

Restructuring the global coordination of IDD control programs

The consolidation of ICCIDD and the Network for the Sustained Elimination of Iodine Deficiency Disorders creates a new organization, the ICCIDD Global Network

During 2012, extensive discussions amongst and between the members of ICCIDD and The Network for the Sustained Elimination of IDD culminated in an agreement by both Boards to consolidate the two organizations into a single new entity, the ‘ICCIDD Global Network’.

The reasons were several. It was felt that two separate entities working toward the same goal could lead to redundancy of efforts and confusion on regional/national guidance. Both organizations recognized that shrinking resources for IDD programs meant the need for improved coordination and efficiency was now particularly acute. Also, it was felt that a new global structure was needed to ensure sustainability of the remarkable achievements of the past two decades.

A ‘kick-off’ workshop for this new organization was held in Zurich, Switzerland, on November 1 and 2, 2012. Participants included the new Board of Directors, ten invited external experts and two external facilitators from Accenture Development Partners (ADP). Michael Zimmermann, ICCIDD, hosted the meeting and welcomed all participants to snowy Zurich. He briefly reviewed the events leading to this historic meeting and handed over to Larry Grummer-Strawn, Chief of Nutrition at the U.S. CDC, who chaired the meeting in the absence of the Chair, Jerry Burrow. The workshop aims were to discuss vision, mission, objectives and functioning of the new ICCIDD Global Network. Kiwanis International, through Stan Soderstrom, provided generous financial support for the meeting and the external facilitation by ADP.



Current iodine landscape

Arnold Timmer, UNICEF, provided a comprehensive landscape analysis of iodine nutrition and USI, entitled: “Current state of IDD and USI: key statistics, progress achieved, and

what remains to be done” (reported in the Nov 2012 issue of the IDD Newsletter). He outlined a wide range of challenges and needs that current programs face. These included a background landscape analysis, the evolving iodine nutrition and program landscape, a summary of the current global iodine and USI status, the program status of countries, and global and national challenges and developments. A consensus emerged to use this landscape analysis as a strategy and function framework for the ICCIDD Global Network.

Call for action: a unified mission

To set the stage for a discussion on the functions of the ICCIDD Global Network, Larry Grummer-Strawn made a presentation on

Box 1: Vision, Mission and Goals of the ICCIDD Global Network

VISION

Our vision is a world where all people attain optimal iodine nutrition and children can reach their full cognitive potential.

MISSION

Our mission is to be the authoritative voice for iodine nutrition. We support and catalyze global and national iodine programs, working with key public, private, academic, and civic stakeholders. We focus on universal salt iodization as the most cost-effective and sustainable solution for prevention of iodine deficiency disorders.

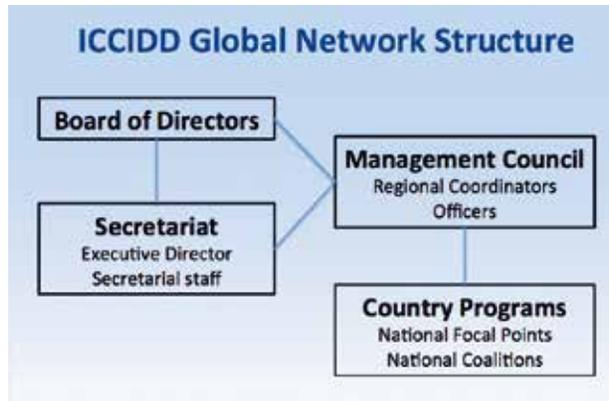
GOALS

1. To support the harmonization of national and international iodine program delivery through alignment of approaches, partnerships and resources
2. To advocate for political will and increased attention and resources for iodine programs in the context of the broader global nutrition landscape
3. To identify and help address challenges to iodine programs and thereby accelerate progress towards sustained IDD elimination
4. To support and strengthen national programs and fortification coalitions through consistent programmatic guidance and enhanced communication to, from and among national programs
5. To identify and address scientific questions and influence the research agenda in order to increase the effectiveness of iodine programs

“The rationale for consolidation, collective goals, and proposed mission and strategy”. He explained the background and operation of the two former entities. Because of the overall mutual aim around iodine, a process was started to bring these bodies together in a single entity integrating the horizontal (global) and vertical (countries, programs and research) organizational strengths of both bodies. Vision, mission and goals statements for the new ICCIDD Global were drafted and adapted after the meeting (Box 1).

Analysing the strategic options and priorities

Willy Pillinger, the external facilitator from ADP, introduced key concepts by means of a presentation on “Strategy methodology, the key question, and prioritization framework”. Participants then subdivided into three groups to identify key activities on a benefit vs. execution viability scale to distinguish activities with high feasibility and greater benefit to the goals of the new ICCIDD Global Network and to relate the priorities to the organizational structure.



Proposed operating structure

Operating under the existing ICCIDD By-Laws, the ICCIDD Global Network will continue to be a Canadian chartered organization and a UN-recognized NGO. Its structure is outlined above. The Board of Directors may have up to 18 Directors responsible for the overall policy, strategy and program planning. The Officers –the Chair, Vice-Chair, Secretary and Treasurer– are elected by the Board. The Executive Director (ED) is appointed by the Board to lead in developing budget and programs and directing implementation.

The Secretariat of the ICCIDD Global Network will be based in Zurich, Switzerland at the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology (ETH), hosted by Michael Zimmermann.

The Management Council consists of the Regional Coordinators and their deputies as well as the Officers, and is chaired by the ED. The Regional Coordinators develop, execute and evaluate work plans and budgets for their regions, in conjunction with the National Coordinators in their regions, and make policy and program recommendations to the Board. The legally-defined voting membership of the organization consists of the Board Directors, the Management Council and the National Coordinators.

Closing

In his concluding remarks Willy Pillinger congratulated the participants for their open discussion of a wide range of topics, differences, and perceptions, all of which form a platform for refinement and implementation. The Chair, Larry Grummer-Strawn, remarked that common views and consensus existed in most respects and that differences on some issues need to be reconciled. The Executive Director, Michael Zimmermann, suggested many of the short term goals are achievable and was enthusiastic to move forward. He thanked the facilitators for the role they played, the participants for their valued contributions and the meeting was closed.

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