

Participants:

Lingjiang Yang (LY) - Chair, Rachel Park (RP) Taufik Wilmansyah (TW), KR Krishnamurthy (KR), Analia Acebal (AA), Sonia Pagliusi (SP), Stephen Jarrett (SJ), Sonia Villaseñor (SV).

Meeting started at 13h05 and finished at 14h20.

SP introduced the issue of selecting a co-Chair. It was noted that Vishnu from IIL had previously volunteered to be co-Chair and the WG members agreed to him being the co-Chair. It was further noted that LY's term as Chair and co-Chair had been extended through June 2021 at which time a discussion will need to take place about selecting a new Chair.

SP gave an update on the consortium being put together piloting the barcoding of primary packaging following the pioneering work of Bio Farma in this traceability innovation. Four applications had been received as a result of the Expression of Interest that had been issued in November where DCVMN had indicated being able to provide some support with funding from PATH. These applications had been reviewed by an independent group and discussed in a meeting held on 12 January. The reviewers considered the applications not sufficiently clear with details missing, but did support the idea of creating the consortium. One important factor was the recent developments at VIPS which highlighted the need to ensure companies were able to barcode secondary and tertiary packaging in line with Gavi/UNICEF requirements. This meant that barcoding of primary packaging should be tackled only once companies had implemented barcoding on secondary packaging. The consortium will have its first meeting on 10 February where the applicants will provide more details on their intended pilots and what specific requirements of support they have from DCVMN.

The issue of barcoding on secondary packaging was discussed. TW indicated that Bio Farma was in the process of implementing barcoding on secondary and tertiary packaging while piloting barcoding on primary packaging. He further informed that Bio Farma is now focused on barcoding of its COVID-19 vaccine from Sinovac in the filling and finishing processes. AA informed that Sinergium is working on the barcoding of secondary packaging which is an NRA requirement. SP mentioned that the costs of barcoding primary packaging may be a constraint for some companies.

Given the heightened focus on the barcoding of secondary packaging, it was suggested that the consortium be expanded to include members engaged in barcoding of secondary packaging. A new invitation (Expression of Interest) could be sent out to members for new applications with a mid-March deadline on the understanding that a commitment to eventually pilot barcoding of primary packaging was given. The consortium may be limited to a total of 10 manufacturers to make it manageable. Software development was considered an important part of the implementation of barcoding. At the same time, while serialization was prudent to address counterfeiting, the costs may be too high at the initial stages. GS1 itself may be able to advise on the pros and cons of serialization.

SJ gave a brief introduction on stockpiling, which is the second agenda item that had been agreed for the WG from the discussions held in 2019. He had circulated a draft working paper beforehand indicating the growing attention being given to stockpiling, noting the recent establishment of an Ebola vaccine stockpile up to 500,000 doses. This adds to the cholera, yellow fever, meningitis, measles/MR and polio stockpiles already in place. Furthermore, CEPI has focused on the need for stockpiling new vaccines for epidemic preparedness. In addition to the need for rapid response to emergencies, the fast deployment of vaccines is also needed to address stock-outs which are common in many countries. A distinction has to be made between static stockpiles, only used when outbreaks occur, and rotating stockpiles where vaccines are routinely shipped but a certain amount is kept for emergency use (outbreak or stock-out).

The goal is to obtain the experience of companies managing stockpiles, to understand the risks and challenges involved and to determine best practices in stockpile management. Going forward, a list of potential discussion points could be put together by email.

RP indicated that Eubiologics had experience with the cholera stockpile and TW mentioned the tPOV and mOPV stockpiles Bio Farma manages. KR added that Bharat Biotech keeps 6 months of some of its vaccines in stock for meeting client needs. LY and AA indicated that neither CNBG nor Sinergium has any experience with stockpiles. It was agreed that RP, TW and KR will present their experiences in the next meeting of the WG.

TW gave a short update on Biofarma's project. SP asked, regarding the results published in the paper, if all the 600 doses of vaccines shipped to the different Health centers achieved the objective or if there were any issues, reports or safety/quality concerns; she also asked how many doses will be piloted for the Covid vaccine. TW answered that there were no issues reported in the pilot of 600 doses and that the Covid vaccine barcoding implementation will be done directly, without a pilot, as the pilot was done with the pentavalent vaccine. More data can be provided in the next meeting by his colleague Mr. Yudha Bramanti.

Action points:

1. A new invitation (Expression of Interest) to be sent out to members for new applications to the consortium with a mid-March deadline focusing on the barcoding of secondary packaging with the understanding that a commitment to eventually pilot barcoding of primary packaging would be given.
2. RP, TW and KR to prepare summaries of their experiences with stockpiling for the next meeting of the WG.

Nyon, January 26, 2021

Notes by Stephen Jarrett, edited by Sonia Pagliusi & Sonia Villaseñor

 2021.03.09

Approved: Lingjiang Yang, Chair
Chengdu