

Update on the LSM work plan 2018/2019

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A number of countries in Africa have mentioned LSM as one of their interventions of choice in their National Strategic Plans. Although external funders are supposed to be guided by the NSPs we are not aware of any country in Africa that has been funded through the traditional vector control funding channels (Global Fund, USAID-PMI) to conduct LSM. Some of the reasons often cited are (1) funding LSM would divert resources that should be focused on LLINs and IRS; (2) some wrongly assume there is no sufficient evidence for LSM efficacy.

Some countries have managed to source government or bilateral funding for LSM. This could have been an opportunity for other funders to encourage and support those countries, particularly in monitoring the impact of LSM.

The current WHO position statement on LSM, particularly the “few, fixed, findable” terms seems to have confused the national programs on the best ways to adopt this intervention. It is therefore necessary for the VCWG to deliberately support LSM initiatives in Africa, by providing technical support to countries implementing LSM.

Project 1: Draft a consensus statement as RBM VCWG work stream with the aim to change WHO position on LSM

A draft statement was drafted but members of the workstream felt it was not strong enough to change the current position of WHO on LSM. There was no clear consensus on the way forward.

Gaps: The community has not yet reached a consensus on whether/how to change the current WHO position statement on LSM.

Project 2: Advocating for environmental management including habitat modification and manipulation and inter-sectoral collaboration as priority interventions in LSM

We are expanding our core membership to other sectors particularly public health engineers. We are trying to reach out to the African Development Bank (AfDB) which has published safeguards for health impact assessments including vector control requirements.

Gaps: So far we have not been able to effectively engage other sectors. AfDB has not responded to our invitations, and we do not have funds to do a proper reach out to other sectors for advocacy.

Project 3: Update and expand spreadsheet of WHOPES approved larvicides as source of information; Compile SOPs on: How to test larvicides efficacy and how to test for resistance

With the recent changes from WHOPES to WHO PQ system, i2i will lead on this project. According to i2i, the generation of SOPs for testing larvicides has stalled recently because the expert recruited to work on this did not get adequate time to do it, but it is hoped it will be done in 2019.

Project 4: LSM – A modern tool for vector control: Review of state of the art technology for LSM e.g. GIS, satellite imagery, motorized application equipment, areal application, drones, use of mobile data transfer)

A new project (funded by IVCC) started in October 2018 in Zanzibar to test the value of integrating new technology (satellite imagery, drones, and mobile apps) to improve larval source management. The project will last two years.

Project 5: Reviewing operational LSM in national malaria control programmes – Evidence of impact, training and support needs

WHO-AFRO and the International Centre of Insect Physiology and Ecology, Kenya have initiated three new operational research projects in Botswana, Namibia and Swaziland aiming at assessing whether adding fortnightly larviciding during the dry season to the standard IRS in those countries will further reduce malaria transmission. Ulrike is providing technical support to the National Malaria Programs and WHO office in those countries to implement the projects.

Two countries, Niger and Uganda have plans to integrate LSM in their vector control programs. Representatives of those programs will give their updates in the 2019 VCWG meeting.

Gaps: Lack of funds to pay for technical support to National programs

Measuring the impact of the workstream

The success of the workstream would be measured by the following criteria:

- Countries have a clear guidance on how to implement LSM in their contexts and receive technical support as required.
- Countries have a multi-sectoral working group that advocates and supports implementation of different aspects of LSM as appropriate in their contexts
- Countries implement larviciding using WHO recommended larvicides
- Where appropriate, new technology is integrated to improve LSM