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**SPECIAL PROGRAMME FOR RESEARCH AND TRAINING IN
TROPICAL DISEASES: MEMBERSHIP OF THE
JOINT COORDINATING BOARD**

The Special Programme for Research and Training in Tropical Diseases (TDR) is an independent global, scientific collaboration programme, which helps coordinate, support and influence global efforts to combat communicable diseases that disproportionately affect the poor. Established in 1975, TDR is hosted at World Health Organization headquarters and sponsored by the United Nations Children's Fund, the United Nations Development Programme, the World Bank and WHO. TDR is governed by three bodies: (1) the Joint Coordinating Board (JCB), (2) the Standing Committee, and (3) the Scientific and Technical Advisory Committee.

The JCB consists of 28 members. Currently, the representative from the Government of the Republic of Korea serves as a member representing the WHO Western Pacific Region. This is in accordance with paragraph 2.2.2 of the Memorandum of Understanding on the Administrative and Technical Structures of TDR. The four-year term of the Government of the Republic of Korea will end on 31 December 2026.

The Regional Committee is hereby requested to select one Member State to send as a representative to the JCB for a four-year period commencing 1 January 2027.

1. CURRENT SITUATION

The Joint Coordinating Board (JCB) is the top governing body of the Special Programme for Research and Training in Tropical Diseases (TDR). Its principal role is to coordinate the interests and responsibilities of all parties cooperating in the Special Programme (Annex 1). The JCB meets annually to review TDR's activities, evaluate progress and plans, and determine TDR's budget.

The Memorandum of Understanding on the Administrative and Technical Structures of TDR provides for the establishment of a JCB to coordinate the interests and responsibilities of all parties cooperating in the Special Programme (Annex 1). The JCB consists of 28 members, and its composition is described in section 2.2 of the Memorandum of Understanding, which includes:

- Under 2.2.1 Twelve government representatives selected by the contributors (donors) to the Special Programme;
- Under 2.2.2 Six government representatives selected by WHO regional committees;
- Under 2.2.3 Six members designated by the JCB itself; and
- Under 2.2.4 Four agencies that comprise the Standing Committee: United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the World Bank and WHO.

Each of the six WHO regional committees is responsible for selecting one government representative to serve on the Board under paragraph 2.2.2.

In 2026, the status of Member States from the Western Pacific Region selected by the Regional Committee under paragraph 2.2.2 is as follows:

<u>Member</u>	<u>Year elected</u>	<u>Term of office</u>
Government of the Republic of Korea	2022	2023–2026

Membership of the JCB as of 1 January 2026 is in Annex 2. A diagram illustrating the composition of the JCB by constituency is provided in Annex 3.

The Regional Committee's attention is drawn to the following paragraphs of section 2.2 of the Memorandum of Understanding:

1. paragraph 2.2.3, which indicates that six members, in addition to the members selected by the regional committees and those appointed under paragraph 2.2.1, may be designated by the JCB itself from among the remaining Cooperating Parties (see section 1.2 of the Memorandum of Understanding);
2. section 2.2, which indicates that governments and other organizations that are Cooperating Parties in the Special Programme but have not been selected for membership of the Board may attend its meetings as observers (at their own expense), subject to prior approval by the JCB.

The regional member selected by the Regional Committee will represent both the country and the Western Pacific Region, recognizing the importance of voicing the needs of the country, the Region and the disease-endemic countries in the JCB's deliberations. Currently, the Government of the Republic of Korea serves as a member representing the Region under paragraph 2.2.2 of the Memorandum of Understanding and may be reappointed.

The selected representative should possess expertise in one or more of the communicable diseases dealt with by TDR, preferably with good knowledge of the research issues. Disease programme officers with research knowledge, as well as those with experience in resource mobilization, within government or other relevant sources, if the representative is from a nongovernmental organization, would be a distinct advantage. The guidelines on the role and qualifications of JCB representatives selected by the Regional Committee are in Annex 4.

2. ISSUE

The term of the Government of the Republic of Korea will end on 31 December 2026. It will be necessary for the Regional Committee at its seventy-seventh session to select one Member State to the JCB for a four-year term commencing 1 January 2027.

3. ACTION PROPOSED

The Regional Committee is requested to select one Member State under paragraph 2.2.2 of the Memorandum of Understanding for a four-year term, effective 1 January 2027.

ANNEX 1

**MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING ON THE ADMINISTRATIVE AND
TECHNICAL STRUCTURES OF THE SPECIAL PROGRAMME FOR RESEARCH AND
TRAINING IN TROPICAL DISEASES**

(1978; amended 1988, 2003, 2006, 2008 and 2013)

This Memorandum of Understanding describes the functions, composition and operation of the Joint Coordinating Board, the Standing Committee and the Scientific and Technical Advisory Committee of the Special Programme for Research and Training in Tropical Diseases (hereinafter called the Special Programme). The Special Programme is structured on the basis of co-sponsorship¹ by the United Nations Children's Fund (hereinafter called UNICEF), the United Nations Development Programme (hereinafter called UNDP), the World Bank (hereinafter called the Bank) and the World Health Organization (hereinafter called WHO), and operates within a broad framework of intergovernmental/interagency cooperation and participation.

1. DEFINITIONS

- 1.1 The Special Programme is a global programme of international technical cooperation initiated by WHO and co-sponsored by UNICEF, UNDP and the Bank, and shall be guided by strategic plans developed by the Secretariat and approved by the Joint Coordinating Board.
- 1.2 Cooperating Parties are:
 - 1.2.1 those governments contributing to Special Programme Resources; those governments providing technical and/or scientific support to the Special Programme; and those governments whose countries are directly affected by the diseases dealt with by the Special Programme;
 - 1.2.2 those intergovernmental and other non-profit making organizations contributing to Special Programme Resources or providing technical and/or scientific support to the Special Programme.
- 1.3 The Executing Agency is WHO.
- 1.4 Special Programme Resources are financial resources made available to the Special Programme by governments and organizations through a fund administered by WHO.

¹ Amended by the Co-sponsoring Agencies in agreement with the Joint Coordinating Board; with effect from the Twenty-seventh Session of the Board in 2004 [See the report of JCB(26), document TDR/JCB(26)/03.3].

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2. THE JOINT COORDINATING BOARD (JCB)

2.1 Functions

The JCB shall, for the purpose of coordinating the interests and responsibilities of the parties cooperating in the Special Programme, have the following functions:

- 2.1.1 Review and decide upon the planning and execution of the Special Programme. For this purpose it will keep itself informed of all aspects of the development of the Special Programme, and consider reports and recommendations submitted to it by the Standing Committee, the Executing Agency, and the Scientific and Technical Advisory Committee (STAC).
- 2.1.2 Approve the proposed plan of action and budget for the coming financial period, prepared by the Executing Agency and reviewed by the Standing Committee.
- 2.1.3 Review the proposals of the Standing Committee and approve arrangements for the financing of the Special Programme in that period.
- 2.1.4 Review proposed longer-term plans of action and their financial implications.
- 2.1.5 Review the annual financial statements submitted by the Executing Agency, as well as the audit report thereon, submitted by the External Auditor of the Executing Agency.
- 2.1.6 Review periodic reports which evaluate the progress of the Special Programme towards the achievement of its objectives.
- 2.1.7 Endorse the proposals of the Executing Agency and the Standing Committee for STAC membership.
- 2.1.8 Consider such other matters relating to the Special Programme as may be referred to it by any Cooperating Party.

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2.2 Composition²

The JCB shall consist of 28³ members from among the Cooperating Parties as follows:

- 2.2.1 Twelve⁴ representatives from the governments contributing to the Special Programme Resources, selected by the contributors to the Special Programme. Each such government representative shall serve as representative of his/her government and may also serve as representative of a constituency established by governments under this membership category. Each constituency will develop its own procedure to designate its representative to the Board. In the event a government intends to serve on the Board also as representative of a constituency, it shall indicate this in its application for membership, it being understood that each government participating in that constituency shall be entitled to rotate as the representative of that constituency at any session of the JCB.
- 2.2.2 Six⁵ government representatives selected by the WHO Regional Committees from among those countries directly affected by the diseases dealt with by the Special Programme, or from among those providing technical or scientific support to the Special Programme.
- 2.2.3 Six members⁶, designated by the JCB itself, from among the remaining Cooperating Parties.
- 2.2.4 The four⁷ co-sponsors of the Special Programme.

Members of the JCB shall serve for a period of four⁸ years and may be reappointed.

Other Cooperating Parties may, at their request, be represented as observers upon approval by the JCB.

2.3 Operation

- 2.3.1 The JCB shall meet in annual session, and in extraordinary session if required, and with the agreement of the majority of its members.

² Members are guided by the Terms of Reference for JCB members.

³ Last amended by the Co-sponsoring Agencies in agreement with the Joint Coordinating Board; with effect from the Thirty-sixth Session of the Board in 2013 [See the report of JCB(35), document TDR/JCB(35)/12.3].

⁴ Amended by the Co-sponsoring Agencies in agreement with the Joint Coordinating Board; with effect from the Thirty-first session of the Board in 2008 [See the report of JCB(30), document TDR/JCB(30)/07.3].

⁵ Amended by the Co-sponsoring Agencies in agreement with the Joint Coordinating Board; with effect from the Thirty-sixth session in 2013 [See the report of JCB(35), document TDR/JCB(35)/12.3].

⁶ Amended by the Co-sponsoring Agencies in agreement with the Joint Coordinating Board; with effect from the Twenty-ninth Session of the Board in 2006 [See the report of JCB(28), document TDR/JCB(28)/05.3].

⁷ Amended by the Co-sponsoring Agencies in agreement with the Joint Coordinating Board; with effect from the Twenty-seventh Session of the Board in 2004 [See the report of JCB(26), document TDR/JCB(26)/03.3].

⁸ Amended by the Co-sponsoring Agencies in agreement with the Joint Coordinating Board; with effect from the Thirty-first Session of the Board in 2008 [See the report of JCB(30), document TDR/JCB(30)/07.3].

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2.3.2 ⁹The JCB shall elect a Chair and a Vice-Chair from among the representatives of its members:

- the Chair shall be elected every three years;
- the Vice-Chair shall be elected every two years;
- both officers shall serve until their successors are elected.

If the Cooperating Party which the Chair represents is no longer a member of the JCB or if the Chair is no longer a representative of that JCB member, this chairpersonship shall come to an end prior to the normal date of expiry. In the case of a vacancy in the chairpersonship, the Vice-Chair shall act as Chair until the new Chair is elected at the next session of the Board.

The Chair and, in the latter's absence, the Vice-Chair, shall preside over sessions of the JCB. Between sessions, they shall have such additional duties as may be assigned to them by the JCB.

2.3.3 The Executing Agency shall provide the Secretariat and arrange for supporting services and facilities as may be required by the JCB.

2.3.4 Subject to such other special arrangements as may be decided upon by the JCB, members of the JCB shall make their own arrangements to cover the expenses incurred in attending sessions of the JCB. Observers shall attend sessions of the JCB at their own expense. Other expenses of the JCB shall be borne by the Special Programme Resources.

3. THE STANDING COMMITTEE

3.1 Composition and functions

The Standing Committee shall be comprised of the co-sponsors, namely UNICEF, UNDP, the Bank and WHO, and the Chair and the Vice-Chair of the JCB, the Chair of STAC, one representative from the JCB resource contributors group (a JCB member under paragraph 2.2.1 above), and one representative from a disease endemic country (which may be a JCB member under paragraph 2.2.2 or paragraph 2.2.3 above). The representative of the resource contributors group and the representative from a disease endemic country will be nominated by the JCB and will serve as members of the Standing Committee for a period of two years, provided that the country which they represent remains a member of the JCB.

⁹ Last amended by the Co-sponsoring Agencies in agreement with the Joint Coordinating Board; with effect from the Thirty-sixth session in 2013 [See the report of JCB(35), document TDR/JCB(35)/12.3].

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The Standing Committee shall be guided by Standard Operating Procedures (as approved by the JCB) and have the following functions:

- 3.1.1 Review the JCB for the financing of the Special Programme for the coming financial period.
- 3.1.2 Make proposals to the JCB for the financing of the Special Programme for the coming financial period.
- 3.1.3 Approve re-allocation of resources between Programme areas and Scientific Working Groups of the Special Programme during a financial period, upon the recommendation of STAC and the Executing Agency, and report such re-allocations to the JCB.
- 3.1.4 Examine the reports submitted to the Executing Agency by the Scientific and Technical Advisory Committee (STAC) and the Executing Agency's comments; make the necessary observations thereon, and transmit these, with comments as appropriate, to the JCB.
- 3.1.5 Review particular aspects of the Special Programme, including those which may be referred to it by the JCB, and present findings and recommendations in the form of reports to the JCB.
- 3.1.6 Inform the JCB, as required, regarding Special Programme matters of interest to the JCB.

3.2 Operation

- 3.2.1 The Standing Committee shall meet regularly, normally twice a year as provided in the Standard Operating Procedures.
- 3.2.2 The Executing Agency shall arrange for supporting services and facilities as may be required by the Standing Committee.
- 3.2.3 Members of the Standing Committee shall make their own arrangements to cover the expenses incurred in attending meetings of the Standing Committee, except as may otherwise be provided in the Standard Operating Procedures.

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4. THE SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE (STAC)

4.1 Functions

The STAC shall have the following functions:

- 4.1.1 Review, from a scientific and technical standpoint, the content, scope and dimensions of the Special Programme.
- 4.1.2 Recommend priorities within the Special Programme, including the establishment and disestablishment of scientific working groups, and all scientific and technical activities related to the Programme.
- 4.1.3 Provide the JCB and the Executing Agency with a continuous independent evaluation of the scientific and technical aspects of all activities of the Special Programme.

For these purposes the STAC may propose and present for consideration such technical documents and recommendations as it may deem appropriate.

4.2 Composition

- 4.2.1 The STAC shall be comprised of 15 scientists¹⁰ and other technical personnel who will serve in their personal capacities to represent the broad range of biomedical and other disciplines required for Special Programme activities. The Chair may – if and when deemed necessary and within the budget allocated to STAC – invite additional experts to participate in the meetings of the STAC on an ad hoc basis¹¹. Members of STAC, including the Chair, will be selected on the basis of scientific or technical competence by the Executing Agency, in consultation with the Standing Committee and with the endorsement of the JCB.
- 4.2.2 Members of the STAC, including the Chair, shall be appointed to serve for a period of two years, and may be eligible for reappointment for one or more additional terms of two years each. Whenever possible, to maintain continuity of membership, the expiration of the initial terms of office of members of STAC will be staggered.

¹⁰ Amended by the Co-sponsoring Agencies in agreement with the Joint Coordinating Board; with full effect from the Thirty-seventh session in 2014 [See the report of JCB(35), document TDR/JCB(35)/12.3].

¹¹ Amended by the Co-sponsoring Agencies in agreement with the Joint Coordinating Board; with effect from the Thirty-sixth session in 2013 [See the report of JCB(35), document TDR/JCB(35)/12.3].

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4.3 Operation

- 4.3.1 The STAC shall meet at least once each year.
- 4.3.2 The Executing Agency shall provide the Secretariat to STAC including sustained scientific, technical and administrative support.
- 4.3.3 Costs of the STAC shall be borne by the Special Programme Resources.
- 4.3.4 The STAC shall prepare an annual report on the basis of a full review of all technical and scientific aspects of the Special Programme. This report, containing its findings and recommendations, shall be submitted to the Executing Agency and to the Standing Committee. The Executing Agency shall submit its comments on the report to the Standing Committee. The Standing Committee shall then transmit the report, including the comments of the Executing Agency, together with its own observations and recommendations, to the JCB, not less than forty-five days before the JCB's annual session. The Chair of the STAC, or in his/her absence a member of the STAC deputized to act for him/her, shall attend all sessions of the JCB.

5. THE EXECUTING AGENCY

The Director-General of WHO, after such consultations as he/she may deem appropriate, shall appoint the Special Programme Coordinator and the Special Programme Director and appoint or assign all other personnel to the Special Programme as specified in the plans of work. Drawing as required upon the administrative resources of WHO and in cooperation with the co-sponsors of the Special Programme, the Coordinator will be responsible for the overall management of the Special Programme. Under the authority of the Special Programme Coordinator and drawing to the full upon the scientific and technical resources of WHO, the Director of the Special Programme shall be responsible for the overall scientific and technical development and operation of the Special Programme, including the plan of action and budget.

ANNEX 2

MEMBERSHIP OF THE JOINT COORDINATING BOARD (JCB)
(As of 1 January 2026)

1. Members selected according to paragraph 2.2.1 of the Memorandum of Understanding (government representatives selected by the contributors to the Special Programme resources)

Belgium	to 31 December 2026
China	to 31 December 2026
Germany and Luxembourg Constituency	to 31 December 2029
India and Thailand Constituency	to 31 December 2029
Japan	to 31 December 2026
Mexico	to 31 December 2029
Nigeria	to 31 December 2026
Panama and Spain Constituency	to 31 December 2029
Sweden	to 31 December 2026
Switzerland	to 31 December 2029
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	to 31 December 2026

The membership of the Governments of Belgium, China, Japan, Nigeria, and Sweden, under paragraph 2.2.1 is due to expire on 31 December 2026.

The Governments of Mexico, Switzerland and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, the constituency of the Governments of Germany and Luxembourg, the constituency of the Governments of India and Thailand, the constituency of the Governments of Panama and Spain, were reselected under paragraph 2.2.1 by the resource contributors during the forty-eighth session of the Joint Coordinating Board in 2025, for four years from 1 January 2026. One seat remains vacant.

Annex 2

2. Members selected according to paragraph 2.2.2 of the Memorandum of Understanding (government representatives selected by the WHO Regional Committees)*

African Region

Equatorial Guinea to 31 December 2026

Americas Region

Guatemala to 31 December 2026

Eastern Mediterranean Region

Morocco to 31 December 2026

European Region

Kyrgyzstan to 31 December 2026

South-East Asia Region

Bangladesh to 31 December 2026

Western Pacific Region

Republic of Korea to 31 December 2026

3. Members selected according to paragraph 2.2.3 of the Memorandum of Understanding (members designated by the JCB itself from among the remaining Cooperating Parties)

Burkina Faso to 31 December 2029

Cuba to 31 December 2027

Drugs for Neglected Diseases *initiative* (DNDi) to 31 December 2029

Fiocruz (Fundação Oswaldo Cruz) to 31 December 2029

Sri Lanka to 31 December 2027

Zambia to 31 December 2029

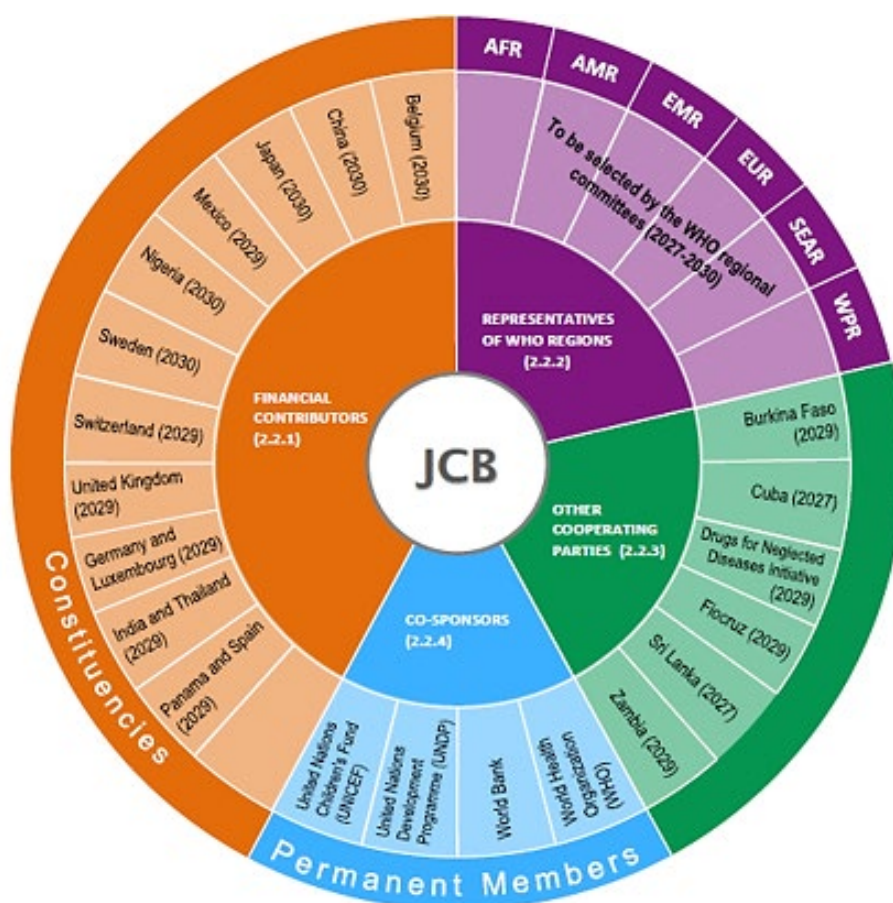
The Governments of Burkina Faso and Zambia, the Drugs for Neglected Diseases *initiative* and Fiocruz, whose membership under paragraph 2.2.3 was due to expire on 31 December 2025, were re-selected under paragraph 2.2.3 for membership from 1 January 2026 until 31 December 2029.

No vacancies will occur on 1 January 2026.

* Current memberships under this paragraph will expire on 31 December 2026

ANNEX 3

Membership of the TDR Joint Coordinating Board (as of 1 January 2027)



ANNEX 4

**GUIDELINES FOR JOINT COORDINATING BOARD (JCB) REPRESENTATIVES
SELECTED BY THE WHO REGIONAL COMMITTEES
(February 2022)**

Background issues

1. This document is intended to provide guidelines for those selected by the Regional Committees for JCB membership.
2. Regional representatives are encouraged to proactively participate in the discussions at the JCB. Disease endemic country and other regional representatives can contribute to TDR and in order to do this they should play an active role during JCB sessions.
3. To facilitate participation by the regional representatives at JCB, they need to be briefed about TDR before arriving for their first JCB session. A regional representative should be well versed not only of his/her country's relationship with TDR but also know about TDR activities in the region. Good briefing should enable the representatives to participate in and contribute to the discussions at the JCB and benefit the cause of TDR.
4. The TDR Secretariat and the regional offices will assist with this briefing.

Guidelines on the role of representatives

- Represent both the country and the region at the JCB, recognizing the importance of voicing the needs of the country, the region and the disease endemic countries in the Board's deliberations.
- Familiarization with the work of TDR and the regional issues by:
 - reading background information provided by the Programme and/or the regional office - the TDR website is <https://tdr.who.int/>
 - making contact with (or visiting) current and/or past representatives who have attended JCB sessions
 - making contact with (or visiting) key national or neighbouring country scientists who are familiar with the work of TDR (details to be provided by TDR)
 - making contact with (or visiting) the Regional Office
- Secure national briefing before the JCB session and provide feedback to the government after the JCB session.

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- Secure briefing from the Regional Office before the JCB session and provide feedback to the Regional Office after the JCB session, with possible attendance at the Regional Committee meeting if possible.
- Participate in the following meetings just prior to or during the JCB:
 - the JCB briefing meeting
 - the meeting of regional representatives, aimed primarily at disease endemic countries
- Participate in the virtual network of regional representatives.
- Keep JCB dates free to ensure attendance for the whole term of office if nominated by the Government for the full period – if not nominated for the full period or if changes occur, brief the successor. Ensure availability of suitable alternates in case of absence and brief them thoroughly.
- At the end of the term of office, be prepared to provide briefing to the next regional representative.
- Assist, as required, in raising resources for research for health, especially for the neglected diseases, at the national, regional and global level.

It is recommended that all JCB representatives have the following qualifications:

- Expertise in the field of infectious diseases of poverty, preferably from the research side or with good knowledge of the research issues. Disease programme officers with research knowledge, as well as those with experience in resource mobilization, within government or other relevant sources if the representative is from a nongovernmental organization, would be a distinct advantage.
- Experience preferably as a research coordinator in or linked to the Ministry of Health or the Ministry of Science and Technology, with experience in the overall coordination of national health research activities and collaboration with the Regional Office and TDR.
- Fluency in English or French, the working languages of WHO as the Executing Agency for TDR.
- Familiarity with the workings of WHO or other UN specialized agencies and past experience in their governing body and/or international scientific meetings.
- Knowledge of the work of TDR or willingness to rapidly acquire such knowledge.
- Cooperating Parties participating as observers should preferably also meet these qualifications.