

Terms of Reference: Evaluating Research for Health Africa
A programme jointly implemented by the NEPAD Agency and COHRED

Introduction and Background

Research for Health Africa (R4HA) is a programme aimed at improving health, development and equity by strengthening capacity for governance of research and innovation in African countries.

The R4HA team works with countries to help them:

- Define national research priorities to establish a national research agenda
- Build a research management information system
- Develop a policy framework
- Strengthen research infrastructure, including research ethics review capacity and infrastructure

R4HA works with institutions in Mozambique, Senegal and Tanzania as they build national systems for managing research and innovation.

In the original Research for Health Africa proposal (written jointly by the NEPAD Agency and COHRED in 2008/2009) the target results for a five-year programme were defined as:

1. The creation of African centres of excellence that can support health research governance and management throughout the continent.
2. To have in place structures enabling the effective governance and management of research for health in several African countries which will have set policies and priorities for research for health.
3. An African platform for the exchange of expertise on management of research and health research – at the national, regional and continental levels; and
4. A package of practical tools, methods and experiences that any country and institution – in Africa and even beyond – can use to optimize their own governance and management of research as a key strategy to improve health, equity and development.

How far have we gotten in reaching those targets?

1. The creation of African centres of excellence: COHRED is in the process of establishing its COHRED Africa office (in Botswana) and staff of that office are actively involved in R4HA. This is the strategy chosen for transferring capacity and skills to the region, ensuring that future R4HA type of activities can be led from the region.
2. To have in place structures enabling the effective governance and management of research for health in several African countries: We are working with three countries. In addition, COHRED is involved in a project with the West African Health Organisation that works with four countries. However, there are many more LMICs in Africa that would need to strengthen their research and innovation system (we have received a formal request from the Botswana Ministry of Health and other potential partners have indicated their interest). The challenge is how to reach out to others and scale up R4HA.
3. An African platform for the exchange of expertise: through the current programme we have managed to create opportunities for learning and exchange (meetings with country partners in Midrand in 2011; Cape Town Forum 2012; and Tanzania November 2012). These activities have been much valued by partners, and have resulted in additional countries expressing their interest to join R4HA. Financially, the activities are supported by R4HA, and will thus

cease to happen by mid 2014 unless other resources are found and/or people are willing to cover their own expenses.

4. A package of practical tools, methods and experiences: This is being developed. Action guides for the various system development components are being made available on COHRED's website; papers on experiences with system development will be written this year; and e-based management information systems (for ethics, research projects, research calls) have been developed and are made available to the participating countries.

Purpose of the evaluation

Although the evaluation of this programme is a donor requirement, **the purpose of this evaluation is learning, and not upward accountability.**

The evaluation needs to answer three main questions:

- a) Are we making any difference?
- b) Are we doing the right things?
- c) Are we doing the right things in the right way?

Within these three questions, COHRED and the NEPAD agency would like to learn how we can better improve our approach to research system for health strengthening, and how we can create a new type of relationship with country partners. We would like to ensure that any relationship with our partners is driven by partner demand.

Ultimately, this programme will be deemed successful if the countries involved have all developed strong national research governance that promotes, attracts and uses research as a key tool towards achieving health, health equity and development. This evaluation will look at whether we are on the right track to achieving this long-term goal.

The extent to which R4HA is mirrored in research governance improvement in surrounding countries, and the measure in which other African countries as well as external donors and research sponsors wish to join the programme will constitute a measure of impact and success. Finally, the possible extension of this approach to other sectors – beyond research or beyond health – will be a key success indicator.

Changes in national governance of research for health, development of effective networks to support this process and influence in regional bodies will be the key short term indicators for the overall programme, while country-specific activities and their development and effect are the measures for impact at country level.

Who are we doing this for? Primary intended users and uses

This evaluation will be shared amongst our partners and donors and used for internal planning for future strategy and programmes.

What is going to be evaluated? Key evaluation questions

- a) Are we making any difference?
1. Will the current creation of the African centre of excellence (the COHRED Africa office) best support health research governance and management throughout the continent?
 - To what extent has this strategy got the potential for transferring capacity and skills to the region ensure that future R4HA type of activities can be led from the region?
 2. To what extent and how successfully did the programme contribute towards creating a conducive environment for research and innovation in partner countries?
 - What did the R4HA programme accomplish?
 - What changes have come about as a result of the programme? Is this being used?
 - Would the R4HA partner countries have been at the same level without the programme?
 - Do R4HA partner institutions report on improvements in the research and innovation environment as a result of activities initiated by the programme? What type of improvements are they? This should include the varying degrees of changes, with accompanying narrative.
 - To what extent and how successfully have R4HA partner countries improved their response to national priorities as a result of activities initiated by the programme?
 - To what extent and how successfully has the programme contributed towards the development of a designated and functioning institutional mechanism charged with analysis of research for health governance statistics?
 - To what extent and how successfully has the programme contributed toward the development effective national systems for research for health governance (show degrees of transformation).
 - How has the programme contributed towards improved processes within institutions through the development of management information systems (for instance by moving from paper to electronic systems)?
 - To what extent and how successfully has the programme contributed toward partner institutions having a systematic and comprehensive approach to research and innovation system development?
 3. In what ways has the current programme created opportunities for learning and exchange within the continent?
 - How have R4HA cross-country meeting activities resulted in changes amongst partners and potential partner institutions?
 - What do these changes look like?
 4. In what way have the practical tools, methods and experiences helped research institutions to optimize their own governance and management of research as a key strategy to improve health, equity and development?
 - How have the tools methods and experience that we have developed helped partner institutions and non-partner institutions with the management and governance of research for health?(These include guides for various system development components, papers on experiences with system development, and e-based management information systems (for ethics, research projects, research calls)

- In what way can the tools, methods and experiences that we are developing help partner institutions to optimise their own governance and management of research as a key strategy to improve health, equity and development?

b) Are we doing the right things?

- Did the objective of the programme align with the needs of the partners?
- How did the programme take into consideration changes in the external environment?
- What are the capabilities and finances of the countries in which we are working?
- Have we been focusing on the right areas in programme implementation in order to contribute towards the objectives of the programme?
- Have we adopted the right strategy for fundraising? (What models should we seek to use? e.g. sales or grant seeking).

c) Are we doing the right things in the right way?

- Have we been using the right planning mechanisms and processes to build the programme activities and objectives around the needs and capacities of the partners?
- Have we created the right organisational structure and processes for effective implementation?
- How effective has the partnership between NEPAD and COHRED been? What lessons can we learn for future collaborations?
- R4HA fundraising strategy: Where should we focus our resources? What approach should we take? (E.g. with partner agencies, regional bodies, go it alone, are we marketing R4HA well etc)
- Have we been effectively communicating the successes and challenges involved in the programme to various stakeholders? Have we been communicating the right messages and in the right ways?
- Recommendations based on all of the above questions.

How is the monitoring and evaluation activity to be done?

The evaluation team is expected to plan and conduct a robust and transparent analysis of the data. We expect the programme will cover our 3 partner countries in the programme: Mozambique, Senegal and Tanzania. The evaluator will be responsible for developing an evaluation plan, including analysis tools, which will be submitted to COHRED and the NEPAD Agency and agreed upon before use.

The evaluator will be responsible for working independently (alone or within their evaluation team, as relevant). COHRED and the NEPAD Agency staff will be available to:

- Consult and provide feedback during relevant stages of the evaluation (design, feedback).
- Provide background and contextual information – for example, through interviews with staff in different countries.

The evaluator will be expected to deliver a written evaluation report and to also verbally report findings to a staff working group, answering questions relevant to the evaluation.

The evaluation should contain suggestions for how COHRED and the NEPAD Agency can improve its work and approach.

Who will be involved in the evaluation?

COHRED and the NEPAD Agency are seeking a qualified and experienced external evaluator(s) to design and lead this evaluation, ensuring quality of process and results. This evaluation involves review and analysis of R4HA's work with national partner institutions in Mozambique, Senegal and Tanzania, and will require the collection of information through surveys and interviews in addition to reviewing information, reports and documents relevant to the programme.

The consultant(s) must demonstrate:

- Excellent technical ability and experience in quantitative and qualitative analysis – and in particular, knowledge and proficiency in different methods of qualitative analysis.
- Demonstrated background and expertise in research for health and innovation in Africa (include details of publications).
- Experience of programme evaluation
- Strong writing ability and ability to produce compelling, concise and high-quality evaluation communications products (reports or otherwise).
- Ability to produce evaluation products in English. Fluency in French is essential. Portuguese desirable.

Information collected through the monitoring of the R4HA programme will be made available to the evaluator. The evaluator will also have access to a COHRED Monitoring and Evaluation Officer.

Milestones, deliverables and timelines

This evaluation is to be undertaken and completed by the 30th September 2013.

1. Develop a detailed evaluation plan and methodology and finalise by end of July 2013
2. Read programme documentation, especially the original funding proposal, the plan and progress reports. Build on the findings of previous evaluations and monitoring of the programme. Make a simple analysis of the budget and how resources have been allocated.
3. Examine (or delve into) the internal logic of the programme and identify the achievable Concern, Task and Purpose. Identify organic indicators (activities and outcomes) that derive from this logic (supplemented by the existing programme logical framework).
4. Talk to key stakeholders and design data collection activities.
5. Collect data using a range of quantitative and qualitative methods and make an initial analysis of the findings.
6. Hold a feedback workshop with the R4HA programme team to share with them the findings and identify recommendations. Do further analysis if needed.
7. Write the draft report.
8. Share with appropriate stakeholders and make changes.
9. Provide the final report (September 2013). The final report should contain:
 - Methodology used, findings, discussion of Issues, conclusions, recommendations, detailed results provided in the Appendices, including tools and instruments.
 - A maximum 2-page Executive Summary which can be circulated independently to non-researcher audiences.
10. Develop a Power Point Presentation of research findings, to be presented to COHRED via telecom, internet or in person in Geneva (September 2013)

Budget

The total budget allocated to this evaluation is 30,000 Euros.

Submitting expressions of interest and questions

The R4HA team invites expressions of interest from individuals and teams with the experience and skills described above. Tenders must include:

- A cover letter of no more than 3 pages introducing the evaluator(s) and how the skills and competencies above are met, with concrete examples as appropriate. Please also use this cover letter to indicate the evaluator/team's availability during the programme period.
- A CV for each member of the evaluation team detailing relevant skills and experience, including contactable referees.
- A preliminary budget
- One or two examples of previous evaluations.

Tenders should be sent to emanuel@cohred.org and received no later than 20 June 2013. Proposals will be reviewed in the third week of June. Selected candidates will then be contacted to discuss the details of the evaluation. A formal decision will then be made and communicated in the first week of July.

Please address all questions to Emanuel Souvairan at emanuel@cohred.org.