
Technical meeting on the prevention, diagnosis and management of maternal anaemia
14-15 April 2025 | 14:30 – 17:00 CST | Virtual meeting**FOR PUBLIC NOTICE AND COMMENT**

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¹ Guidelines for declarations of interest (WHO experts). Geneva: World Health Organization.
(<https://www.who.int/about/ethics/declarations-of-interest>, accessed 8 October 2019)

Technical Experts

Biographies

Prof Bosede AFOLABI

Bosede Bukola AFOLABI is a Professor of Obstetrics and Gynaecology at the University of Lagos, Nigeria. She leads the Centre for Clinical Trials, Research and Implementation Science at the University and is lead investigator of several large clinical trials and implementation research projects with grants from TETFund, NIH, USA, NIHR, UK, and Gates Foundation, amongst others. Bosede is a maternal medicine expert, has a D.M. from the University of Nottingham, UK. and is recognised for her work in sickle-cell and anaemia in pregnancy. Bosede supervises clinical and academic postgraduates including 25 senior resident doctors and 7 PhD students and has authored over 120 publications. She is a fellow of the Nigerian Academy of Science, and a fellow of the Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists, West African College of Surgeons and the National Postgraduate Medical College of Nigeria. She is the President of the Association of Fetomaternal Medicine Specialists of Nigeria, chairs the Board of KAAF Specialist Hospital, University of Lagos and is the immediate past Editor of the Journal of the West African College of Surgeons.

Prof Narendra ARORA

Professor Narendra Kumar Arora (MD – Pediatrics, MSc – Clinical Epidemiology) has been the Executive Director of The INCLEN Trust International since 2005. Previously a faculty member in Paediatric Gastroenterology, Hepatology, & Nutrition at AIIMS (1983–2007), he became President of AIIMS Deoghar in 2018. His contributions to immunization, such as the Pulse Polio Program, vaccine hesitancy, and AEFI surveillance, are globally recognized. Prof. Arora chairs the Covid-19 Working Group of India's National Technical Advisory Group on Immunization (NTAGI), focusing on COVID-19 vaccines, drugs, and diagnostics. He served as Vice-Chair/Member of WHO's SAGE (2010–2016) and is a current member of the WHO GACVS, STAGE, IAVG, and TAG-CO-VAC. Prof. Arora has led major studies, including documenting India's COVID-19 responses and strengthening AEFI surveillance under GVDN. His impactful studies, such as those on the Pulse Polio Program, vaccination safety, and cold chain infrastructure, have influenced key policy changes like house-to-house immunization, underserved strategies, and introducing auto-disabled syringes. Prof. Arora's expertise continues to shape immunization strategies, safety measures, and public health advancements. He remains dedicated to improving vaccine policy and practices globally.

Dr Isabella ATIENO OCHIENG

Isabella Ochieng has worked with Jhpiego an NGO as the Regional Maternal Health advisor. She has worked extensively in predominantly humanitarian settings providing technical guidance in developing, implementing, managing, and evaluating sexual and reproductive health projects. Working in Kenya, Bangladesh, Sudan, and South Sudan. Isabella has vast experience in workforce capacity development and quality improvement programs through in-service mentorship, supportive supervision and technical guidance in comprehensive SRH programs including, emergency obstetric and newborn care using the Helping Mothers and Babies Survive using the Low-Dose-High-Frequency training approach. Isabella has been providing maternal newborn health Regional technical support to the Jhpiego programs in Zambia, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, and Zambia. This included supporting a successful pilot of a community-based prevention post-partum haemorrhage project with Jhpiego and the WHO EMOTIVE PPH bundle of care study. Isabella carries strong technical, management, and communication skills. Her career goal is to utilize and continue to develop this extensive programmatic and clinical experience to improve the lives of women and their families through supporting the successful implementation of results-orientated SRH projects. During Isabella's spare time, she likes to sing in her home church choir, watch TV soap operas, entertain visitors, and cook delicious meals.

Prof Amina BARKAT

Professor Amina Barkat is currently Head of the Neonatal Medicine and Resuscitation Department

at the Children's Hospital of Rabat, a national reference center in neonatology and nutrition. A graduate of Mohammed V University in Rabat, she is a pediatrician specialized in neonatology and neonatal resuscitation (Mediterranean Faculty of Marseille), and a University Professor at the Faculty of Medicine and Pharmacy in Rabat. She holds a PhD in Nutrition. She has held numerous academic and pedagogical leadership roles and contributed to the development of many national maternal and neonatal health programs. She is a member of several national committees on neonatal mortality audits, immunization, food fortification, and medical education. She regularly participates in national and international congresses and forums organized by WHO, UNICEF, UNFPA, FAO, and others. She has authored more than 160 indexed publications and delivered over 1000 presentations at conferences. She received the Best Clinical Researcher Award from Web of Science in 2019 and from Scopus in 2022, as well as the Maghreb Pediatric Award in 2008 and 2013.

Prof Megan BOHREN

Professor Meghan Bohren is Unit Head of the Gender and Women's Health Unit at the University of Melbourne School of Population and Global Health. She is the Co-Director of the WHO Collaborating Centre on Women's Health. She currently holds a National Health and Medical Research Council Emerging Leadership Fellowship and Dame Kate Campbell Fellowship. Professor Bohren's research sits at the intersection of clinical epidemiology and social sciences, using innovative approaches to understand complex healthcare and societal contexts to improve the quality of maternity care. She leads Australian and international research projects, collaborating with multi-disciplinary teams to better integrate the voices of women, families, and healthcare workers into the design, measurement, and implementation of public health and clinical interventions. Her work has been used to inform multiple WHO guidelines, including postpartum haemorrhage, intrapartum care for a positive pregnancy experience, antenatal corticosteroids and tocolytic therapies for preterm birth management. She has a particular interest in using innovative qualitative research methods to bring community and health worker voices to guideline development. Professor Bohren previously worked at WHO, Johns Hopkins University, and PSI. She has a PhD and MSPH from Johns Hopkins University and Bachelor of Arts from The College of William and Mary.

Prof Mario FESTIN

Dr Mario Philip R. Festin is a retired Professor XII at the University of the Philippines College of Medicine, where he contributed to the Departments of Obstetrics and Gynecology and Clinical Epidemiology. He served as the Founding Director of the Institute of Reproductive Health at the National Institutes of Health, University of the Philippines Manila. He also held prestigious roles as the former Vice Chancellor for Research at UP Manila and the Executive Director of the National Institutes of Health. Additionally, he was the Deputy Director for Health Operations at the Philippine General Hospital. In recognition of his exceptional contributions, Dr. Festin was honoured with the Gloria T. Aragon Most Illustrious Faculty Award by the UP College of Medicine in 2023. He was designated as University Scientist II from 2022 to 2024 and previously held the title of University Scientist I from 2006 to 2008 at the University of the Philippines Manila. He received the Distinguished Alumni Award in Education Innovation from the UP Alumni Association in 2024. Dr. Festin's extensive career also includes serving as a Medical Officer and Coordinator for the UNDP/UNFPA/UNICEF/WHO/World Bank Special Programme of Research, Development, and Research Training in Human Reproduction (HRP).

Prof Michael GEORGIEFF

Dr Michael K. Georgieff is the Martin Lenz Harrison Land Grant Professor of Pediatrics at the University of Minnesota. He is executive vice-chair of Pediatrics, and Founder and co-Director of the Masonic Institute for the Developing Brain at the University. He is an internationally recognized expert on the effects of nutrition on the developing brain, and specifically the effects of iron status on learning and memory processing. His career in this area has spanned 40 years and includes investigations of brain function in humans and pre-clinical models. He has conducted multiple studies on the effect of fetal and neonatal iron deficiency and neonatal anemia on developing brain regions and behavior. He has been continuously funded by the NIH since 1992 and has published over 300 peer-reviewed papers and has served as a consultant for UNICEF, the India Ministry of Health and NIH.

Prof Domenico GIRELLI

Domenico Girelli is a Full Professor of Internal Medicine and Head of the Department of Medicine at the University of Verona, Italy, as well as Director of the Internal and Emergency Medicine Clinical Unit at the University Hospital of Verona. He also serves as the Local Coordinator of the EuroBloodNet Center of Excellence on Rare Hematological Disorders. His clinical and research focus includes disorders of iron metabolism, anaemias, rare metabolic disorders in adults (such as lysosomal storage disorders, including Gaucher's and Fabry's diseases), and cardiovascular genomics. Professor Girelli has held prominent board memberships, including the Scientific Subcommittee on Iron and Heme of the American Society of Hematology (2016–2020), Treasurer at the International Society for the Study of Iron in Biology and Medicine (2015–2019), and Secretary for the Italian Society of Internal Medicine (2018–2021). He has also worked as a consultant for the World Health Organization (WHO) on Patient Blood Management and intravenous iron therapy in LMICs. His scientific achievements include pioneering research on Hereditary Hyperferritinemia Cataract Syndrome, Hemochromatosis due to HAMP mutations, and the development of hepcidin assays. He has co-authored over 330 papers in top-tier journals and contributed to renowned medical textbooks.

Dr Aditi IYER

Aditi Iyer is a public health professional with a deep interest in understanding and addressing unjust social inequalities in health. Her multi-disciplinary academic background includes a PhD in Public Health (University of Liverpool), a postgraduate degree in Social Work (Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Mumbai) and graduate training in Sociology (University of Bombay). Aditi was a Goran Sterky Fellow at the Division of International Health Care Research, Department of Public Health Sciences, Karolinska Institutet, Stockholm. She was also Fellow of the University, School of Population, Community and Behavioural Sciences, University of Liverpool. She is currently Senior Research Scientist, Adjunct Associate Professor and Deputy Director of the Ramalingaswami Centre on Equity and Social Determinants of Health, Public Health Foundation of India. Aditi's research focuses on intersectional gender inequality in health and well-being across the life course; maternal safety and rights; respectful maternity care; sexual and reproductive health and rights; health and health systems in urbanising societies; as well as innovative methodologies and strategies to advance health equity, and knowledge translation. Her outputs include papers in peer-reviewed journals, book chapters, knowledge translation-linked outputs, and teaching curricula, including for an online course on gender and intersectionality in health policy and systems.

Dr Crystal KARAKOCHUK

Dr. Karakochuk is an Associate Professor in Human Nutrition at The University of British Columbia in Vancouver, Canada. She is also an Investigator at the BC Children's Hospital Research and Women's Health Research Institutes, and a Canada Research Chair Tier 2 in Micronutrients and Human Health. Dr. Karakochuk's research program focuses on the evaluation of programs and policies for anaemia prevention and treatment, haemoglobin measurement for the determination of individual- and population-level anaemia, and the risk-benefit of micronutrient interventions globally. Her research brings together clinicians, researchers, and policy makers to advance and apply innovative knowledge in human nutrition.

Prof Elizabeta NEMETH

Elizabeta Nemeth is a Professor of Medicine at UCLA's David Geffen School of Medicine and Director of the UCLA Center for Iron Disorders. She earned a BS in Molecular Biology from the University of Belgrade and a PhD in Cell, Molecular, and Neurosciences from the University of Hawaii. Joining UCLA in 2002, her research focuses on the molecular basis of iron homeostasis, particularly the hepatic hormone hepcidin and its receptor ferroportin. Her work has elucidated hepcidin's regulation by iron, inflammation, and erythropoiesis, as well as its roles in hereditary hemochromatosis, β -thalassemia, anemia of inflammation, immunity, and pregnancy. She also helped discover the hepcidin-regulating hormone erythroferrone. Dr. Nemeth has co-founded three biotech companies targeting hepcidin diagnostics and therapeutics and is the current President of the International Bioiron Society. At UCLA, she mentors junior faculty, postdocs, and

graduate students through various programs. She has received prestigious awards, including the Grace Goldsmith Award (2007), Biolron Presidential Award (2019), and William Dameshek Prize (2021), recognizing her significant contributions to nutrition, systemic iron regulation, and hematology. Dr. Nemeth also serves on NIH panels and contributes as an editor and advisor in her field.

Prof Kamija PHIRI

Prof Kamija Phiri is a clinical epidemiologist at the Kamuzu University of Health Sciences, formerly known as the University of Malawi, College of Medicine. He holds a medical degree from the University of Malawi, a master's in epidemiology from the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, and a PhD in epidemiology from the Liverpool School of Tropical Medicine. Prof Phiri directs the Training & Research Unit of Excellence (TRUE), an independent research organization he founded in 2009. His research focuses on malaria and anemia control in children and pregnant women. He leads a multicenter research consortium across Malawi, Kenya, and Uganda, investigating post-discharge management of severe anemia in children. He has received several awards, including the 2012 Merle A. Sandee Health Leadership award in Africa. Prof Phiri also serves on the Malawi National Malaria Advisory Board, advising on malaria control.

Dr Farnaz SABET

Dr Farnaz Sabet is an academic family doctor with global health expertise. She is currently a Global Health Fellow at the Centre for Adolescent Health at the Murdoch Children's Research Institute in Melbourne, Australia. She was a previous Assistant Professor of medicine in Jordan and has undertaken public health and policy work across refugee, humanitarian, and indigenous health settings, including UNHCR, IRC, Prime Minister and Cabinet in Australia and the Cape York Institute. In addition to her research and policy work she continues to work clinically. She received her medical degree from Monash University, a Masters in Global Health Science from Oxford University and a PhD on Adolescent Maternal Care, with a focus on participatory women's groups from the University of Melbourne.

Prof Ali TAHER

Ali T. Taher, Professor of Medicine at the Division of Hematology & Oncology, is Director of the Naef K. Basile Cancer Institute (NKBCI) at the American University of Beirut Medical Center and Associate Vice President for Medical Advancement and Communications since December 2021. He is also a founding figure of the Fellowship and Residents Research Program and a consultant at the Thalassemia Department of Lebanon's Chronic Care Center. In 2018, he earned tenure as a full-time professor. Prof. Taher has garnered numerous awards, such as the Sultan Bin Khalifa International Thalassemia Award (2013), a Research Excellence Award from Lebanon's National Council for Scientific Research (2016), and the National Cedar Medal (2022). With over 509 publications in leading journals and an h-index of 76, he ranks among the world's most prolific hematology researchers. He has also made significant contributions to guidelines by the Thalassemia International Federation. An esteemed editor, reviewer, and speaker, he has actively advanced the understanding and treatment of thalassemia, including iron chelation therapy. His groundbreaking research, extensive collaborations, and dedication to mentorship have earned him global recognition and a legacy in hematology.

Prof Michael ZIMMERMANN

Michael Bruce Zimmermann is a Full Professor of Human Nutrition at the Medical Research Council Weatherall Institute of Molecular Medicine, University of Oxford. His research focuses on iron and iodine nutrition, using innovative approaches such as isotope techniques, compound formulation, biomarkers, and nanotechnology. A global expert in using stable iron isotopes, he has pioneered widely-used methods in this field. Prof. Zimmermann was previously Professor and Head of the Laboratory of Human Nutrition at ETH Zurich, Switzerland (2012–2023), and Professor of Micronutrients and International Health at Wageningen University, The Netherlands (2006–2012). He currently chairs the Iodine Global Network, an NGO supporting iodine nutrition worldwide. He earned a medical degree from Vanderbilt University School of Medicine, USA, and completed postgraduate training at the University of California San Francisco and Berkeley, obtaining a Master of Science in Nutritional Sciences. With over 370 peer-reviewed publications, an h-index of 110, and more than 44,000 citations, Prof. Zimmermann is a Clarivate Web of Science Highly

Cited Researcher. His many awards include the Mead Johnson Prize, International Endocrinology Award, Micronutrient Forum Superhero Award, and Princess Sirindhorn Award. He has advised WHO, UNICEF, USAID, and the Gates Foundation.