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CEPI | New vaccines for a safer world

Coalition for Epidemic Preparedness Innovations

Newsletter 12 February 2018

Address from our CEO



CEPI will soon announce its first partnership agreements. These partnerships will support the development of vaccines against MERS, Lassa, and Nipah, pathogens identified by WHO as high priority threats in its *R&D Blueprint for Action to Prevent Epidemics*. In the fall and winter, CEPI anticipates announcing a second round of partnerships, to advance rapid vaccine development and manufacturing platforms, in part by developing vaccine candidates against these and other high priority threats.

The establishment of these partnerships will represent a major milestone for CEPI and for global efforts to combat epidemics caused by emerging infectious diseases. CEPI's funding will provide a major stimulus for the advanced development of vaccines that would not otherwise progress. But while CEPI has a critical role to play in the global vaccine R&D ecosystem, its investments, necessary as they are, will not by themselves be sufficient. CEPI's investments can succeed only if there is coordinated global effort to advance and sustain such vaccines.

Above and beyond its role as a funder, CEPI has an important convening authority. Last week in Delhi, for example, CEPI sponsored a first-of-its-kind meeting on Chikungunya vaccines that brought together many of the world's leading experts on this disease to discuss recent progress in vaccine development, the problems they had encountered, and the challenges they foresee. CEPI's goal in sponsoring this conference was to promote knowledge sharing and to facilitate collaborations between teams working on promising vaccines. We can go faster and farther, especially where resources are limited, if we work together.

This week, in London, CEPI will host the first meeting of its new Joint Coordination Group (JCG). CEPI's JCG first met in November 2016, bringing together some 60 organizations. While that first meeting helped raise awareness of CEPI's efforts, it was not at all clear how to operationalize such a large entity. The new JCG is a considerably streamlined body, with only 11 permanent members and a more narrowly focused mission. The new JCG will facilitate communication and coordination between critical stakeholders, including multilateral organizations, regulatory agencies, agencies that fund or perform procurement, and responders on issues relating to the vaccines in CEPI's portfolio. Where appropriate, the JCG will serve as a platform for the early engagement of clinical scientists, public health officials, and national regulatory authorities in regions at risk. Through this engagement, and through this focus on CEPI's actual portfolio, the JCG will foster end-to-end thinking among critical partners, leading to better coordination of effort and more rapid and sustainable development of much-needed vaccines.

CEPI is a coalition and in a sense belongs to everyone. Speed and agility are critical, but on the long road to vaccine preparedness, CEPI cannot go it alone. We are taking steps to ensure that critical partners remain fully informed and engaged so that collectively we can direct our efforts for the greater good.

Richard Hatchett, CEPI CEO



Chikungunya conference

Chikungunya is a potentially disabling disease endemic to the tropics and sub-tropics. It can cause severe, disabling joint pain and high fever – with effects still felt years after infection for some. There is no cure but there is a clear role for vaccination to prevent the suffering and hardship associated with this mosquito borne disease.

With this in mind the Department of Biotechnology, India (DBT) and Coalition for Epidemic Preparedness Innovations (CEPI) organized a 'first of its kind' workshop "Chikungunya vaccines- challenges, opportunities and possibilities" on 5th and 6th February 2018 in Delhi, India, with support from the NIH/ NIAID in the US and PATH.

This brought together over 140 participants, representing most of the key players. As CEPI's Johan Holst told *Nature* magazine "The timing is right; there are promising vaccine candidates in the pipeline; what's needed now is momentum".

During the two days CEPI shared 'system-wide' data around existing research and development into Chikungunya candidate vaccines and whilst the overall consensus was positive about the possibility of a vaccine being developed there was also a strong sense that it's going to require a lot of coordination to drive that forward.

We would like to extend a big "thank-you" to all those that participated and particularly to our partners at the Department of Biotechnology in India for working with us to make this happen.

We will be shortly publishing a report from the conference so keep an eye on our website for that.

Davos wrap up

CEPI had its first anniversary, fittingly, at the place of its birth the World Economic Forum, Davos. We took some time there to speak to Catherine Cheney about our first year and you can read the article [here](#).

As well as giving CEPI an incredible opportunity to make the case for the importance of our mission it's a unique moment to build and strengthen our coalition across the public, private and philanthropic spheres. As part of the WEF's agenda our CEO led a number of simulation workshops exploring epidemic preparedness – you can get a flavour of what they covered by reading [here](#).

New Board

On January 24 2018, CEPI announced the establishment of its new permanent Board. The Board includes global leaders who have made extraordinary contributions to protecting and improving health, and who bring a wealth of expertise to CEPI as it moves into the next phase of its development. CEPI's new Board will have twelve members. Eight seats will be held by independent members, while four seats have been reserved for investors. Read more about the new CEPI Board and the eight nominated independent members [here](#).



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