

Minutes of the Meeting of the ICMR Tribal Health Research Forum held at ICMR Hqrs, New Delhi on January 12, 2013

The meeting of the ICMR Tribal Health Research Forum (THRF) was held at ICMR Hqrs, New Delhi from 2.30 PM to 9.30PM on 12th January 2013. The meeting was chaired by Dr. V.M.Katoch, Secretary, DHR & DG, ICMR. The following members were present:

1. Ms. Dharitri Panda, Financial Advisor, ICMR, New Delhi
2. Mr. Sanjiv Dutta, Former Jt. Secretary and FA, ICMR, New Delhi
3. Dr. Rashmi Arora, Chief ECD, ICMR, New Delhi
4. Dr. Malbika Roy, Head, RHN, ICMR, New Delhi
5. Dr. Prasant Mathur, NCD, ICMR, New Delhi
6. Dr. S.K.Kar, Director, RMRC, Bhubaneswar
7. Prof. Arvind Pandey, Director, NIMS, New Delhi
8. Dr. B.K.Tyagi, Director, CRME, Madurai
9. Dr. S.D.Kholkute, Director In-charge, RMRC, Belgaum
10. Dr. P. Jambulingam, Director, VCRC, Pondicherry
11. Dr. P. Vijayachari, Director, RMRC, Port Blair
12. Dr. Neeru Singh, Director, RMRCT, Jabalpur & Coordinator of THRF

The detail lists of participants are enclosed in annexure I.

Dr. Neeru Singh welcome Dr. V. M. Katoch, Secretary, DHR and DG, ICMR, Ms. Dharitri Panda, FA, ICMR, Mr. Sanjiv Dutta, Former Jt. Secretary and FA, ICMR, Chief/Heads of various ICMR divisions, Directors of various ICMR Institutes/centre and the other participants for the Tribal Health Forum meeting and requested Dr. V. M. Katoch to chair the meeting and conduct the proceedings. Dr. Neeru Singh introduced the new member Dr. Malbika Roy, Head, RHN, ICMR to the forum.

The meeting started with address by DG, who informed the gathering regarding the importance of formation of Tribal Health Research Forum and stressed the need to

explore the various ways/ strategies to improve the health of the marginalized section of population and provide them with a quality of life. He felt that tribal population needs special attention. He identified few health problems relevant to tribal population such as nutrition, hypertension, communicable and vector borne diseases, tuberculosis, respiratory disorders, diarrhea, haemoglobinopathies, health system research and stressed to focus studies on these issues. He also stressed the need to develop partnership particularly involving local medical colleges, state health authorities. He felt that cancer is a neglected area and needs to be explored in the tribal areas. The mother and child health and the associated high morbidity and mortality in tribal area are also a very important issue and needs special attention. He also mentioned the need for translation of the research output and felt that it is a cohesive action to make a real impact on the health of these people. He further mentioned to identify the health needs of the tribal people and address the same and felt that it can be improved by suitable intervention. He categorically mentioned the role of RMRCT in tribal health research. He also highlighted the tribal health condition and the role of RMRCs working particularly in North-east and in Odissa. He asked the house to set a bench mark and fix the targets to achieve along with timeline. The targets should be well defined and clear so as to make it achievable.

Ms. Dharitri Panda, mentioned that it is very important to improve the health of the tribal population and she felt that it is a great challenge for the Tribal Health Research Forum to achieve this target. She spoke on community mobilization and stressed the need to acquire the local support in all these effort.

Dr. Neeru Singh read out the action taken report based on the last THRF held at Bhubaneswar.

Dr. Ayan Jha, Scientist C from ECD, ICMR presented the four monthly progress. Dr. Jha mentioned that there is a need to target the tribal regions from where research proposals for funding are not received or meager such as Western or Northern region of India. Regarding sending concept proposals to ICMR from a specific zone, Directors of

the ICMR centres/institutes in that specific zone will be responsible. He was also suggested to reduce the time line for the submission of the proposals.

Dr. Prasant Mathur made the presentation from the division of the Non Communicable Diseases.

RMRC, Belgaum

Director-in-Charge of the centre in his presentation showed the progress made by the centre.

Suggestion/comments

Dr. Katoch suggested fulfilling their objectives of the centre. Develop time frame for developing research guideline on herbal medicine. He was also suggested to drop the study on KFD virus as this may require BSL 3/4 laboratory in future studies.

VCRC, Pondicherry

Director of the centre made presentation of the progress made. In the projects Sensitivity and specificity of RDK (monovalent) - in southern districts of Odisha state, Malaria control in a PHC area through IVM in Odisha (Kondh and Parja) – single or combination VC, Clinical and parasite response to ACT - Koraput district, Odisha and New focus of CL among Kani Tribes, Kerala.

Suggestion/comments

DG suggested them to look at the features of the Kala-azar. He also suggested to investigate the presence of parasites at rodents apart from dogs.

RMRC, Bhubaneswar

The scientist of the centre made presentation on the health system management model they have adopted in the tribal area titled "Strategy for reduction of morbidities associated with febrile illness in tribal population of Rayagada district" she also presented centers work about Malaria Vector Behavior in high endemic districts of Odisha and Surveillance of Diarrhea in three tribal districts

Suggestion/comments

DG suggested that current model may not be workable in the area and proposed alternate model as demanded in local situation.

Regarding the study on malaria vector it was suggested to do the year round survey and communicate the findings to the programme.

NIE, Chennai

The scientist update about Tribal health related projects to the forum and how NIE is helping in Capacity building.

Suggestion/comments

It was suggested to incorporate students for various academic programmes of NIE from different tribal areas such as Odissa, Chhattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh, etc.

RMRC, Dibrugarh

The scientist of the centre made presentation on the evaluation of new formulation of new insecticides titled "Cluster-randomized village-scale (Phase III) evaluation of Deltamethrin SC 62.5 g ai/L for Indoor Residual Spraying against *An. minimus*, the major malaria vector in North-East India"

Suggestion/comments

Asked to study long term effect of these insecticide formulations.

NIN, Hyderabad

The scientist of the centre made presentation on the disease specific mortality among primitive tribe Chenchus in Andhra Pradesh by using verbal autopsy method as per the recommendations of ICMR.

Suggestion/comments

The reason for high deaths reported due to cirrhosis and use of alcoholic was raised. It was suggested to disseminate these information to ITDA and plan strategy to reduce these incidences.

RMRCT, Jabalpur

The Director and scientists of the centre made the presentation on future projects and ongoing work at the centre such as on malaria and other vector borne diseases, viral diseases, communicable diseases, IEC based studies, etc.

Suggestion/comments

DG appreciated all the studies and suggested to incorporate/ attach state government and health authorities in these studies. The proposed project by Director i.e., alternate strategy of tackling malaria in disturbed areas of Chhattisgarh was appreciated and asked to process at the earliest.

DMRC, Jodhpur

The scientist of the centre briefed about the activities of the centre to the forum.

CRME, Madurai

The director presented future projects, the action taken regarding earlier meeting of THRF and scientist of the centre made the presentation on Scrub Typhus – an emerging public health problem in the tribal population of Western Ghat region, Tamil Nadu, India and Development of a database incorporating comprehensive inventorization and validation of nutritive and medicinal insects in the tribal population of Nilgiris district, Tamil Nadu, India.

NIIH, Mumbai

The scientists made the presentation of the progress on the project “Newborn screening for sickle cell disease and providing comprehensive care to understand the natural history of sickle cell disease in tribal population in Madhya Pradesh and Gujarat”. They also presented a new proposed study on micro mapping of G6PD deficiency among the tribals of India and its importance for anti-malarial therapy and the participating ICMR centres/institutes.

Suggestion/comments

It was suggested to provide the goals for NIIH for Tribal Health Research Forum and the time lines.

NIMS, New Delhi

The Director made the presentation of the data analyzed from NFHS-III with specific importance on the functioning of health personnel particularly in tribal areas.

Suggestion/comments

DG appreciated the analyzed information.

NIMR, Delhi

The scientists presented the ongoing activities of the institute in the projects "Efficacy of AS+SP in falciparum and CQ in vivax malaria (2011-12)" and Comprehensive Case Management of Malaria in Odissa.

Suggestion/comments

They were suggested to show tribe specific data in next meeting as there was no input regarding tribal health research. It was also suggested to formulate malaria group among institutes working on malaria and review the work biannually.

RMRI, Patna

The scientist presented the ongoing activities of the institute and the concept proposals submitted to ICMR for working in tribal areas.

RMRC, Port Blair

The Director and scientist presented the ongoing activities of the institute. Director briefed the forum about the change in the ecology and vectors of malaria after Tsunami.

Suggestion/comments

He was asked to take state health authorities in confidence and do proactive work.

NIRT, Chennai

The participating scientist thanked the forum for incorporating NIRT Chennai in the forum and briefed about the work and future plans of NIRT in tribal areas.

RHN Division, ICMR, New Delhi

The head of the division presented the projects and their outcomes undertaken/sponsored by RHN division. Some preliminary analyzed data from NFHS-III was also presented.

The venue for the next meeting of THRF was decided for VCRC, Pondicherry in April 2013, where as DMRC, Jodhpur offered to host annual meeting in August 2013.

DG in his concluding remarks suggested to come out with book on minutes and achievements of the THRF and may be titled as **"To Serve the Un-served"**.

The minutes concluded with vote of thanks by Dr. K.B.Saha.

Annexure I

List of participants of Tribal Health Research Forum Meeting, January 12, 2013

- Dr. Neeru Singh, Director, RMRCT, Jabalpur & Coordinator of THRF
- Ms. Dharitri Panda, Financial Advisor, ICMR, New Delhi
- Dr. Rashmi Arora, Chief ECD, ICMR, New Delhi
- Mr. Sanjiv Dutta, Former Jt. Secretary & FA, ICMR, New Delhi
- Dr. Malbika Roy, Head, RHN, ICMR, New Delhi
- Dr. Prasant Mathur, NCD, ICMR, New Delhi
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- Dr. B.K.Tyagi, Director, CRME, Madurai
- Dr. S.D.Kholkute, Director, NIRRH, Mumbai & Director In-charge, RMRC, Belgaum
- Dr. P. Jambulingam, Director, VCRC, Pondicherry
- Dr. P. Vijayachari, Director, RMRC, Port Blair
- Dr. K.V.Singh, Scientist F, DMRC, Jodhpur

- Dr. M.V. Murhekar, Scientist F, NIE, Chennai
Dr. P Paulkumalan, Scientist D, NIRT, Chennai
Dr. Roshan Kamal Topno, Scientist C, RMRIMS, Patna
Dr. Neena Verma, Scientist E, RMRIMS, Patna
Dr. Malay Mukherjee, Scientist D, NIIH, Mumbai
Dr. Roshan Colah, Scientist F, NIIH, Mumbai
Dr. Annas Kerketta, Scientist D, RMRC, Bhubaneswar
Dr. P.V.Barde, Scientist C, RMRCT, Jabalpur
Dr. K.B.Saha, Scientist D, RMRCT, Jabalpur
Dr. P.Philip Samuel, Scientist B, CRME, Madurai
Dr. A. Laxmaiah, Scientist E, NIN, Hyderabad
Dr. Nutan Nanda, Scientist E, NIMR, Delhi
Dr. Anil Prakash, Scientist F, RMRC, Debrugarh
Dr. Subarna Roy, Scientist D, RMRC Belgaum
Dr. Beena Thomas, Scientist B, NIRT, Chennai
Dr. I.P Sunish, Scientist C, RMRC Port Blair
Dr. Anup Anvikar, Scientist D, NIMR, Delhi
Dr. Ayan Jha, Scientist C, ECD, ICMR, New Delhi
Dr. Prasant Mathur, NCD, ICMR, New Delhi

With kind regards,

Dr. V.M.Katoch
Chairman