

## **Surveillance Practice and Data Quality Committee**

### **Roll Back Malaria Surveillance Monitoring and Evaluation Reference Group**

## **SCOPE AND PURPOSE**

### **I. Background and Rationale**

Despite the increased focus over the last decade on surveillance strengthening activities and the proliferation of surveillance-related tools, malaria endemic countries continue to experience challenges in generating timely and accurate data, and in effectively using surveillance data for decision-making. One of the ways to overcome these challenges is to use a global, dynamic knowledge management and document approach to improve the visibility of surveillance and data quality improvement initiatives, and to streamline global coordination on surveillance-related efforts.

The purpose of Roll Back Malaria partnerships' Surveillance, Monitoring and Evaluation Reference Group (RBM SMERG) is to facilitate coordination and alignment of partners on strategies and "best practices" in surveillance, monitoring, and evaluation (SM&E) of malaria control programmes. Hence, it is an optimal platform to address the malaria surveillance and routine data quality challenges outlined above.

Based on the SMERG Terms of Reference, Committees may be established to function as a Task Force, but work on a longer-term thematic topic. This document outlines the term of reference of the new committee called surveillance practice and data quality (SP&DQ) Committee, dedicated to document and coordinate malaria surveillance and data quality strengthening efforts under the SMERG. This committee was set up following recommendations from the 31st SMERG meeting [23-25 September 2020].

### **II. General objective**

The purpose of this SMERG SP&DQ Committee is to improve the visibility of surveillance and data quality improvement initiatives and to streamline global coordination of surveillance-related efforts.

### **III. Specific objectives**

- Disseminate through SMERG Secretariat and RBM, information on implementing partners' current use of surveillance operational tools, and improve implementation and partner coordination relating to their use and uptake
- Dynamically monitor initiatives and the implementation of associated tools and practices and provide updates to the SMERG whenever necessary.
- Document pros and cons of monitoring and data quality tools and activities, as well as lessons learned from their implementation through RBM SMERG Secretariat.
- Identify, the operational surveillance priorities of the National Malaria Control Programmes (NMCPs) through the SMERG Secretariat to enable further support the uptake and adaptation of the tools.

## IV. Membership

The SMERG SP&DQ Committee is a willing assembly of SMERG partners; as such, membership is open to all interested parties. Its members may actively approach and encourage individuals or organisations to join the Committee to diversify the group or introduce new strengths and skills. The SP&DQ Committee membership strives for a balance of scientific and programmatic knowledge and experience and for geographic representation. If necessary, the meetings can be bilingual to ensure that both Anglophone and Francophone colleagues can participate. SMERG Chairs may invite knowledgeable professionals who are not otherwise engaged in SMERG activities to join the Committee.

Membership to the Committee can be requested through the SMERG secretariat, of which the Committee is a sub-group. Membership is a voluntary role, and there is no remuneration for participating.

Representatives from different agencies will share information known to them on the implementation of surveillance and data quality related efforts, the use and uptake of related tools, and challenges related to their implementation. It is anticipated that active regional engagement from NMCPs will be sought as well as participation from MERG members.

### Expectations of all members:

- Institutional investment or personal involvement in malaria surveillance and/or routine data quality implementation
- Expertise and experience in malaria surveillance and/or routine data quality

## V. Structure

The Committee will be co-led by two individuals called co-leads and will have an agreed mandate and specific annual plans. The SMERG co-chairs must approve the establishment of the SP&DQ Committee, with the support of the SMERG Secretariat. Following this approval, the committees will be named on the SMERG website with their contact information.

**Committee co-leads:** Up to two Co-chairs will be elected or selected from the SP&DQ Committee membership.

Roles and responsibilities for co-chairs include:

- Strategic and technical direction of the SP&DQ Committee
- Preparation and chairing of SP&DQ Committee meetings
- Communication with SMERG Secretariat
- Review of meeting minutes, quarterly update and annual reports

**Supporting functions:** The coordination and preparation of the SP&DQ Committee activities will be supported by Malaria Consortium through a 3-year BMGF investment together with the SMERG secretariat.

## VI. Operating procedures

**Convocation of meetings:** SP&DQ Committee co-leads will aim for monthly virtual meetings, ideally the week before the SMERG monthly coordinating calls so the Committee could provide an update in that forum. Committee meetings will include invitations to the SMERG Co-chairs and Secretariat.

**Meeting Minutes:** The Committee supporting function will draft minutes on the proceedings of meetings. The SMERG Co-chairs, and other interested members, will review these minutes within one month of a virtual meeting. Meeting minutes will be submitted to the SMERG Secretariat.

### Election of Co-leads:

- The election procedure shall be transparent and open to all individual members, defined as those who have attended at least 2 SMERG meetings in the last 3 years (endemic country participants, generally defined as representatives from NMCPs and country-led research institutions, must only have attended 1 meeting in the last 3 years in order to vote). Notifications about election of co-leads will be sent at least one month prior to the election, soliciting nominations.
- Each member has the right to nominate one person or self-nominate. Nominees may be anyone working on the malaria surveillance or routine data quality area.
- Prior to the election, the SMERG Secretariat shall obtain a confirmation from the nominees that they are interested and willing to run for election.
- Prior to the Co-leads' endorsement by the membership, they must gain assurance from their employer regarding the travel and workload required by the role.
- The election should be carried out through a secret ballot or through the use of electronic vote. A simple majority decides.

## VII. Dissolution of the Committee

The Terms of Reference (ToR) will be reviewed by the SMERG Co-chairs, Committee Co-leads and SMERG Secretariat on a biannual basis. If there is a low rate of participation among members, if the mandate of the Committee is no longer relevant, or if the SMERG no longer feels that the mandate of the Committee is relevant to it, the SMERG can decide to dissolve the Committee.