CONSULTATIVE MEETING REPORT ON
THE ESTABLISHMENT OF AN INSTITUTION TO PROMOTE HEALTH
RESEARCH AND EVIDENCE-BASED DECISION MAKING IN ZAMBIA.

HELD 31ST MARCH TO 1ST APRIL 2006
AT PROTEA HOTEL, CHISAMBA.

A consultative meeting on the establishment of an organisation to promote health research and evidence based decision making in Zambia was held at Protea Hotel from the 31st of March to the 1st of April 2006. There were twenty four participants, drawn from various organisations (government and non governmental). The list of participants is attached in the annex.

DAY 1 - 31ST MARCH, 2006.

1. MORNING SESSION

The meeting was called to order by the convenor Dr Joseph Kasonde at 11:05 hours. He started by welcoming those present at the meeting. The convenor then asked all participants present to introduce themselves.

Since most participants were not present in the morning session, the convenor suggested that participants break-off for lunch and convene at 14:00 hours.

2. AFTERNOON SESSION

Self introductions were continued in the afternoon because more participants had arrived.

Professor Neil Nkanza, a pathologist, was nominated as the chairperson of the meeting.
The chairperson led the participants in the afternoon deliberations. Three presentations were made. The first presenter was Dr Joseph Kasonde who is an international consultant. The second was Mr. Sandy Campbell from the International Development Research Centre (IDRC) and the third presentation was done by Dr. Fred Kaona, a senior scientist at the Mwengu Research Centre.

2 a. First Presentation

Dr. Kasonde's presentation mainly outlined the expected outcomes of the consultative meeting. Some points highlighted in his presentation were, the need to carry out research and ways of using research findings to formulate policies. He also mentioned that as the organisation is being formed there is need to be specific so that there is no dublication of work.

Dr. Kasonde highlighted some of the concerns with regard to the health research environment in the country such as:
-   Inadequate support to health research and capacity building
-   Inadequate utilisation of results for policy and practice, and
-   Inability to translate research into a language that stake-holders can understand.

He also said that by the end of the consultative meeting, participants should come up with shared vision and mission, objectives, strategies and actions for the organisation. He further encouraged participants to be free and open during the deliberations and to participate actively. He also mentioned that contributions from the participants should be broad and not excessively detailed.

2 b. Second presentation

Mr Sandy Campbell's presentation focused on three issues
- Research matters in Zambia
- Knowledge translation, and
- Challenges faced by researchers and stakeholders.

2 c. Third Presentation

Dr. Kaona informed the participants that the intention to form an organisation that would bring all research findings together was not a new concept. This need was identified way back in 1998 at a workshop in Siavonga. Stake holders at that meeting identified that a lot of research was being done around the country but there was no co-ordination of these researches and access to the results by policy makers and other researchers was very minimal and difficult.

Dr. Kaona mentioned that in November 2005, Mwengu Research Centre was given a task to go round the country to find out what researchers have done in the country and accessibility of these research results. He also mentioned that the centre gathered a lot of information which could be made available to the organisation that is about to be formed.

He further revealed that some of the hindrances encountered by researchers were financial support and lack of motivation.

He expressed enthusiasm and hoped that the organisation that is being put in place to co-ordinate research will bring with it assurance that information collected by researchers will be put to public use.

3. COMMENTS FROM PARTICIPANTS

After the three presentations, the following comments and contributions were made by participants:

- Participants expressed happiness and appreciation at the fact that such a meeting had been organised to bring together researches that are being done in the country.

- They said that the organization being formed should ensure that ownership of research is recognised in order to remove fear of losing research; the organisation should endeavour to promote and protect ownership of research.

- Participants felt that the consultative meeting should also highlight positive work researchers have done in the country.

- Participants expressed concern on the mode of research funding in the country. They said it is dificult to release results of researches that are donor - driven, since donors detect when, where and to whom they think the results should be released. Therefore, it would be better if government has funds that researchers can access so that research results can be easily released.

- Participants also wanted clarification on the role the government will play in the new organisation.

- A participant wanted to know if there is any association that researchers are affiliated to which assists in solving their problems. In response, a participant stated that researchers are affiliated to the National Science and Technology Council (NSTC) which supervises and oversees all research in the country, but, there is need for health researchers to organise themselves and co-ordinate their work. Another participant added by saying that the Ministry of Health (MoH) has a Research Board which is supposed to oversee all health research being done in the country.

- It was emphasized that the organisation should not only look at health research but researches in other areas of study as well.

- The participants further emphasized that there is need for the new organisation to be supported by a legal framework which will make a difference from earlier attempts to form such an organisation. The legal framework will enable the organisation to form networks with researchers and research organisations. The legal backing will also enable the organisation prompt research organisations to submit research results to the organisation.

- It was mentioned that there is need for this organisation to have a say on research in the country.

- The new organisation that will be formed should have a strong organisational structure that will bond research institutions together.

- Finally the chairperson wrapped up the discussion by stating that participants should come up with a strategic plan designed in such a way that it attracts funding for continuity of the organisation.

4. GROUP DISCUSSIONS

Participants were divided into three groups to come up with a vision and a mission statement for the organistion. The participants agreed that the vision and the mission statement of the organisation should be:

4 a. VISION:

"An environment in which health research evidence forms the basis for policy and practice, leading to improved health".

4 b. MISSION STATEMENT:

"The Zambian Health Research Forum is a not-for-profit organisation; its aim is to contribute to the improvement of the health status of the Zambian population through coordinated, responsive and sound health research and evidence".

The first day ended at 19:30 hours. The chairperson asked the participants to continue working in their groups and come up with objectives and strategies for the organisation so that these could be presented the following morning.

DAY 2 - 1<u>ST</u>APRIL, 2006.

Day 2 was the last day of the consultative meeting. The meeting started at 09:00 hours with presentations from the three groups. After the presentations, participants agreed on the following Objectives, Strategies and Activities of the organisation that will be followed for the next 5 years:

Objectives	Strategies	Activities
Coordinate research OR Coordinate research activities between and among researchers (institution-to-institution) and research users in governmental and non governmental institutions	Inventory research institutions and their functions Broad representation Advocacy	• Prioritise research to be coordinated. • Identify who is doing research (institutions and individuals). • Visit research institutions and individuals. • Encourage and support institutions to do their own inventories and to share with the Forum. • Create a mechanism to take in, monitor/track incoming information to create a database of research and publish it on a website. • Undertake literature review of published and unpublished works. • Compile, print and disseminate directory of researchers (individuals and institutions). • Ensure broad representation of government and nongovernmental stakeholders on the Forum. • Advocate with stakeholders on the need for coordinated research.
Collate identified needs and set priorities of research and research users	Assessment and analysis of research needs	• Map stake-holders. • Review database to relate the needs with available research. • Identify research gaps and set priorities and a research agenda. • Develop tools (eg. questionnaires, visits and meetings) for needs assessment for research institutions and individuals. • Analyse, publish and disseminate findings of the needs assessment. • Facilitate priority setting processes of other institutions.
Synthesize research and promote its use by stakeholders	Knowledge translation	• Analyse, interpret and distill available research and convert it into advocacy tools. • Promote use of evidence-based information for decision- making. • Create a website with a data base of research activities on it. • Organise workshops/meetings for stakeholders.

		• Publish and disseminate workshop reports.
Facilitate linkages and networking among researchers, users and like-minded institutions locally, regionally and globally	Develop linkages among stakeholders Networking Encourage communication and collaboration between researchers and users of research results.	• Identify institutional, individual and potential users of information. • Identify means of networking with institutions. • Identify existing networks and ways to link with them. • Advertise and promote the work of others, spotlight researchers. • Brainstorm on other incentives to link. • Support internet connectivity among network members. • Use the directory of researchers for networking support.
Act as a resource centre providing available resources (funding sources, conferences, training opportunities)	Resource centre to assist researchers Provision of services.	• Establish resource centre infrastructure (physical space, computers and internet access, etc.). • Provide other non-infrastructural aspects (human resources, etc.) • Provide information on sources of funding, training opportunities, and assist those interested in accessing them. • Help researchers usher protocols through the ethics review process. • Develop and disseminate IEC materials. • Host conferences and workshops. • Market Resource Centre to researchers and other potential users.
Support capacity building in both research and research utilization	Mobilise resources Capacity building	• Offer courses on methodology and resource mobilisation and general research. • Identify and establish links with local and international funders.
Ensure organizational credibility and sustainability	Standard Operating Procedures Marketing of the Forum	• Refine constitution. • Seek accreditation with relevant local and international bodies. • Create organizational structure with roles, etc. • Establish an office.

		- Ensure funding, set up credible accounting systems, budgets, etc. - Periodic assessment of organizational SWOT, on-going organizational M&E for appropriate positioning of the organization. - Develop a code of conduct and standards including guidelines, and shared values. - Ensure broad representation of government and nongovernmental stakeholders on the Forum. - Undertake income generating activities such as workshops, training programmes and consultancy.

5. POSITIONING AND STRUCTURE OF THE ORGANISATION

Other issues that were discussed at the session were:
- How the organisation will be positioned in the research environment;
- The structure of the organisation.

Participants discussed and agreed that by fulfilling its objectives the organisation will automatically position itself in the research environment. Participants agreed that the organisation will be an independent non-profit-making organisation which will provide services according to its objectives.

It was also agreed that the organisation will have the following structure:

1. **General Assembly:** This will be an assembly of people affiliated to the organisation. They will take part in major decision- making once a year at the Annual General Meeting (AGM).
2. **The Council:** The council will have 21 members depending on the number of affiliates to the organisation. The council members will meet 3 to 4 times in a year and they will have three - year tenure of office.
3. **The Board:** The board will consist of 9 members and 1 ex-officio member. The Board will be in charge of supervising the Secretariat.
4. **Secretariat:** This will consist of full-time staff and will be headed by an Executive Director who will be empowered to constitute the Secretariat with the approval of the Board, or wii be given statutory description under the constitution.

6. WAY FORWARD AND NAME OF THE ORGANISATION

Participants suggested that there should be another meeting soon which should be a General Meeting of the organisation's members in the next four months i.e. 31st July, 2006 so that members can elect position holders in the organisation. The name of the organisation should also be discussed at the General Assembly.

7. CLOSING REMARKS

The meeting ended at 16:00 hours with conclusion remarks from Dr. Victor Mukonka, the Director of Public Health and Research, Ministry of Health and Dr. Joseph Kasonde, the convenor of the consultative meeting.

Dr. Mukonka assured participants that the organisation will receive full support from the Ministry of Health. He also commended the organisers for the initiative taken to make it possible for the consultative meeting to take place.

Dr. Kasonde thanked the participants for availing themselves and participating diligently in the deliberations. He also thanked the sponsors of the meeting; National AIDS Council (NAC) and the International Development Research Centre (IDRC). He further thanked management of Protea Hotel for their hospitality.

Reported by:

Rhoza Chiwambo Shonga – MPH II/SOM
Linda Nyangu Chonya – MPH II/SOM

1. LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

PARTICIPANTS LIST FOR THE CONSULTATION MEETING ON HEALTH RESEARCH

Chisamba, 31st March – 1st April, 2006

No.	Name	Designation	Email address	Phone/Cell No.	Organisation
1.	Dr. Joseph Kasonde	International Consultant	jkasonde@hotmail.com	097 822812	International Organisation
2.	Prof. Neil Nkanza	Pathologist	nkanza@lancet.co.za	096 667680	Prof. Nkanza Laboratories
3.	Mr. Sandy Campbell	Project Officer	scampbell@idrc.ca	097 113991	IDRC
4.	Prof. K.S Baboo	Professor	sridutt2001@yahoo.com	095 832672	UNZA/ZMA
5.	Dr Sekelani.S Banda	Assistant Dean	ssbanda@zamnet.zm	096 758833	UNZA/Foundation 50 Academic Society
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15	Dr. Victor Mukonka	Director Public health and Research	vmukonka@cboh.org.zm	097 844754	Ministry of Health
15.	Mr Bernard Chisanga	Policy Advisor	bchisanga@hssp.org.zm	01 254555	HSSP
16.	Rhoza C. Shonga	MPH Student/ Research	rhozashonga@yahoo.co.uk	097 633629	Community Medicine
17.	Linda N. Chonya	MPH Student/ Research	lindachonya@yahoo.co.uk	097 810017	Community Medicine

ANNEX B

2. AGENDA

AGENDA FOR THE CONSULTATION MEETING
ON HEALTH RESEARCH
Chisamba, 31st March – 1st April, 2006

I. Opening. Friday 31st March, 2006.

10:00 – 12:00

Introductions
Nominations of chairperson
Objectives of the consultation (Dr. Joseph Kasonde)
Overview of research in Zambia (Dr. Fred Kaona)
Discussion

Lunch break and hotel check-in 12:00 – 14:00

II Aims and Objectives OF THE Proposed Institution 14:00 – 17:30

Presentation on donor and NGO percepectives on research (Dr. Golden Bolla)
Presentation on Knowledge translation (Mr. Sandy Cambell)
Discussion
Vision: *If this institution is to be 100% successful, what should it do?*
Mission: *How can this institution act to be 100% successful?*
Positioning: *How can this instritution maintain autonomy yet be responsive to its major stakeholders?*
Objectives: *Over a five-year period, what must be archieved?*
Discussion

Tea Break 15:45 – 16:00

III STRATEGY: *How can this institution achieve the defined objectives?*
(For Friday evening informal discussions in groups)

Dinner 19:00 onwards

Saturday 1st April 2006

III STRATEGY continued
08:30 – 10:30
Strategies: *How can this institution achieve the defined objectives?*
Priority Actions: *What does it need to do and when?*
Funding needs and mechanisms: *How to fund it, and by whom?*

Tea break 10:30 – 10:45

10:45 – 12:30
IV Small Group Discussions
   a) Vital issues already identified and vital issues not yet identified
   b) Suggestions for specific actions
   c) Should this institution be a capacity builder (e.g. for researchers? Health managers?) and if so how?

12:30 - 14:00
Lunch

14:00 – 16:00
V. Structure, Functions and Management
Report back to group on small group findings
Staffing: *What kind of staffing complement is needed?*
Board of Director: *What blend of people/institution should sit on the board?*
Revisiting the proposed name of the institution.

16:00 Session closes.