

Memorandum of Understanding

Link programme and collaboration between

Institute for Environmental Research (IER), Tehran University of Medical Sciences, Tehran, Iran

And

The Swiss Tropical and Public Health Institute, Basel, Switzerland

Preamble

Collaboration between the Institute for Environmental Research (IER), Tehran University of Medical Sciences, Tehran, Iran; and the Swiss Tropical and Public Health Institute (Swiss TPH), Basel, Switzerland, has been initiated in 2013 through the Training Course "Cohort Studies in Air pollution and Health Research" as a joint project of WHO, Ministry of Health and Medical Education (MOHME), and Institute for Environmental Research (IER) of Tehran University of Medical Sciences (TUMS) (Teheran, Nov 2-7, 2013)

In face of the global challenges and transitions evident in the field of non-communicable and communicable diseases and its environmental, social, cultural, and life-style determinants, and considering the complementary efforts made by both institutions, a closer collaboration in research and training could help to address priorities in public health.

Therefore, based on mutual interests and shared tasks of the two institutes – IER and Swiss TPH – they intend to establish the present Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) as an umbrella for a link programme through which a closer collaboration and co-operation between the respective institutions will be envisaged to strengthen joint teaching and training, research and possibly also service capabilities.

A. The objectives of the link programme will be

1. Promote and foster joint projects to strengthen research capability in fields of shared and complementary disciplines, including environmental epidemiology, cohort and biobank-based non-communicable disease research, and any other fields of public health relevance.
2. Strengthen collaboration in the field of teaching/training related to the joint research projects.

3. IER will assist and guide Swiss TPH in establishing joint projects in Iran and in obtaining research clearances for research and training projects based on the respective country-specific regulations.
4. Promote staff and student exchange between IER and Swiss TPH.

B. Overall arrangements

The overall arrangements (type of project, approaches, training components, supervision, etc.) for each link activity including the respective budget and financing schemes need to be summarised in a Project Document and agreed upon by all partners concerned before the start of the activity.

Names of trainees can be proposed by the institutions. All partners concerned must reach agreement for acceptance of any trainee.

C. Finance

All the costs of the programme, including equipment, will be covered by the respective projects. The existence, nature and potential of the present MoU should be considered in any planning stage of new major projects by any of the two institutions involved.

Any new activity will require careful budgeting well in advance and a mutually agreed strategy on how funds could be generated and are managed and disbursed. These aspects are also laid out in the separate Project Document (see section B, above).

D. Evaluation

The link programme/collaboration is assessed by the joint internal review of the progress made every year. The review is undertaken by at least two members of each institution appointed by the directorate of each institution. In addition, representatives of the institutions make regular site visits based on the respective operational plans.

The institutions involved may also call for an external evaluation when considered necessary.

E. Further dispositions

Code of conduct regarding joint activities

- The Parties shall at all time act in good faith in undertaking the programme and specific projects.
- Conduct the programme and specific projects in accordance with all applicable scientific and ethical codes and guidelines, statutory and institutional

requirements. This also includes using only personnel who have the necessary skills and qualifications to undertake the tasks.

- The parties are committed that senior scientists involved in the programme or specific projects act as mentors to junior scientists, including supervision of theses and assistance with continuous education and training.

Transfer of biological material

- Biological specimens collected as part of the programme or specific projects can be transferred between the institutions provided the respective institutional and national clearances are obtained.
- The transferred material can only be used for work specified in the respective project documents and the ethical approvals under which they were collected and transferred.
- The use of residual samples from joint research studies held at IER and/or Swiss TPH for future studies (by the institutions or 3rd parties) will require consent by IER and Swiss TPH as well as the respective national ethical clearances.

Intellectual property (IP)

- Programme IP shall be jointly owned by the two parties as tenants in common in proportion to their respective contributions to the programme and in accordance with IER and Swiss TPH and Basel / Swiss University regulations with regards to IP.
- Details regarding protection and possible commercialisation of programme/project IP will be dealt with on a project by project basis where IP issues become relevant.

Confidentiality and publications

- Neither party shall disclose any confidential information of the other party or make use of any confidential information of the other party for any purpose without consent of the other party, except for disclosures required by law or governmental authorities.
- Neither party shall publish results that are generated through partnership without the consent of the other party.
- The publishing party submits proposed publications to the non-publishing party for review and comment prior to its submission for publication or presentation. The non-publishing party shall have 21 days from receipt of the publication to advise on whether the publication may proceed.
- The publishing party will assure adequate representation according to international standards of publication of all contributors.

F. Termination of the MoU

A party may terminate this MoU by notice in writing if (i) the other party breaches this MoU, and (ii) and the breach is not remedied to the reasonable satisfaction of the first named party within 30 days of a notice to the party committing the breach requiring that it be remedied.

The parties may also terminate this MoU (i) at any time by mutual consent upon 30 days written notice or (ii) if the directorates form a reasonable conclusion that the programme is not achieving its stated objectives either party may terminate this MoU.

G. Signatures

Institute for Environmental
Research (IER), Tehran University of
Medical Sciences (TUMS), Tehran,
Iran

The Swiss Tropical and Public
Health Institute
Basel, Switzerland

M. Yunesian

Prof. Masud Yunesian
Vice chancellor for Research, TUMS

Date: July 7, 2014

[Signature]

Prof. Dr. Marcel Tanner
Director Swiss TPH

Date: 10/7/2014

[Signature]

Prof. Alireza Mesdaghinia
Director Institute for Environmental
Research (IER), TUMS

Date: July 7, 2014

Prof. Dr. Nino Künzli
Deputy Director Swiss TPH and
Head of Département Epidemiology
and Public Health

Date: [Signature] 20.7.2014