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## **RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE 34<sup>TH</sup> CONFERENCE OF THE INTERNATIONAL SCIENTIFIC COUNCIL FOR TRYPANOSOMIASIS RESEARCH AND CONTROL (ISCTRC) AND THE 16<sup>TH</sup> PATTEC COORDINATORS MEETING HELD IN LIVINGSTONE, ZAMBIA, FROM 11<sup>TH</sup> TO 15<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER 2017**

The Meeting acknowledged the high quality presentations made under the various thematic areas and the resultant discussions. The following recommendations were therefore, made:

1. That the African Union was requested to sensitise the national government officials through advocacy, with a view to influence policies on tsetse and trypanosomiasis (T&T), focussing on the allocation of resources and sustainability of control programs. The meeting therefore agreed that the recommendations of the 34th ISCTRC conference be brought to the attention of the Specialised Technical Committee (STC) of Ministers in charge of Agriculture, Rural Development, Water and Environment, during their meeting to be held on October 5 and 6, 2017 organized by African Union at Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.
2. The meeting noted with concern the lack of guidelines for use by the PATTEC country programmes. It was therefore recommended that the African Union takes the lead and collaborate with mandated international organisations in the development of these guidelines for the declaration of tsetse free areas.
3. It was also noted with concern that many countries have not integrated T&T strategies into their National Agricultural Investment Plans as a priority for the mobilization of national and regional resources. Countries need to be reminded about the Head of States' and Government decision made in Lomé-Togo in the year 2000 to eradicate tsetse flies and eliminate trypanosomiasis from Africa. This should assist in prioritization by national governments in allocation of resources for T&T programs.
4. The meeting took note of the absence of regional reports and recognized the need to adopt a regional approach in the development of projects and in the search for funding. In this regard, the support of the Regional Economic Organizations will be especially sought. The AU-PATTEC Coordination Office will then be able to provide technical support to countries affected by the T&T and play the role of facilitator in resource mobilisation.
5. Noting with concern the increasing fragmented approach being pursued by partners in their efforts to contribute to the fight against T&T, it was recommended that ISCTRC and the AU-PATTEC Coordination Office should develop multi-stakeholder partnership frameworks designed as a basis for partners' contributions to the fight against T&T.
6. Noting with concern the apparent disconnect between T&T research and field operations and the increasing trends where some researchers and research institutions are doubling as field implementers, it was recommended that the ISCTRC strengthens its coordination role to enhance policy dialogue in the translation of T&T research outputs into field application.

7. Progressive pathways and the related roadmaps are being successfully used for the control of different diseases (i.e. FMD, PPR, brucellosis and rabies). The approach has been recently adapted to AAT by FAO, in collaboration with AU-PATTEC, IAEA and CIRAD. ISCTRC welcomes the development of this new strategic tool in support of the PATTEC initiative, and recommends that:
  - a. Support be given for its further refinement so as to pave the way to its subsequent implementation in AAT-affected countries and at the international level. The meeting also recommended that the application of PCP explored for non-tsetse transmitted trypanosomiasis by working closely with the OIE.
  - b. Stakeholders involved in AAT PCP to engage OIE delegates in the process of placing the PCP initiative on OIE's agenda through formal consultations with OIE to ensure the PCP compliance with the OIE Terrestrial Animal Health Code regarding standards for each of the steps.
8. The meeting observed with great concern the widespread occurrence of counterfeit drugs and/or drug misuse and the resultant phenomenon of treatment failure. The general consensus was that all relevant stakeholders should work more closely with the relevant government arms to address the crisis using new approaches including establishment of testing labs.
9. It was noted also with concern that PATTEC Country reports lacked information and detail on non-tsetse transmitted trypanosomiasis, and recommended that efforts be made to give adequate prominence to this very important area.
10. On the issue of HAT research, control/elimination as a public health concern by 2020 and noting the continued and remarkable progress made. The meeting recommended:
  - a. That control strategies should be adapted accordingly to the subsequent changes in epidemiological status, as well as to the new tools becoming available;
  - b. That the ownership of countries of the elimination goal should be reinforced to ensure political sustainability of the process while progressive integration of control and surveillance activities in the routine health system should also be recommended to ensure the technical sustainability;
  - c. That in order to improve surveillance of the disease, the use of existing tools should be optimized, and quality be regularly monitored. It must be stressed that parasitological confirmation of cases remains essential. New diagnostic tools and algorithms should be independently evaluated. Initiatives to improve funding and access to screening and diagnostic tools were encouraged;
  - d. That despite the relatively lower burden of rhodesiense Human African Trypanosomiasis (HAT), it is important to consider its situation and its particularities in order to ensure it is not left out:
    - A multisectoral approach (One Health) is essential to address this disease;
    - The increased use of rapid diagnostic tests (RDTs) for malaria has reduced the use of blood smear microscopy for this purpose, thus incidentally diminishing the possibility of diagnosing rhodesiense HAT via microscopy in the same patient. The use of blood smear microscopy in rhodesiense HAT endemic areas should be encouraged;
    - Considering the significant adverse events related to current therapeutic tools for rhodesiense HAT, the ISCTRC encourages partners to invest all possible efforts to extending the clinical trials of fexinidazole as a treatment for rhodesiense HAT;
  - e. That taking into account the importance of the Atlas of HAT in mapping the disease and supporting the planning of activities for HAT elimination, the transfer of capacity for the use of this tool at national level in endemic countries is highly encouraged;

11. The meeting appreciated efforts made to generate new knowledge in the areas of parasite and vector genetics/genomics/proteomics and chemical ecology e.g tsetse population genetics, vector and disease predictive modeling, tsetse attractants/repellants and transmission blocking vaccines using metacyclic antigens. The meeting recommended translation and sharing of this knowledge with national control programmes to enhance control efforts and allocation of funds.
12. On the issue of vector research, sustainable/elimination the meeting made the following recommendations:
  - a. That there have been recent developments and access to new tools for T&T control and that these need to be optimized for different applications by national control programmes;
  - b. That tsetse control interventions should take into consideration spatial distribution and trypanosome infection in order to maximise cost-benefit ratios in the control of AAT;
  - c. That tsetse control interventions should take into consideration sustainability mechanisms to avoid re-infestation of controlled areas;
  - d. The new tools presented should be taken into consideration for T&T control and to update tsetse distribution according to climate and land use changes.
  - e. Considering the link between tsetse distribution and climate change and T&T control, institutions with focus on climate change issues should be approached for funding;
  - f. Non-tsetse transmitted trypanosomiasis continues to be an important area and it is recommended that efforts should be enhanced in the development of new olfaction and visual baits for the control of the vectors to maximise control of *Trypanosoma evansi* infections;
13. It was recognized that the training and mentoring of young scientists was crucial in addressing the growing manpower demands of tsetse and trypanosomiasis research/control. In this regard the meeting appreciated the efforts of organisations that have supported capacity building and appealed to others to contribute.