# GloPID-R Co-Chairs Recommendations following the 2021 GloPID-R Scientific Advisory Group report

## A. The GloPID-R Scientific Advisory Group (SAG)

As the world faces the uncertainty of the second year of the COVID-19 pandemic, the leadership of the research funders consortium GloPID-R (Global Research Collaboration for Infectious Disease Preparedness[1]) chose to form a Scientific Advisory Group (SAG) in February 2021. SAG members were chosen for their breadth of expertise relating to GloPID-R's mission.

> *Membership:* Chair: Marion Koopmans (GloPID-R Scientific Advisor); Lina Moses (GOARN Research – Tulane University); Moses Alobo (African Academy of Sciences); Nahoko Shindo (WHO); Nicole Lurie (CEPI); Steven Hoffman (CIHR); Xavier de Lamballerie (University of Marseilles); Yazdan Yazdanpanah (INSERM/ANRS - GloPID-R Vice-Chair).

The purpose of the SAG's work was to provide recommendations to the GloPID-R Co-Chairs on areas of research funding importance for COVID-19 over the coming 12-18 months, as well as areas of strategic importance for GloPID-R as a meta-organisation. The SAG undertook this work over a three-month period through reviewing existing research agendas and supplementary evidence and applying their existing broad expertise to undertake the Oxford Scenario Planning Approach to produce possible & plausible future scenarios for COVID-19 and the related research landscape (see the SAG Report for more details).

## B. Overview of the SAG report

*Looking to 2030: three plausible scenarios for COVID-19 research*

Using the Oxford Scenario Planning Approach[2], SAG members developed three plausible scenarios which they used to frame their deliberations. Such scenarios were not designed to predict the future; rather, they served as tools to challenge assumptions and prompt strategic conversations and can be used as such by the GLOPID-R members as well. **The scenarios** differ in level of global attention for infectious disease threats, the priorities for research investments (national versus international) and the size of investments.

These scenarios were then used to inform the recommendations for GloPID-R's strategy over the next 12-18 months. Recommendations were structured as: strategic observations for GloPID-R; scenario independent areas for research recommendations; scenario dependent areas for research

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[1] The work of the GloPID-R Secretariat is supported by the European Union's Horizon 2020 Research and Innovation Programme under GloPID-R SEC 2 Grant Agreement no. 874667.

[2] Ramírez, R., & Wilkinson, A. (2016). *Strategic Reframing: The Oxford Scenario Planning Approach*. Oxford University Press. https://doi.org/10.1093/acprof:oso/9780198745693.001.0001

*\* 'Scenario independent' research priorities are pertinent as they were identified by the SAG to be of high-priority for any of the plausible future scenarios.*

recommendations; and big projects for GloPID-R to consider as a meta-organisation. These recommendations were intended to be considered in complement to the anticipated revised WHO COVID-19 research agenda. The full SAG report, which has informed the recommendations in section C, will be published shortly (see the SAG Report).

## C. GloPID-R co-Chairs Recommendations, 2021-2023

> Chair: Charu Kaushic (CIHR); Vice- chairs: Jeremy Farrar (Wellcome); Barbara Kerstiëns (EC); Shoji Miyagawa (AMED); Charles Shey Wiysonge (SAMRC); Yazdan Yazdanpanah (ANRS)

Following discussions of the SAG report, GloPID-R Co-Chairs formulated a series of recommendations along three main areas: (1) Low- and Middle- Income Countries (LMIC); (2) Scenario-Independent priorities; and (3) priorities aligned to the anticipated 2021 WHO COVID-19 R&D Roadmap. With reference to the GloPID-R Charter, GloPID-R members, however, remain free to choose which of these areas and priorities they are willing to support, in particular if they cannot fund projects outside the remit of their statutory and legal obligations.

*1. GloPID-R should continue to expand its strategic focus on research preparedness and response in Low- and Middle- Income Countries (LMIC). This is in addition to GloPID-R's ongoing work in the areas of data sharing, social sciences and clinical trials coordination (through its established standing working groups).*

- GloPID-R has a LMIC working group with active participation across its broad global membership and this should be a key focus for future activities. Strengthening research preparedness, including through creation or alignment of regional clinical trial networks, could be an aspect of this.
- GloPID-R should continue to expand its membership, in particular across the Global South.
- GloPID-R should further explore the possible evolution towards the creation of a network of global regional hubs, with strengthened global partnerships.

*2. GloPID-R should develop a model for coordinated funding and adopt certain of the 'scenario-independent*' research priorities identified by the SAG. These are beyond the scope of the 2020 WHO & GloPID-R COVID-19 research roadmap.*

- Both the SAG and GloPID-R Co-Chairs identified developing a coordinated funding model (akin to the Global Alliance for Chronic Diseases) as a key priority over the next 12 months.
- The coordinated funding approach could be tested on a selection of the following scenario-independent research priorities identified by the SAG:
  - Operational research to improve response effectiveness and adaptability of health systems and health research systems
  - Implementation research to determine the best application of medical countermeasures particularly with vulnerable or hard to reach populations
  - Research focusing on policy and economy relating to the current and future pandemic response and recovery
  - Research addressing the environmental impacts of COVID-19
  - Research into mental health impacts of the pandemic
  - Learning lessons for future preparedness planning
  - Research focussing on Long COVID

*There was an acknowledgement amongst the SAG that they were a small group and that these scenarios and the recommendations identified may differ if the SAG was larger and if they had more time. These scenarios are not the end of this process, but instead **the beginning of a learning process and a strategic conversation** with and within the global health funders community. Therefore, the scenarios would need to be updated regularly and reframed to reflect new developments.*

*3. **GloPID-R members should make efforts to align to the anticipated 2021 WHO COVID-19 R&D Roadmap, with a particular focus on the following priorities, which may require strengthened investments:***

- Research on assessment of variants relating to clinical- and public health decision making
- Research on the animal/ environment interface with a One Health focussed approach.
- Research aimed at improving access to vaccines, therapeutics and truly novel concepts prior to being picked up as part of the R&D pipeline, or those not covered by market forces. In particular, GloPID-R should make efforts to find new and more efficient ways to coordinate research actions on vaccines with organisations such as CEPI. GloPID-R should consider ways to promote:
  - Standardisation and independent evaluation across the research funded;
  - Integrating equity as a guiding principle for vaccine development;
  - Prioritising research to develop vaccines against new strains.
- Social science research in alignment to both the WHO and the UN Research Recovery Roadmap for COVID-19.

## D. Conclusion

The above described recommendations may help guide GloPID-R members' actions and planning for the next 24 months. As a follow up to these recommendations, next steps will include discussions on alignment and implementation of a coordinated funding approach adapted to the needs of GloPID-R funders (autumn 2021) and the establishment of a Call Launch group by the end of 2021.

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