Terms of Reference for the Malaria Technical Advisory Group to the Pan American Health Organization

Background and Rationale

The Region of the Americas has made significant progress in implementing interventions against malaria and in achieving global, regional, and country targets particularly the malaria-specific UN Millennium Development Goal (MDG 6C). Between the years 2000 and 2013, confirmed malaria cases declined by 64% and malaria deaths by 78% among the 21 malaria endemic countries in the Region. Thirteen countries have already achieved the UN MDG for malaria and 5 others report significant reductions and are on track in terms of achieving the malaria UN MDG. Fourteen Member States are free of local malaria transmission, and 7 countries are in "pre-elimination": ARG, BLZ, COR, ECU, ELS, MEX, PAR (WHO, 2014). The WHO certification process for malaria elimination in Argentina has been requested by the country and is set to be pursued this year. The countries which remained most challenged are Guyana, Haiti, and Venezuela, having reported increases in cases since 2000.

Best practices on malaria have also been strongly documented in the Region. Eighteen malaria programs / efforts (national or community) from 10 countries (BRA, COL, DOR, ECU, GUT, HON, MEX, NIC, PAR, SUR) have been recognized as Malaria Champions of the Americas since 2009. Furthermore, the Amazon Malaria Initiative / Red Amazonica de Vigilancia de la Resistencia a los Drogas Antimalaricos (AMI/RAVREDA) is regarded as a quintessential example of a network that has been strongly instrumental in bridging gaps on malaria in the Region and various countries since its inception in 2001.

With the evolving increase of interest and support to the acceleration of malaria efforts toward elimination, which is the strategic direction presented in the Global Maria Technical Strategy (GTS) 2016-2030, a number of malaria initiatives have been launched in recent years. These include the Elimination of Malaria in Mesoamerica and the Island of Hispaniola (EMMIE); Haiti Malaria Elimination Consortium (HaMEC); and Mesoamerican Initiative on Malaria in Vulnerable Populations. Currently, 14 of the 21 malaria endemic countries have indicated commitment toward malaria elimination:

- ARG, PAR, SUR
- Elimination of Malaria in Mesoamerica and the Island of Hispaniola (EMMIE): BLZ, COR, DOR, ELS, GUT, HAI, HON, MEX, NIC, PAN
- Haiti Malaria Elimination Consortium (HaMEC): HAI, DOR
- Mesoamerican Initiative on Malaria In Vulnerable Populations (planning is on-going): BLZ, COL, DOR, ELS, GUT, HAI, HON, South MEX, PAN

As the Region completes the implementation of the current Strategy and Plan of Action for Malaria in the Americas 2011-2015, PAHO is currently facilitating the consolidation of the post-2015 Regional Malaria Plan, which will strongly emphasize strategic approaches and a plan of action that addresses the specific context of countries and communities in the Region. The Strategy and Plan of Action for Malaria in the Americas 2016-2020 will likewise ensure strong alignment of efforts with various global and regional mandates, including PAHO's 2014-2019 Strategic Plan; the GTS, the Global Malaria Action Plan

2 (a.k.a. Action and Investment Case for Malaria); *P. vivax* Strategy; and the Sustainable Development Goals.

The Malaria Technical Advisory Group (Malaria TAG) will serve as the mechanism to coordinate and provide technical guidance to malaria efforts throughout the Region of the Americas; covering all contexts in the control to elimination continuum (prevention, control, elimination, prevention of re-introduction). It will serve as an enabling committee for PAHO / WHO to execute its core functions (as it applies to malaria) in the Americas:

- providing leadership on matters critical to health and engaging in partnerships where joint action is needed;
- shaping the research agenda and stimulating the generation, translation and dissemination of valuable knowledge;
- setting norms and standards and promoting and monitoring their implementation;
- articulating ethical and evidence-based policy options;
- providing technical support, catalyzing change, and building sustainable institutional capacity; and
- monitoring the health situation and assessing health trends.

The Malaria TAG will be complementary to the WHO Malaria Policy Advisory Committee (MPAC), which provides global technical guidance on malaria as it will focus on contextual specificities in the Region of the Americas.

Functions and Roles

The Malaria Technical Advisory Group will serve as the principal advisory group to PAHO / AMRO on matters related to malaria in the Region of the Americas. It will provide an independent evaluation on the strategic, scientific and technical aspects of PAHO/AMRO malaria activities, including progress and challenges; and will review and make recommendations on committees, working groups, and networks on priority malaria activities. The Malaria TAG will also be in charge of facilitating the establishment of ad hoc working groups to analyze and make recommendations on specific issues (e.g. priorities for malaria research in the Americas; improving epidemiological surveillance and M&E capacities; malaria vector control in the context of elimination and Integrated Vector Management; threat of anti-malarial drug resistance; etc.).

- The Malaria TAG will specifically **advise** on:

1. Consolidation, development, and Implementation of the Strategy and Plan of Action for Malaria, 2016-2020 and progress towards achievements of goals;
2. PAHO's response at Regional level, to current public health priorities with regard to malaria, prevention, control, elimination, and prevention of re-introduction activities;
3. Promotion of malaria research and innovation according to agreed priorities;
4. Existing or needed general policies, goals and targets related to malaria, including those related to evolving concerns (e.g. special target populations; outbreaks and emergency situations; etc.);
5. Identification of obstacles and appropriate corrective / mitigation measures to facilitate on-track implementation and achievement of targets;
6. Identification and coordination of funding / resource mobilization to support implementation of malaria activities in the Region;
7. Inter-sectoral, cross departmental, cross-network / cross-initiative coordination of activities and linkages with other health interventions;
8. Malaria advocacy and relations with stakeholders and partners in the fight against malaria;

9. Promotion and facilitation of integration of malaria interventions at country and sub-regional levels; and
10. Various key malaria-related issues, as may be deemed appropriate.

Membership

The Malaria TAG will have a minimum of 7 to a maximum of 11 members, who shall serve in their personal and voluntary capacity, and provide technical expertise in a broad range of areas of knowledge covering malaria prevention, control, elimination, and prevention of re-introduction. PAHO/AMRO will convene an internal nominations panel, which will nominate the Malaria TAG members for approval and subsequent appointment by the PAHO Regional Director.

The Chairperson will be selected from among appointed Malaria TAG members. TAG members shall be recognized individuals with expertise in the fields of malaria policy and program management, case management, epidemiology, public health, entomology/vector borne diseases, infectious diseases, hospital and laboratory management and practices, health-care administration and finances, health economics, drug quality and other related areas of expertise (including legal, economic, and regulatory processes).

TAG members, including the Chairperson, shall be appointed to serve for an initial term of two years. Such term may only be renewed once; prior to their appointment and/or renewal of term, nominees and current TAG members shall be required to complete a "Declaration of Interest form" (Annex 1) and confidentiality agreements (Annex 2). The membership of the TAG shall seek to reflect a balanced representation of:

- (1) Professional affiliation (i.e. academia, medical and related professions, research institutes, and governmental bodies, including national programs, public health departments and regulatory authorities).
- (2) Major areas of interest (e.g. malaria prevention, control and elimination, surveillance, laboratory quality control and quality assurance, rational use of antimalarials, epidemiology, research, drug quality, quality of care, case management, vector control, health education, health economics, community participation and others).
- (3) Major strategic areas of PAHO's work relating to malaria prevention, control, elimination, and prevention of reintroduction activities: (a) Malaria Prevention, Surveillance, and Early Detection and Containment of Outbreaks, (b) Integrated Vector Management, (c) Malaria Diagnosis and Treatment, (d) Advocacy, Communication, and Partnerships, and Collaboration, (e) Health Systems Strengthening; Strategic Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation; Operations Research; and Country-Level Capacity-Building.

Geographic representation and gender balance will likewise be considered in the overall composition of the Malaria TAG.

Meetings / Operational Procedures / Observers

The Malaria TAG will meet regularly (once a year) for two to three days. The frequency and duration of meetings may be adjusted as necessary. The Malaria TAG recommendations are taken by consensus. In the exceptional situation that a consensus on a particular issue cannot be reached, the Chairperson shall

report the majority and minority view. It is the also the Chairperson's responsibility to ensure there is clarity for Malaria TAG members on what exactly is being decided.

Representatives of USAID; the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria, the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation; relevant UN agencies; AMI/RAVREDA; EMMIE; HaMEC; Mesoamerican Initiative; and others may be invited to participate as observers in Malaria TAG meetings and deliberations. Regional staff members of PAHO and designated WHO counterparts will attend as members of the Secretariat. In addition, up to three National Malaria Control Program managers from the Region are invited as resource persons to observe and participate in the meetings.

PAHO / AMRO may also invite other observers to the Malaria TAG meetings, including representatives from other international partners, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), international professional organizations, technical agencies, and donor organizations. Additional experts and Technical Resource Persons, may also be invited to meetings, as appropriate, to further contribute to specific agenda items. (*Note: Rules on observership are further explained on Annex 3).*

The Malaria TAG will work with PAHO/AMRO to develop work priorities and meeting agendas, with input from the countries. The Malaria TAG will be kept informed by PAHO/AMRO of the progress in the implementation of strategies and the attainment of objectives at country and regional level. PAHO/AMRO, together with the Malaria TAG Chairperson, will determine which issues and information should be brought to the attention of the Malaria TAG. In order to seek broader input and allow for the exchange of information and views and to ensure transparency and inclusivity, the majority of discussions will occur in plenary with the observers and invited technical resource persons. However, the actual deliberations of and development of recommendation by the Malaria TAG will take place in a closed session in order to protect the integrity and independence of the committee from pressure and undue influence. Transparency will still be ensured however, as minutes approved by PAHO/AMRO, will be made available and circulated to all partners and relevant stakeholders. Approved documents, minutes and recommendations will be archived and will be publicly available.

In addition to attendance of meetings, active participation will be expected from all Malaria TAG members throughout the year, including participation in ad hoc committee meetings, video and teleconferences, as well as interactions via e-mail. Review of documents may also be solicited. Malaria TAG members will not be remunerated for their participation in Malaria TAG. However, reasonable expenses, such as travel expenses incurred by attendance at Malaria or related meetings, will be compensated by PAHO /WHO in accordance with WHO applicable rules and policies.

The Malaria TAG and the TAG's Secretariat reports to the PAHO Regional Director (or designee) and will debrief the PAHO Regional Director (or designee), the Communicable Disease and Health Analysis (CHA) Director, and the Chief of the Neglected, Tropical and Vector Borne Diseases (VT) Unit following each Malaria TAG meeting.

Some Key Dates

- April to May 2015: Internal (PAHO/WHO) review and clearance of TAG-Malaria Terms of Reference
- June – Aug. 2015: Appointment of TAG-Malaria Members
- October, 2015: Inaugural Meeting of PAHO/AMRO TAG-Malaria

Annex 1

DECLARATION OF INTERESTS FOR PAHO/WHO EXPERTS

PAHO/WHO's work on global health issues requires the assistance of external experts who **may have interests related to their expertise.** To ensure the highest integrity and public confidence in its activities, PAHO/WHO requires that experts serving in an advisory role disclose any circumstances that could give rise to a potential conflict of interest related to the subject of the activity in which they will be involved.

All experts serving in an advisory role must disclose any circumstances that could represent a **potential conflict of interest** (i.e., any interest that may affect, or may reasonably be perceived to affect, the expert's objectivity and independence). You must disclose on this Declaration of Interest (DOI) form any financial, professional or other interest relevant to the subject of the work or meeting in which you have been asked to participate in or contribute towards and any interest that could be affected by the outcome of the meeting or work. You must also declare relevant interests of your immediate family members (see definition below) and, if you are aware of it, relevant interests of other parties with whom you have substantial common interests and which may be perceived as unduly influencing your judgment (e.g. employer, close professional associates, administrative unit or department). Please note that not fully completing and disclosing all relevant information on this form may, depending on the circumstances, lead PAHO/WHO to decide not to appoint you to PAHO/WHO advisory bodies / functions in the future.

Please complete this form and submit it to PAHO/WHO if possible at least 4 weeks but no later than 2 weeks before the meeting or work. You must also promptly inform the PAHO/WHO if there is any change in this information prior to, or during the course of, the meeting or work. All experts must complete this form before participation in a PAHO/WHO activity can be confirmed.

Answering "Yes" to a question on this form does not automatically disqualify you or limit your participation in a PAHO/WHO activity. Your answers will be reviewed by PAHO/WHO to determine whether you have a conflict of interest relevant to the subject at hand. One of the outcomes listed in the next paragraph can occur depending on the circumstances (e.g, nature and magnitude of the interest, timeframe and duration of the interest).

PAHO/WHO may conclude that no potential conflict exists or that the interest is irrelevant or insignificant. If, however, a declared interest is determined to be potentially or clearly significant, one or more of the following three measures for managing the conflict of interest may be applied. PAHO/WHO (i) allows full participation, with public disclosure of your interest; (ii) mandates partial exclusion (i.e., you will be excluded from that portion of the meeting or work related to the declared interest and from the corresponding decision making process); or (iii) mandates total exclusion (i.e., you will not be able to participate in any part of the meeting or work).

All potentially significant interests will be **disclosed** to the other participants at the start of the activity and you will be asked if there have been any changes. A summary of all declarations and actions taken to manage any declared interests will be **published** in resulting reports and work products. Furthermore, if the objectivity of the work or meeting in which you are involved is subsequently questioned, the contents of your DOI form may be made available by PAHO/WHO to persons outside PAHO/WHO if the Director considers such disclosure to be in the best interest of the Organization, after consulting with you. Completing this DOI form means that you agree to these conditions.

If you are unable or unwilling to disclose the details of an interest that may pose a real or perceived conflict, you must disclose that a conflict of interest may exist and PAHO/WHO may decide that you be totally recused from the meeting or work concerned, after consulting with you.

Name:
Institution:
Email:

Date and title of meeting or work, including description of subject matter to be considered (if a number of substances or processes are to be evaluated, a list should be attached by the organizer of the activity):

Please answer each of the questions below. If the answer to any of the questions is "yes", briefly describe the circumstances on the last page of the form.
The term "you" refers to yourself and your immediate family members (i.e., spouse (or partner with whom you have a similar close personal relationship) and your children). "Commercial entity" includes any commercial business, an industry association, research institution or other enterprise whose funding is significantly derived from commercial sources with an interest related to the subject of the meeting or work. "Organization" includes a governmental, international or non-profit organization. "Meeting" includes a series or cycle of meetings.

EMPLOYMENT AND CONSULTING

Within the past 4 years, have you received remuneration from a commercial entity or other organization with an interest related to the subject of the meeting or work?

1 a	Employment	Yes	No
1 b	Consulting, including service as a technical or other advisor	Yes	No

RESEARCH SUPPORT

Within the past 4 years, have you or has your research unit received support from a commercial entity or other organization with an interest related to the subject of the meeting or work?

2 a	Research support, including grants, collaborations, sponsorships, and other funding	Yes	No
2 b	Non-monetary support valued at more than US $1000 overall (include equipment, facilities, research assistants, paid travel to meetings, etc.)	Yes	No
	Support (including honoraria) for being on a speakers bureau, giving speeches or training for a commercial entity or other organization with an interest related to the subject of the meeting or work?		

INVESTMENT INTERESTS

Do you have current investments (valued at more than US $5 000 overall) in a commercial entity with an interest related to the subject of the meeting or work? Please also include indirect investments such as a trust or holding company. You may exclude mutual funds, pension funds or similar investments that are broadly diversified and on which you exercise no control.

3 a	Stocks, bonds, stock options, other securities (e.g., short sales)	Yes	No
3 b	Commercial business interests (e.g., proprietorships, partnerships, joint ventures, board memberships, controlling interest in a company)	Yes	No

INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY

Do you have any intellectual property rights that might be enhanced or diminished by the outcome of the meeting or work?

4 a	Patents, trademarks, or copyrights (including pending applications)	Yes	No
4 b	Proprietary know-how in a substance, technology or process	Yes	No

PUBLIC STATEMENTS AND POSITIONS (during the past 3 years)

5 a	As part of a regulatory, legislative or judicial process, have you provided an expert opinion or testimony, related to the subject of the meeting or work, for a commercial entity or other organization?	Yes	No
5 b	Have you held an office or other position, paid or unpaid, where you represented interests or defended a position related to the subject of the meeting or work?	Yes	No

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

6 a	If not already disclosed above, have you worked for the competitor of a product that is the subject of the meeting or work, or will your participation in the meeting or work enable you to obtain access to a competitor's confidential proprietary information, or create for you a personal, professional, financial or business competitive advantage?	Yes	No
6 b	To your knowledge, would the outcome of the meeting or work benefit or adversely affect interests of others with whom you have substantial common personal, professional, financial or business interests (such as your adult children or siblings, close professional colleagues, administrative unit or department)?	Yes	No
6 c	Excluding PAHO/WHO, has any person or entity paid or contributed towards your travel costs in connection with this PAHO/WHO meeting or work?	Yes	No
6 d	Have you received any payments (other than for travel costs) or honoraria for speaking publicly on the subject of this PAHO/WHO meeting or work?	Yes	No
6 e	Is there any other aspect of your background or present circumstances not addressed above that might be perceived as affecting your objectivity or independence?	Yes	No

TOBACCO OR TOBACCO PRODUCTS *(answer without regard to relevance to the subject of the meeting or work)*

7	Within the past 4 years, have you had employment or received research support or other funding from, or had any other professional relationship with, an entity directly involved in the production, manufacture, distribution or sale of tobacco or tobacco products or representing the interests of any such entity?	Yes	No

EXPLANATION OF "YES" RESPONSES: If the answer to any of the above questions is **"yes", check above and briefly describe the circumstances on this page. <u>If you do not describe the nature of an interest or if you do not provide the amount or value involved where relevant, the conflict will be assumed to be significant.</u>**

Nos. 1 - 4: Type of interest, question number and category (e.g., Intellectual Property 4.a copyrights) and basic descriptive details.	**Name of company, organization, or institution**	**Belongs to you, a family member, employer, research unit or other?**	**Amount of income or value of interest (if not disclosed, is assumed to be significant)**	**Current interest (or year ceased)**

Nos. 5-6: Describe the subject, specific circumstances, parties involved, time frame and other relevant details

<u>CONSENT TO DISCLOSURE</u>. By completing and signing this form, you consent to the disclosure of any relevant conflicts to other meeting participants and in the resulting report or work product.

<u>DECLARATION</u>. I hereby declare on my honour that the disclosed information is true and complete to the best of my knowledge.

Should there be any change to the above information, I will promptly notify the responsible staff of PAHO/WHO and complete a new declaration of interest form that describes the changes. This includes any change that occurs before or during the meeting or work itself and through the period up to the publication of the final results or completion of the activity concerned.

Date: _____ Signature_____

ANNEX 2

CONFIDENTIALITY UNDERTAKING

Should be sent with the invitation or appointment letter

1. The Pan American Health Organization/World Health Organization (PAHO/WHO), acting through its Department of _____, has access to certain information relating to _____, which information PAHO/WHO considers to be proprietary to itself or to parties collaborating with it (hereinafter referred to as "the Information").

2. The Undersigned, as a member of _____ the advisory meeting, group or committee (collectively referred to as the "the Advisory Process"), may have access to the Information in the course of his/her participation in the Advisory Process (whether at or in relation to Advisory Process meetings, internet-based collaborative workspaces, telephone conferences or otherwise).

3. PAHO/WHO is willing to provide the Undersigned the Information, or arrange for the provision of the Information to the Undersigned, for the purpose of performing his/her responsibilities in connection with the activities of the Advisory Process ("the Purpose"), provided that the Undersigned undertakes to treat the Information as confidential and proprietary, and to disclose it only to persons who have a need to know for the Purpose and are bound by like obligations of confidentiality and non-use as are contained in this Undertaking.

4. The Undersigned undertakes to regard the Information as confidential and proprietary to PAHO/WHO or parties collaborating with PAHO/WHO and agrees to take all reasonable measures to ensure that the Information is not used, disclosed or copied, in whole or in part, other than as provided in this Undertaking, except that the Undersigned shall not be bound by any such obligations if and to the extent he/she is clearly able to demonstrate that the Information:

    a) was known to him/her prior to any disclosure by or for PAHO/WHO to the Undersigned; or
    b) was in the public domain at the time of disclosure by or for PAHO/WHO to the Undersigned; or
    c) becomes part of the public domain through no fault of the Undersigned; or
    d) becomes available to the Undersigned from a third party not in breach of any legal obligations of confidentiality.

5. The Undersigned also undertakes not to communicate the deliberations and decisions of the Advisory Process to third parties except as agreed by PAHO/WHO.

6. If requested to do so, the Undersigned agrees to return to PAHO/WHO any and all copies of the Information.

…/..

7. The obligations of the Undersigned shall survive the termination of his/her membership in the Advisory Process.

8. Any dispute relating to the interpretation or application of this Undertaking shall, unless amicably settled, be subject to conciliation. In the event of failure of the latter, the dispute shall be settled by arbitration. The arbitration shall be conducted in accordance with the modalities to be agreed upon by the parties or, in the absence of agreement, with the UNCITRAL rules of arbitration. The parties shall accept the arbitral award as final.

Name:

Signature:
Date:

ANNEX 3

Rules on Observership

- An "Observer" is an individual who attends the meetings without being a member of the group or engaged as a consultant or temporary adviser, but whose presence in a group deliberation is considered to be beneficial.

- The nomination of Observers is conditional on approval by the Chairperson of the Malaria TAG or the PAHO Regional Malaria Program. Only a limited number of Observers may be allowed to participate in the TAG meetings, in order to keep such meetings with an optimally low number of participants, promoting maximal interactions and exchanges between the actual members of ERGs and TEGs.

- The Observers should be selected on the basis of clear and objective criteria; their names may not be included in the list of participants, but listed separately. They will only be able to intervene in the deliberations if invited by the Chairperson, and normally only at the end of each agenda item.

- The Observers will only be allowed to attend the Malaria TAG meetings, and will not be part of communication exchanges between the Chairperson, the members of the Malaria TAG and the PAHO Regional Malaria Program which will function as secretariat. At the technical meetings, Observers should be excluded from those sessions that deal with the actual development of the group's recommendations. In other words, Observers should only attend those sessions which deal with the general exchange of information and views, to act as a resource and to clarify the position of the organization to which they belong.

- Since Observers are invited to attend because they normally represent groups interested in the proceedings, their affiliations are transparent. For this reasons, Observers are not required to complete a DOI Form. They should normally pay their own expenses.