TERMS OF REFERENCE
GLOBAL ONCHOCERCIASIS NETWORK For ELIMINATION (GONE)

Purpose: On 30 January 2023, the World Health Organization (WHO), Member States and partners, launched the Global Onchocerciasis Network for Elimination (GONE) to accelerate progress towards onchocerciasis elimination targets set in the global 2030 Neglected Tropical Diseases (NTDs) Road Map.

I. Mission
GONE’s mission is to support countries to reach the 2030 NTD Road Map onchocerciasis elimination targets. GONE aims to contribute working towards cross-cutting targets aligned with WHO’s Thirteenth General Programme of Work and the Programme Budget.

II. Status
GONE is a WHO network of the onchocerciasis community working towards the achievement of the 2030 Road Map targets for onchocerciasis elimination. As such, GONE is not a separate legal entity but derives its legal status from WHO. Thus, it shall be administered and housed in WHO. The operations of GONE shall in all respects be administered in accordance with the WHO Constitution and General Programme of Work, WHO’s Financial and Staff Regulations and Rules, WHO’s manual provisions, and applicable WHO rules, policies, procedures and practices.

III. Vision and Goal
GONE’s vision is to SEE onchocerciasis GONE!
The goal of GONE is to accelerate progress towards the achievement of the 2030 Road Map targets for onchocerciasis elimination. To achieve this goal, GONE will drive a global partnership platform supporting countries to reach the 2030 NTD Road Map onchocerciasis elimination targets.

IV. Core Principles of GONE: GONE is governed by the following principles:
a. To be inclusive and diverse in membership and structure, ensuring adequate representation from different stakeholder groups and geographical regions;
b. To be transparent in all processes, including the operational strategy and GONE activities;
c. To ensure all activities align with WHO’s norms and standards;
d. To facilitate coordination among interested parties to advance WHO’s priorities on NTD Road Map 2030.

V. Objectives
Objective 1: To provide an inclusive and open access forum to improve communication, coordination, partnership and community of practice for all onchocerciasis stakeholders to work closely to reach the 2030 Roadmap goals.

To achieve this, GONE will:
a. Facilitate a more rapid and sustainable knowledge-sharing and capacity-strengthening forum with countries at the centre.
b. Promote country and partner coordination to jointly tackle obstacles to elimination and develop/implement elimination strategies which enable countries to move from one programmatic step to the next one, with a particular focus on achieving 2030 Road Map targets for onchocerciasis elimination

c. Map onchocerciasis stakeholders and their roles, responsibilities and areas of expertise and contribution towards the achievement of the NTD Road Map goals for onchocerciasis elimination.

d. Undertake needs assessments by consulting countries on their gaps towards the achievement of the NTD Road Map targets and how to address them, facilitating the work of all partners.

e. Organize country- and topic-focused meetings (e.g. webinars) to provide updates on national onchocerciasis elimination programmes, share knowledge and challenges and advocate towards decision-makers and stakeholders to address critical actions needed.

f. Organize periodic annual meetings with the GONE network to review progress, identify gaps, share best practices and lessons learnt, and discuss strategies to minimise such gaps.

g. Promote and disseminate information and resources aligned with GONE’s mission.

h. Intensify cross-cutting, inter- and multidisciplinary approaches with other NTDs and sectors.

**Objective 2: To conduct action oriented and effective advocacy working towards the 2030 Road Map targets and milestones for onchocerciasis elimination.**

- Serve as an advocacy body for sustainable action against onchocerciasis at national, regional, cross-border and global levels, to support the last mile of elimination (including but not only sustainable financing and sustained political support).

- Raise awareness and visibility of onchocerciasis-affected people and communities with the aim to put them higher on the national, regional and global health agendas.

- Help keep stakeholders focused and motivated by identifying specific advocacy tasks and roles and providing measurable, transparent, and reliable support to endemic countries to meet 2030 Road Map targets for onchocerciasis elimination.

**To achieve this GONE will:**

a. Develop a global advocacy and awareness-raising strategy to mobilize sustainable political and financial support for onchocerciasis elimination.

b. Formalize and standardize advocacy activities and communication mechanisms to help ensure that priority concerns are addressed.

VI. **Governance and structure**

GONE comprises a Steering Group (SG), Working Groups and members and network participants. The governance and structure of GONE are designed to facilitate coordination of activities and to ensure that activities align with GONE’s overall mission and objectives. GONE is not a decision-making body, nor does it have any bearing over the work and activities of its participants that occur outside GONE.

**6.1 The Secretariat**

WHO serves as the Secretariat of GONE. The role of the Secretariat is to oversee the day-to-day management of GONE’s work, including coordination of discussions across stakeholders on priorities.
and gaps, preparation of draft work plans for consideration by the Steering Group and/or the Working Groups along with administration and budget management.

More specifically, key responsibilities of the Secretariat are as follows:

a. Leads GONE’s operations;
b. Serves as the interface between GONE and its participants;
c. Manages and updates the registration of GONE members and participants;
d. Coordinates the development, implementation and maintenance of GONE work plans in consultation with the Steering Group;
e. Oversees implementation of GONE’s work plans, in collaboration with the Chair, Vice-Chairs and the Steering Group;
f. Monitors and evaluates activities and processes of GONE, making amendments as necessary, in consultation with the Steering Group, to optimize overall GONE’s functioning and impact;
g. Coordinates correspondence with GONE participants, as required, to facilitate participation and collaboration of all participants;
h. Coordinates participants’ meetings of GONE in collaboration with the Steering Group (SG), including development of relevant documentation (e.g. agenda) and logistical support;
i. Develops a central repository for GONE to house all relevant documents and resources;
j. Develops and regularly updates GONE website (hosted by WHO).

Subject to the availability of sufficient human and financial resources for this purpose, Secretariat support and coordination for GONE will be provided by WHO and in accordance with WHO’s rules, regulations, policies and procedures. The Secretariat reserves the right not to implement any GONE recommendation or activity which it determines gives rise to undue financial, legal or reputational liability or is contrary to WHO policies, regulations and procedures.

6.2 The Chair and Vice-Chairs of GONE

a. As a WHO managed network, the GONE SG will at all times be chaired by WHO.
b. WHO will in consultation with other SG members and network participants also appoint two Vice-Chairs (at least one from an onchocerciasis-endemic country). The Vice-Chairs will be confirmed by WHO for a period of two years.
c. The Chair and Vice-Chairs will define annual priorities, support and oversee the timely implementation of annual priorities, and liaise with the relevant onchocerciasis stakeholders to ensure prompt communication and effective problem-solving.

6.3 The Steering Group (SG)

a. The SG consists of Chair, two Vice-chairs, GONE donors, a representation of key constituencies, including the Chair and Co-chair of the NGDO onchocerciasis group, the OTS chair and DTAG subgroup onchocerciasis chair and a number of technical representatives from endemic Member States. Members of the SG will be appointed by WHO.
b. The SG will operate on the basis of consensus after having consulted with the constituencies they represent. If no consensus on a given matter is possible, the decision in relation to that matter will be taken by WHO.
c. Key responsibilities of the SG are as follows:
• Provides strategic direction and guidance for how GONE will operate, mobilize collaboration to implement agreed activities and mobilize resources to accomplish GONE’s work plan, including GONE plenary meetings.

• Reviews annual work plan priorities, budget allocation and provides advice and recommendations to the GONE Secretariat.

• Meets virtually at least once a year and has ad-hoc meetings when necessary.

• Monitors and evaluates activities and processes of GONE proposing amendments as necessary to WHO, to optimize GONE’s functioning and impact.

6.4 Working Groups

a. The establishment of specific time-limited working groups (WGs) will be decided by the SG who shall approve the related terms of reference of such WGs.

b. The WGs will be composed of stakeholders from the different areas who will identify key issues and challenges, propose strategies, and make recommendations to address those in order to reach elimination targets.

c. Each working group will have meetings, attended by working group participants. The frequency of working group meetings will be determined by the Chair and Co-Chair of the respective working group.

d. Participants will be self-selected on a voluntary basis, based on their expertise relevant to the WGs themes identified by GONE. They will communicate their interest to the Secretariat who shall make a recommendation regarding their participation to the SG.

e. The WGs will provide an update on their work in GONE Members meetings. Selected WGs will focus on priorities assigned to them and evolve or be disbanded as appropriate over time.

f. Each working group will have an area of focus with corresponding work plan, that is approved by the Secretariat in consultation with the SG, which outlines its objectives, key outputs, priorities and methodology.

g. A Chair and Co-Chair will be appointed in each working group by the Secretariat. They are responsible for:
   ➢ Coordinating working group meetings and activities;
   ➢ Facilitating communication within the group, ensuring balanced participation of its group participants;
   ➢ Providing verbal and written reports of working group progress to the Secretariat and the SG

VII. Membership

The GONE network is open to all onchocerciasis stakeholders that demonstrate a commitment to work towards the 2030 Road Map targets for onchocerciasis elimination, agree to follow GONE’s core principles and build a community of practice by committing to engage in a range of network activities contributing to GONE’s objectives.

For the avoidance of doubt, organizations that are part of or that are affiliated with or that advance the interests of the tobacco or arms industries cannot be involved in any GONE activity.
Only organizations can become members of the GONE network. They will nominate 1-2 lead representatives who are the primary liaison between their organization and GONE.

GONE membership consist of representatives from:
- Member States of endemic and non-endemic countries;
- Intergovernmental organizations;
- Non-governmental organizations;
- Not for profit product development partnerships
- Academic institutions;
- Private sector represented through industry associations. Individual companies that are making demonstrated, sustained and meaningful contribution to the control of onchocerciasis may be invited by the Secretariat to participate in GONE WGs and the Members meeting as Observers;
- Philanthropic foundations

Each member organization of GONE is committed to:

a. Adhere to the Terms of Reference of GONE
b. Actively participate in and support GONE, its purpose, guiding principles, goals, objectives, and activities;

c. Take responsibility according to the division of labor, and make meaningful contributions, in connection with the work and activities of the various GONE working groups;

d. Share knowledge and information with other participants (such as resources, data, case studies, published reports and papers, etc.) so that all members have access to a repository of relevant and up-to-date advances.

e. Act in the best interest of public health in alignment with WHO policies; and
f. Ensure effective communication with Secretariat and with the SG related to activities relevant to the GONE’s mission and vision.

7.1 Membership registration process
Organizations can register as members of GONE by completing an expression of interest form. Expression of interest forms will be reviewed and assessed by the Secretariat in consultation with the SG. Following this, organizations will be notified about their membership registration.

VIII: Participants:

Individuals can join the network as non-member participants on an individual basis and join activities of GONE.

IX: Members Meeting

9.1 Meetings of GONE
As the Secretariat of GONE, WHO convenes the members meeting. GONE members’ meetings shall be open to all GONE members and participants. The periodicity of the meetings shall be decided by the Secretariat of GONE in consultation with the SG.
The aim of the GONE Members’ meeting will be to:

a. Review progress of national elimination programmes, discuss challenges and identify critical actions to be taken to achieve NTD Road Map 2030 targets and milestones for onchocerciasis elimination;

b. Discuss strategies to address major challenges or barriers to elimination;

c. Serve as a platform for knowledge-sharing amongst members;

d. Strengthen global and regional collaboration enabling a prompt, opportune and sustainable sharing of knowledge, lessons learnt and best practices among countries and partners.

e. Formalize and standardize communication mechanisms and advocacy activities to help ensure that priority concerns are addressed.

X. Communications

10.1 Visual Identity
To ensure that GONE is deliberately communicating with one voice to external parties on topics of substance principles, priorities, target product profiles, standards, plans and actions, funding, and all confidential information, etc.) any communication in the name of GONE will take place through the Secretariat.

GONE may develop a visual identifier such as a logo which will help identify the network to its audience. The right to use the logo, including on publications, may be granted to participants on a case-by-case basis with prior written approval by the Secretariat. Participants shall not use WHO’s name, acronym and emblem. This includes, inter alia, the display of the WHO logo and name on any premises, equipment, as well as on any communication and/or training materials, training certificates, social media tools or publications.

10.2 Publications
GONE will produce publications through WHO. Any publication by a participant, other than WHO, referring to GONE activities shall contain appropriate disclaimers as decided by WHO, including that the content does not reflect the views or stated policy of the participants.

The participants must ensure that the work of GONE is not misrepresented, and appropriate disclaimers are included where necessary. GONE activities shall not include the development of technical materials, normative documents or policy papers.

10.3 GONE’s website
GONE shall have a webpage that is housed within WHO’s domain. The webpage includes a list of member organizations, subject to their consent. GONE will not use or publish member data without consent.

XI. Finance
Members and participants will be responsible for their own expenses in relation to all GONE activities (including participation at meetings), unless agreed otherwise by the Secretariat. If members and participants receive third party funding to support participation in GONE’s meetings and activities, this must be disclosed to the Secretariat.

The Secretariat support and related day-to-day operations of GONE will be financed by voluntary contributions from the participants. The Secretariat may also raise funds from other sources to support the
work of GONE in accordance with WHO's policies including its financial regulations, rules, and practices. However, grant applications made by the participants for raising funds in the name of GONE require consultation with and endorsement by the Secretariat to ensure alignment with the goals and principles of the network. The Secretariat reserves the right to require that the name of GONE not be used in such grant applications. Contributions by participants including donations (in cash or in kind), will be acknowledged by the Secretariat in accordance with WHO’s applicable rules, policies and practices.

XII. Confidentiality
Depending on the agenda item being discussed, each participant of GONE may be required to abide by confidentiality obligation and sign a standard confidentiality undertaking using the form provided by WHO for this purpose.

XIII. Amendments
These Terms of Reference may be amended from time to time by WHO in consultation with the Steering Group.
### Mapping key mandates/objectives of WHO, ESPEN, Onchocerciasis Elimination NGDO Group, GONE

<table>
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<tr>
<th>WHO HQ</th>
<th>AFRO/ESPEN/EMRO/PAHO</th>
<th>Onchocerciasis Elimination NGDO Group</th>
<th>GONE</th>
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| • Provides leadership and creates partnerships to improve health  
• Manages information and promotes research  
• Sets norms and standards  
• Provides technical support  
• Issues policy guidance to national onchocerciasis programs and endemic countries  
• Recipient of the donated medicines | Technical and fundraising support to national onchocerciasis programs to control and eliminate onchocerciasis:  
• Works towards achieving access to treatment and full geographical coverage  
• Supports effective use of donated drugs through enhanced supply chain management by conducting country medicine inventory missions.  
• Helps countries develop annual national action plans, assists them in leveraging donated drugs for MDA.  
• Trains countries on how to conduct integrated transmission assessment surveys and provides operational support to implement impact assessments.  
• Developed ESPEN Portal and ESPEN collect to enable evidence-based decision making and use scarce resources in the most efficient way; trains countries how to use these digital tools | • Works closely as implementation partners to provide technical and financial support to country programs and national onchocerciasis elimination committees (NOECs).  
• Advocates for oncho and NTD elimination programs with ministries of health to mobilize domestic resources and political will for oncho elimination.  
• Influences policy based on demonstrated effectiveness and feasibility of new or adjusted approaches.  
• Contributes to scientific advancements in support of oncho elimination.  
• Helps identify issues in need of operational research and the resources needed to conduct it.  
• It also helps translate WHO policies and procedures into practice in the field. | **Objective 1:**  
To provide an inclusive and open access forum to improve communication, coordination, partnership and community of practice for all onchocerciasis stakeholders to work closely to reach the 2030 Roadmap goals.  

**Objective 2:**  
To conduct action oriented and effective advocacy working towards the 2030 Road Map targets and milestones for onchocerciasis elimination. |

#### DTAG-Subgroup on onchocerciasis
- Sets diagnostic priorities  
- Develops new or reviews existing TPPs  
- Provides guidance for scientists and product developers

#### Onchocerciasis Technical Advisory Subgroup (OTS)
- Reviews strategies and provides recommendations on common strategies for OEM, stop-MDA evaluation  
- Identifies key research and operational questions  
- Reviews and provides input to the development of milestones relevant to elimination of onchocerciasis  
- Develops common strategies for mapping and treatment co-endemic areas