

RBM Vector Control Working Group

A brief update to VCWG-16 annual virtual meeting on March/April 2021

About the RBM Vector Control Working Group

The Vector Control Working Group comprises a diverse array of stakeholders interested in advancing the impact of vector control towards the elimination of malaria. The VCWG is a platform for sharing research outcomes around both existing and new tools; for dialogue around operational priorities in vector control and for promotion of best practices, which support the needs of endemic countries. It achieves this through the combined inputs of a diverse array of partners from national disease control programs, funding organisations, implementing agencies, research and academia, private-sector industry and others. This diversity allows for rich dialogue and mutual learning and for the development of robust responses adapted to the challenges of vector control. Through an emphasis on collaboration with regional networks, the VCWG also ensures that the specific needs of endemic regions are taken into account.

After some months of consultation with the work stream co-leads, and taking into account both the objectives of VCWG to better support endemic countries and the diverse expertise of the VCWG community, the Working Group will now be based around three primary work streams, within which core themes will be addressed, as shown below.

Enhancing Impact of Core Interventions: co-led by Hannah Koenker and Allan Were with core themes covering LLINs and IRS.

Expanding the Vector Control Toolbox: co-led by Allison Tatarsky and Sheila Barasa with core themes covering innovations in vector control and surveillance and taking into account residual malaria transmission and larval source management.

Implementing the Global Vector Control Response: co-led by Mark Hoppé and Chadwick Sikaala with core themes covering the integration of tools and approaches, entomology capacity building and insecticide resistance management.

Each of the three work streams will be encouraged to structure their work plans around three Focus Outputs:

Identify tool gaps or capacity needs & steer research priorities

Policy clarification & evaluation pathways

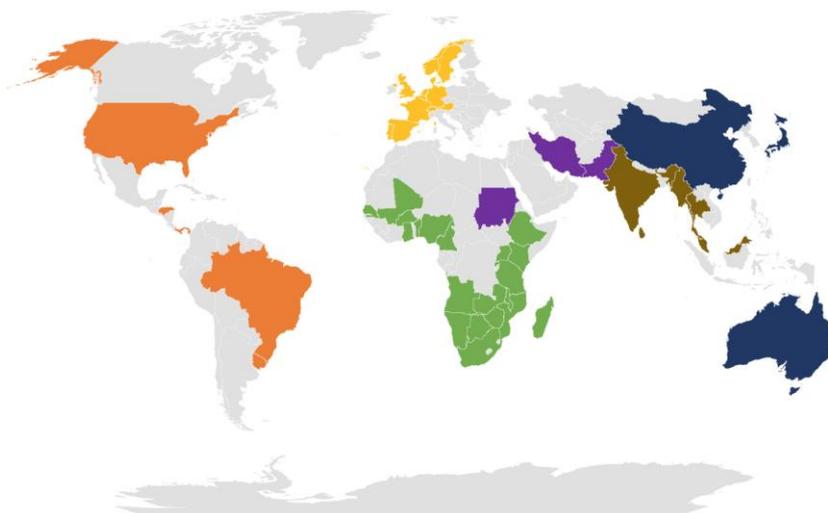
Implementation / Operational scale-up support / Training and capacity building initiatives

The structure is completed with a specific Focus Group on Vector Control for Humanitarian Emergencies, which is unchanged in terms of former leadership and operation but each of the new work streams are encouraged to ensure that the needs for this focus group are taken into account in their work plans.

As a new approach within the work streams, we now encourage the engagement of defined Task Forces to support specific elements of the work plans. The support of these Task Force Members would be time-limited and specific to areas of expertise relevant or needed to address work plans. As such, it opens up the opportunity for broader contribution from VCWG members who are willing to volunteer their time to the outputs of the Working Group. Task Force members can be proposed/identified by the work stream co-leads on an as-needs basis as required by the topic. If a VCWG member wishes to also volunteer her/his time (i.e. increase her/his contribution to VCWG), then that will be welcomed and looked at by the workstream leads. Task Force members will be recognized within the work stream work plan documents. When the work plan item is completed then the 'tenure' of the Task Force member ends accordingly. The Task Force members are not elected, but selected purely on their ability (and willingness), to make a valuable contribution to advance specific topics. Consistent with the approach at both the co-chair and workstream co-lead level, the intention is that representatives from malaria endemic countries are well represented across those topics—and that diversity and gender balance are well addressed.

The 16th Annual Meeting of the Vector Control Working Group

This year, the RBM VCWG-16 meeting was virtual, due to the current COVID-19-pandemic. We counted 411 registrants. The participants are from 54 different countries, representing all WHO regions (AFRO, AMRO, EURO, EMRO, WPRO, SEARO). Of the 54 countries represented, 36 countries are malaria affected and 18 are officially malaria free.



Graph 1. Countries and WHO regions represented at VCWG Annual Meeting 2021.

AFRO: Angola, Benin, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Côte d'Ivoire, Ethiopia, Eswatini, Ghana, Kenya, Madagascar, Malawi, Mali, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, Nigeria, Rwanda, Senegal, South Africa, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia, Zimbabwe

AMRO: Brazil, Honduras, Panama, Uruguay, USA

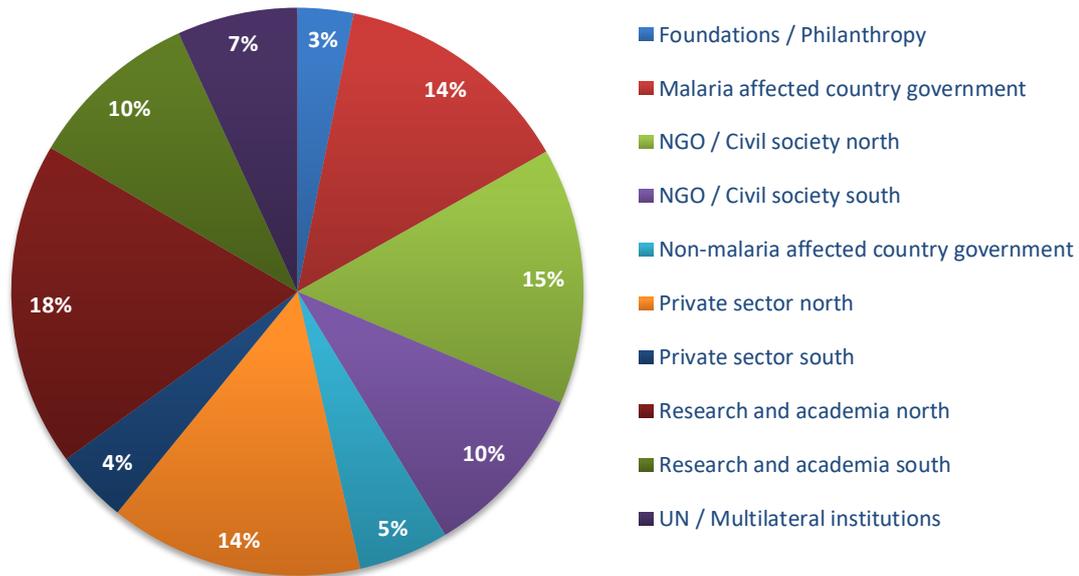
EURO: Austria, Belgium, Denmark, France, Germany, Netherlands, Norway, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, United Kingdom

EMRO: Iran, Pakistan, Sudan

WPRO: Australia, China, Japan, Vanuatu

SEARO: India, Malaysia, Myanmar, Sri Lanka, Thailand

Constituencies



Graph 2. Constituencies represented at the VCWG-16 annual virtual meeting.

38% of the participants are affiliated with organizations based on malaria affected countries. From those 14% are linked with government, 10% with NGO/ civil society, 10% with research and academia and 4% with private sector.

62% of the participants are affiliated with organizations based on malaria free countries. From those 18% are linked with research and academia, 15% with NGO/ civil society, 14% with private sector, 7% with UN/ multilateral institutions, 5% with government, 3% with foundations. For a full overview please consult graph 2. In total our participants represented 162 different organizations and affiliations.

Gender balance

In regards to the gender balance, 38% of the participants are female and 62% are male.

Speakers

55 speakers and moderators took part in the 5 sessions.

VCWG network

Vector control specialists from around the world receive the newsletter (twice per year) and vector control news, project updates, publications, event reminders, guidelines and job advertisement through the mailing list (over 1700 subscribers as of April 2021).

Registration fee and sponsoring

A reduced registration fee covers this year's costs around the event platform which hosts the virtual sessions. The annual meeting welcomes partners and participants who join on their own costs. The participation of selected affected-countries at the annual meetings is ensured with funds by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) through the GlobMal project at Swiss TPH.