategy.

The PCG may prepare joint updates or reports if this supports the above key functions. These will be managed by WHO as the convenor of the PCG.

Frequency of meeting

The PCG will meet every two months, with the possibility of holding additional ad hoc meetings.
Participation

Membership is inclusive and will be comprised of senior representatives of agencies that have at least two-year track record of engaging in one or more Strategy’s five objectives. This can include UN agencies, international capacity-building institutions, donors/prospective donors, nongovernmental organizations, philanthropic organizations, and academic institutions working or engaging in global genomic surveillance for pathogens with pandemic and epidemic potential. Partners must have a planned or existing portfolio of work (implementation, advocacy, research, resourcing) in genomic surveillance relevant for pathogens with pandemic or epidemic potential.

Institutions/entities interested should write to pathogengenomics@who.int including the following:

1. Statement of previous work or anticipated activities related to the Strategy (<150 words)
2. Designated focal point name, title and email contact

Convenor

WHO will be the convenor for the PCG and will work with partners to ensure the smooth operation of the group. WHO shall be responsible for gathering and distributing any required meeting materials to PCG members and any other meeting participants in advance of each meeting. Minutes of meetings will be documented and circulated for each call.

WHO reserves the right to accept or reject any partner’s expression of interest, to annul the open call process and reject expressions of interest at any time without incurring any liability to the affected partner or partners and without any obligation to inform the affected partner or partners of the grounds for WHO’s action. WHO may also decide, at any time, not to proceed with the PCG, change the approach or disband it. WHO shall not in any way be obliged to reveal, or discuss with any partner, how an expression of interest was assessed, or to provide any other information relating to the selection process for participation or to state the reasons for not choosing a partner.