

SRCMF Malaria Technical Working Group (MTWG) Meeting Report

Virtual Meeting

27th May 2022

Contents

Execu	tive Summary2
Inaug	ural Session Error! Bookmark not defined.
Busin	ess Session3
Арр	oointment of Chair3
Add	option of Agenda3
1. S	summary and follow-up on the recommendations of the last MTWG meeting3
	Presentation on coordination and facilitation for strengthening of surveillance and M&E in der areas/districts3
3. <i>A</i>	Apprise and discuss on advocacy and communication strategy3
4. <i>A</i>	Apprise and discuss on Resource mobilization strategy4
	Discussion on role of Parliamentarians, Legislators and leaders of the local governance uctures4
6. S	RCMF website contents5
7. N	MTWG Committee Members5
Dis	cussions & Recommendations5
Clos	sing Error! Bookmark not defined.
Anne	xes7
1.	Summary of Recommendation of last MTWG Meeting7
2.	Surveillance, Monitoring and Evaluation for cross-border coordination8
3.	Accelerating Cross Border Respnses – Role of Advocacy & Communication13
4.	SCRMF Website15
5.	Agenda
6.	List of Participants19

Executive Summary

The 2nd Malaria Technical Working Group (MTWG) Virtual Meeting was held on the 27th May 2022.

The meeting was Chaired by Dr. Rinku Sharma, Joint Director, NCVBDC, Ministry of Health, Government of India. Meeting was participated by representatives from country CCMs and delegates from National Malaria Programmes, Resource Persons of the SRCMF and partner organizations, MTWG members and SRCMF Secretariat.

After deliberations on all the agenda points following recommendations were proposed:

- Work done by SRCMF needs to be documented and utilized as advocacy materials.
- Advocacy for Regional elimination of malaria to presented in the WHO Regional meeting of Health Ministers to advocate for Resource Mobilization for cross-border malaria elimination.
- For sustained funding, countries must earmark a small part of Global Fund resources at proposal development stage for intercountry collaboration. CCMs to advocate for allocating of funds in Global Fund country proposals for cross-border inter-country activities in the SEA Region.
- Until Indian FCRA (The Foreign Contribution (Regulation) Amendment Act) registration is obtained SRCMF needs to approach donors which are exempted from FCRA, to be able to receive funds from external sources.
- SRCMF should engage parliamentarians to appraise them of cross-border malaria elimination
- CCM needs to advocate for cross-border malaria elimination in National Parliamentary steering committees.
- SRCMF Website should be linked with country websites.
- CCM needs to be made responsible for data sharing and coordination among countries and with SRCMF.
- Challenges of real-time data sharing across the countries needs to be addressed by activating formal and informal channels for data sharing to address cross-border issues.
- Key indicators for Surveillance and M&E for formalization of routine data collection need to be identified.
- Research being an important element for Surveillance and M&E, a research component may be included in the Surveillance and M&E plans.
- Advocacy for cross-border malaria elimination at high level to support the long-term political and financial commitments is necessary.
- MTWG should come up with guidelines for treatment of people moving across porous national borders since different countries may have differing treatment protocols for addressing the cross-border malaria.

The meeting concluded at 4:30 pm IST.

Inaugural session

Opening remarks

The opening session started with welcome address by Dr. Jigmi Singay, Executive Secretary cum Coordinator, SRCMF. He extended warm welcome to each and every one from Global Fund (GF) constituency member countries, partners and all resource persons. He highlighted the objectives and expected outcome of the 2nd MTWG meeting to the audience. This was followed by self-introduction by the participants.

Business Session

Appointment of Chair

This session started with Dr. Jigmi Singay, Executive Secretary proposing Dr. Rinku Sharma, Joint Director, NCVBDC, Ministry of Health, Government of India as chair for the MTWG meeting. The proposal was unanimously accepted.

Adoption of Agenda

The Chairperson of the meeting thanked the participants for nominating her as the Chair of the MTWG meeting and then invited comments on the draft agenda (annex). In absence of any comments, the draft agenda was adopted without any change as the final agenda.

1. Summary and follow-up on the recommendations of the last MTWG meeting

Dr. Shampa Nag, Resource Person of SRCMF, presented the summary and follow-up on recommendations of the last MTWG meeting. Dr. Jimgi Singay mentioned that all recommendations were submitted to SRCMF Regional meetings and inputs if any will be presented back to MTWG for further follow up and full implementation.

2. Presentation and discussion on coordination and facilitation for strengthening of surveillance and M&E in border areas/districts

Dr. Ferdinand Laihad, Resource Person of SRCMF, made a presentation on coordination and facilitation for strengthening of surveillance and M&E in border areas/districts. He spoke of the M&E framework with key performance input, output, outcome and impact indicators for milestones and targets to be achieved by 2025.

He made following recommendations:

- Obtain a cross-border collaboration agreement on malaria elimination at the district level in the in international cross border areas/districts, with the timeline for implementation.
- Establish a joint bilateral coordination mechanism for addressing cross-border malaria elimination and for establishment of information-sharing network.
- WHO criteria for M&E to be recommended from the next meeting onwards.
- Strengthen existing technical assistance from WHO and other partners through SRCMF coordination.

3. Apprise and discuss on advocacy and communication strategy

Mr Soumitra Ghosh, Consultant, apprised on advocacy and communication strategy for accelerating cross-border responses in South-East Asia Region. He emphasized the need for advocacy at the higher levels and requested inputs from the MTWG in finalizing the advocacy strategy for cross-border

programs. He highlighted the need for a 'bottom-up' approach in achieving the goal for Malaria elimination in the region.

Summarizing, he further stated the importance of harmonization and synchronization of policies, action plans, surveillance, monitoring and decision-making and ensuring availability, adequacy and utilization of technical and financial resources and political commitment. This also includes addressing barriers at programmatic/intervention and health systems levels. SRCMF has to provide support in development of plans, materials, tools and mobilize technical assistance towards strengthening regional coordination, facilitate reinforcement of commitment for cross-border malaria elimination.

4. Appraisal on Resource mobilization strategy

Dr. Olavi Elo, Resource Person of SRCMF, shared the Resource mobilization strategy and updated on the progress. He mentioned about the cost involved in activities of SRCMF. It is expected that National budgets should cover the work in cross-border areas, however additional financial resources would be required for coordination and implementation of cross-border plans. SRCMF needs to be alert about opportunities for securing new and additional resources and to approach donors and agencies external to the governments for the required resources. He mentioned about the RBM support through UNOPS for the 1st year and the attempts made to secure funding for Year 2 and 3.

Regarding resources from other agencies, discussions have been held and are ongoing. Recently, discussions have taken place with SAARC Development Fund, (SDF) regarding possibility of additional funding for cross border activities. Discussions have also been initiated with other agencies supporting national programs, such as BMGF and USAID. SRCMF also needs to reach out to the Banks, particularly, ADB.

Dr. Jigmi Singay, the Executive Secretary, added that SRCMF is active in resource mobilization. He added that there is Resource Mobilization Committee under the Chair of the Alternate Board Member Dr. Shobini Rajan that provides input for, consults on and supports the resource mobilization strategy.

He emphasized the need for additional funding and expressed the need for Member countries to work on plan for securing additional funding for sustainability of the cross-border activities.

He further added that UNOPS-RBM had supported SRCMF with funding for the 1^{st} year, till June 2022, and apprised the participants that the SRCMF Secretariat has already submitted proposal for 2^{nd} and 3^{rd} years and the result will be known by July 2022.

ADB and World Bank and UN funding are also being pursued. He also pointed out a major obstacle in securing funds due to requirement of the India FCRA certification for which SRCMF will be eligible only in June 2023.

5. Discussion on role of Parliamentarians, Legislators and leaders of the local governance structures, other relevant influencers and private sector for malaria elimination in cross-border areas/districts

Dr. Jigmi Singay discussed the role of Parliamentarians. He underlined that Parliamentarians and private sector are critical for sustained political commitments and for advocating for sufficient and sustained resources for progressively demonstrating success in reducing malaria burden and accelerating the momentum to achieve the ultimate goal of elimination. Parliammentaries need to be sensitized and taken on board. Parliamentarians, legislatures and local leaders are equally important, since most governments are decentralized. The SRCMF work needs to be presented to them appropriately, to ensure the support of the parliamentarians.

6. SRCMF website contents

Dr SN Misra, Resource Person, SRCMF apprised the participants on contents of the SRCMF website. He discussed the importance of the website and the social media in times when the world is moving towards the digital platform for promoting work, whether it's the government, private sector or the civil society. He added that SRCMF website is going to be a good platform for sharing of information among the countries in the SEA Region.

He shared the content of the SRCMF website:

- ➤ Will cover all SRCMF and disease specific activities across cross-border areas of 11 member countries.
- Intends to be a 'go-to-site' for updated information.
- Will be dynamic and regularly updated with latest information from governments, international agencies and civil society.
- ➤ Will be an attractive platform for all member countries to share all relevant information on the site through the SRCMF secretariat.

7. MTWG Committee Members

Dr. Jigmi Singay, Executive Secretary, SRCMF stated that the Secretariat will approach 11 member committees and get nominations for MTWG from National programs and others who can serve in the committee. A selection process as per the mandate of the committee will be followed and list from all countries will be compiled and finalized.

Discussions & Recommendations

- 1. Work done by SRCMF needs to be documented and utilized as advocacy materials.
- 2. Advocacy for Regional elimination of malaria to be resented at the WHO Regional meeting of Health Ministers to get their support for Resource Mobilization for cross-border malaria elimination.
- 3. For sustained funding, countries must earmark a small part of Global Fund resources at proposal development stage for intercountry collaboration. CCMs to advocate for allocating of funds in Global Fund country proposals for cross-border inter-country activities in the SEA Region.
- 4. Resources should also be mobilized for TB and HIV/AIDS and Health systems as robust health systems are not only essential to ending HIV, TB and malaria but yield broader health outcomes, delivering health services in a sustainable, equitable and effective way.
- 5. SRCMF to engage parliamentarians and appraise them of cross-border malaria elimination.
- 6. CCM to advocate for cross-border malaria elimination in National Parliamentary steering committees.
- 7. SRCMF to advocate at high level to support the long-term political and financial commitment necessary for cross-border malaria elimination
- 8. Until the India FCRA (The Foreign Contribution (Regulation) Amendment Act) registration is obtained SRCMF to approach donors which are exempted from FCRA.
- 9. SRCMF Website should be linked with country websites.
- 10. CCMs may be made responsible for data sharing coordinate among countries and with SRCMF.
- 11. Address the Challenges of real-time data sharing across the countries by activating formal and informal channels for data sharing to address cross-border issues.

- 12. Identify key indicators aligned with national and WHO elimination criteria for Surveillance and M&E for formalization of routine data collection and data/information sharing at cross-border districts/local level between countries in consultation with and agreement of NMEPs. A research component may also be included as part of M&E and surveillance to inform policy decisions, strategy and proposal development and advocacy and communication.
- 13. Cross-border Malaria elimination indicators to be made part of the planning, M&E and NMEP review.
- 14. MTWG to come up with guidelines and advise for treatment for people moving across porous national borders since different countries have differing treatment protocols (issue emerged during Indo-Nepal state and district level bilateral meeting) for addressing the problem of cross-border malaria.
- 15. Any technical issues raised during the districts/local level bilateral meetings should be taken up and deliberated in the MTWG to develop consensus on critical issues, seek advice for best way forward and advise /recommendations to be disseminated to concerned districts for taking action.

Closing

In the closing session the Executive Secretary thanked all the participants for their active participation and valuable contributions. He also thanked Chair for conducting the meeting efficiently and bringing it to a successful conclusion. The Chair thanked participants for their active participation, productive deliberations and making it a very successful meeting. The Chair formally closed the meeting at 4:30 pm IST.

Annexure

1. Summary of Recommendation of last MTWG Meeting

SRCMF Malaria Technical Working Group (TWG)

- The SRCMF Malaria Technical Working Group (TWG) is constituted to provide overall advice and guidance to the SRCMF to:
 - coordinate cross-border coordination to accelerate malaria elimination in SEA Region
 - facilitate strengthening of the on-going efforts in the border areas by the national malaria programmes (NMPs) in the Global Fund constituency countries
- 1st meeting of the MTWG was held on December 20, 2021 (Chair Prof. Dr. Mohammad Abul Faiz, Former Global Fund Board Member, SEA Region and Co-chair - Dr. Tanu Jain, Director, NCVBDC).
- Participants included: representatives from country CCMs and delegates from NMPs, resource persons of the SRCMF, and partner organizations including APLMA-APMEN, BMGF and RTI International.

Recommendations

- CCM representation in MTWG should be on rotation basis to maintain the size small and effective.
- NMPs should be represented in the MTWG; starting with select countries followed by other countries in SEA Region.
- Representation of the Board Member and Alternate Board Member of the GF constituency in SEA to be reviewed and decided later.
- Reasonable range to be suggested for arriving at number of MTWG member depending on requirement and focus areas of focus at a given time to render MTWG effective.
- MTWG should focus mainly on cross-border program management and systems guidance and related strategic plans, action plans, reports, capacity building and resource mobilisation.
- MTWG should focus on local level program management and implementation in border areas
- WHO technical guidance should be followed.
- The ToR of MTWG should be refined to make the group functional.

Recommendations on draft strategic framework for cross-border coordination in SEA 2022-2025

- Strategy is comprehensive, however, needs simplification.
- Strategy should avoid any potential duplication and add value to existing strategies of other organisations. Strategy should focus on health system strengthening in border districts especially prioritizing local capacity building regarding management and coordination.
- The upcoming SRCMF website can play a critical role in communication and in supporting and facilitating advocacy with the GF constituency countries and partners
- The draft strategic framework for cross-border coordination should be shared after incorporating recommendations with all participants for feedback.

2. Surveillance, Monitoring and Evaluation for cross-border coordination to accelerate malaria elimination in SEA 2022-2025

> Surveillance, Monitoring and Evaluation for cross-border coordination to accelerate malaria elimination in SEA 2022-2025

Dr. Ferdinand J. Laihad, DMM, MPHM SRCMF SEARO Resource person/consultant TWG SRCMF virtual meeting on 27 May 2022

Table of content

- 1. Strategy Framework,
- 2. Objectives
- 3. Surveillance and M & E, strategy, and key intervention
- 4. Surveillance activities
- 5. Monitoring and evaluation activities
- 6. Milestone and target
- 7. Key performance indicators
- 8. Recommendation

Objectives

- · To improve access to quality and timely malaria diagnosis, treatment and prevention in border areas with special attention to at risk and vulnerable populations
- To strengthen surveillance and M&E in border areas
- · To strengthen cross-border coordination especially focused on local level
- To advance advocacy and communication for leadership commitments, multi-sector coordination and community mobilization

Strategy Framework

- Vision: Malaria-free South-East Asia Mission

To achieve and sustain malaria elimination in South-East Asia through the tailored, inclusive and equitable application of interventions along with border areas within nectusive and equitable application of mervenions along with botter areas wrong countries and effective cross-border coordination between countries through sustained political commitments and multi-sector and community support towards contributing to the achievement of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

By 2025, to contribute to acceleration and attainment of malaria burden reduction and malaria elimination and prevention of re-establishment in border areas in alignment with country milestones and targets in South-East Asia.

Objectives

- To improve access to quality and timely malaria diagnosis, treatment and prevention in border areas with special attention to at risk and vulnerable populations
- To strengthen surveillance and M&E in border areas
- To strengthen cross-border coordination especially focused on local level
- To advance advocacy and communication for leadership commitments, multi-sector coordination and community mobilization

Surveillance, monitoring & evaluation strategy, and key intervention

 ${\bf Strategy:} \ Optimizing \ epidemiological \ surveillance, \ Optimizing \ entomological \ surveillance, \ Strengthening \ M\&E$

Key intervention: Facilitate and coordinate:

- strengthening of capacities and systems for epidemiological surveillance (routine and case-based); outbreak preparedness, early warning & response including cross-border notification, especially in the event of a surge in cases, the emergence of drug resistance, etc.
- $\bullet \ sharing \ of \ information \ regarding \ imported \ cases, \ active \ transmission \ foci; \ and \ establishment \ of \ linkages \ with \ existing/upcoming \ database(s)/dashboards$
- · strengthening of capacities and systems for entomological surveillance
- strengthening of M&E and related capacities; establishment of a mechanism for joint review, and field supervision; and promotion of border-relevant research

Surveillance activities in the borders area

- Strengthening of capacities and systems for epidemiological surveillance:
 - Screening/Case detection & classification, focus classification & response on the cross border districts as well at exit/entry points for travelers/high-risk groups/mobile migrant Population (MMP) from Malaria endemic areas.
 - Establish and expand Border Malaria Check posts including infrastructure, personnel, supplies, and training
 - Ensuring quality assurance of diagnostics used for screening of populations at international border crossings and training/certification of security personnel at international border crossings on malaria diagnosis
 - intensify routine surveillance to detect and eliminate the sale of oral artemisinin-based monotherapies, spurious, falsified, falsely labelled, and counterfeit antimalarials, especially in border areas
 - Synchronized surveillance activities to be implemented for malaria elimination in both cross border districts

Surveillance activities in the borders area -2

· Sharing of information:

- Case information sharing, notification, active transmission foci, and referrals such as treatment guidelines, anti-malarial drugs efficacy, health post check positive malaria cases for treatment, and referral
- Support from multilateral agencies for the facilitation of cooperation and information sharing between countries.

· Strengthening of capacities and systems for entomological surveillance:

 Joint cross border Vector surveillance on mapping vector breeding potential and Insecticide resistance study

Monitoring & evaluation activities in the borders areas

- The aim of monitoring and evaluation activities in the borders areas is to ensure the programs are working satisfactorily and to make adjustments if necessary to reach malaria elimination and prevention of re-establishment at border districts through:
 - Implementation of a mechanism for monthly data collection from international border areas and integration into national MIS.
 - Monthly monitoring indicators, annual evaluation, and regular supervision using tools available
 - · Establishment of a mechanism for joint review, and field supervision
 - · Promotion of border-relevant research
 - Synchronized monitoring and evaluation activities to be implemented for malaria elimination in both cross border districts

Milestone and target

By 2022

- Development of costed roadmaps with actions and key indicators for the Global Fund SEA constituency countries (in alignment with technical guidance by the WHO and others) facilitated following comprehensive situation analysis.
- Country focal points for cross-border coordination at national/provincial/state/district levels designated.
- Mapping of health facilities within 10 Km of the border, PoE (formal, informal), and key and vulnerable communities facilitated, and capacity building/communication needs assessed.
- Sharing of malaria information through agreeable modes (including the SRCMF website) initiated.
- Regional consultations on cross-border coordination participated/hosted by the GF SEA constituency with facilitation by the SRCMF and/or partner agencies organized.
- Bilateral coordination meetings between adjoining districts organized.
- Consultations with partners/donors held for support/exchange of information.
- Advocacy with Parliamentarians, Legislators of Legislative Assembly/Provincial level government, leaders of
 the local governance structures, and other influencers initiated for cross-border coordination.
- Resource mobilization strategy developed, and resource needs for cross-border coordination explored.

Milestone and target - 2

By 2024:

- Set milestones and targets in country NSPs related to progressive/complete interruption of local transmission achieved.
- · Cross-border coordination strengthened with requisite capacities built at local level.
- Mechanism for sharing relevant malaria information between countries established.
- Advocacy and multi-sector collaboration enhanced for sustained commitments. By 2025:
- Set milestones and targets in country NSPs related to malaria elimination achieved with an optimized implementation of interventions and surveillance and M&E.
- Functional cross-border coordination is an integral component of malaria elimination and prevention of re-establishment settings.
- All Districts along the international border reached malaria elimination with no indigenous cases in the last 3 consecutive years according to WHO criteria.

Key performance: outcome indicators

- Annual Blood Examination Rate (%): Number of patients receiving parasitological tests in a year
- Proportion of detected cases that contacted health services within 24 hours of the onset of symptoms
- Proportion of cases who had treatment supervised
- Proportion of population that slept under an ITN the previous night
- Proportion of children under 5 who slept under ITN the previous night
- · Proportion of pregnant women who slept under ITN the previous night
- Proportion of households with at least one ITN

Key performance: Output indicators

- Proportion of suspected fever cases that received a parasitological test - disaggregated by age, gender, type of testing, treatment site
- Proportion of confirmed malaria cases that received first-line antimalarial treatment according to national policy
- Proportion of confirmed cases fully investigated
- Proportion of malaria foci fully investigated, classified and response (in elimination settings)
- Number of LLIN's distributed to targeted risk groups through continuous distribution disaggregated by pregnant women, children <5 years, key and vulnerable populations
- Number of long-lasting insecticidal nets distributed to at-risk populations through mass campaigns
- Proportion of routine HMIS or routine reporting units submitting monthly/weekly reports on time according to national guidelines
- Proportion of expected facility reports (for the reporting period) that are actually received
- Proportion of personnel, HF/HW/HV with the public sector, NGO, and private sector on malaria elimination programme management and key national guidelines - disaggregated by type of sector)
- Proportion of targeted population who have received malaria prevention and control messages (through any channel) during the reporting period
- Proportion of districts that established multi-sector task forces

Recommendations

- To obtain a cross-border collaboration agreement on malaria elimination at the district level in the area of the international border with the timeline.
- Establish a joint bilateral coordination mechanism for addressing cross border malaria elimination and information-sharing network
- WHO criteria for M&E to be recommended from the next meeting onwards.
- Existing technical assistance from WHO and other partners needs to be strengthened moving forward through SRCMF coordination.

Key performance: input indicators

- Reaching national commitment and signing cross-border collaboration agreements on malaria elimination along the international border.
- Technical Assistance to support Malaria elimination in the districts along the international borders.

International Border Districts free Malaria

transmission

Thank you

3. Accelerating Cross Border Responses to End Cross-border Disease Transmission in South East Asia Region – Role of Advocacy & Communication









4. SCRMF Website

SRCMF Website

Dr. S N Misra Resource Person

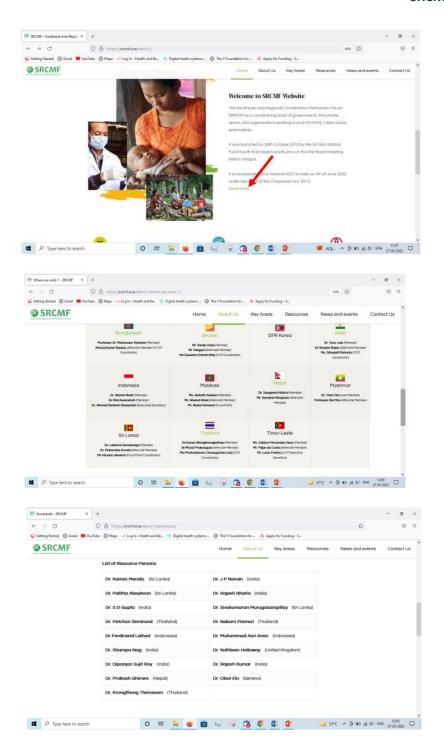
SRCMF Malaria Technical Working Group (MTWG) Meeting 27th May 2022

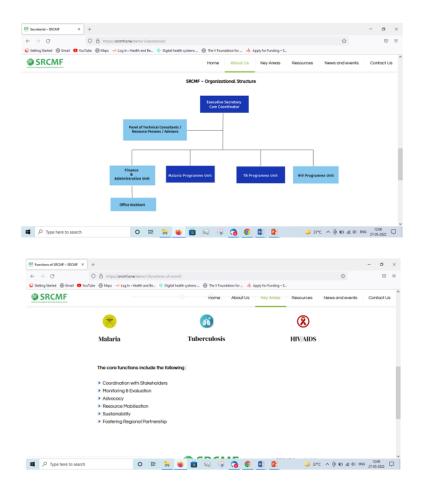
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Main Features

- Will cover all SRCMF and disease specific activities across cross border areas of 11 member countries
- Intends to be a 'go-to-site' for updated information
- Will be dynamic and regularly updated with latest information from governments, international agencies and civil society.
- Will be an attractive platform for all member countries to share all relevant information on the site, through the SRCMF secretariat







- Its work in progress and final site will be ready before launch
- Linked Social media sites to be functional

Thank you

5. Agenda

SRCMF Malaria Technical Working Group (MTWG) Meeting 27 May 2022 at 2 pm (IST)

Time		Responsible person(s)							
1:45-2:00	Virtual Registration	SRCMF Secretariat							
Inaugural Session									
2:00-2:10	WelcomeObjective and expected outcomes of the meeting	-Dr. Jigmi Singay, Executive Secretary cum Coordinator, SRCMF							
2:10-2:20	Self-introduction	All resource persons/participants							
Business Sess	sion	1 1							
2:20-2:25	Appointment of the Chair of the MTWG meeting	-Dr Jigmi Singay							
2:25-3:50	1. Adoption of Agenda	-Chair							
	Summary and follow-up on the recommendations of the last MTWG meeting	-Dr Shampa Nag, Resource person							
	3. Presentation and discussion on coordination and facilitation for strengthening of surveillance and M&E in border areas/districts	-Dr Ferdinand Laihad, Resource person							
	Apprise and discuss on advocacy and communication strategy	-Mr Soumitro Ghosh, Consultant							
	5. Apprise and discuss on Resource mobilization strategy	-Dr Olavi Elo, Resource Person							
	6. Discussion on role of Parliamentarians, Legislators and leaders of the local governance structures, other relevant influencers and private sector for malaria elimination in cross-border areas/districts	-Dr Jigmi Singay							
	7. SRCMF website contents	-Dr SN Misra, Resource							
	8. MTWG Committee Members	Person							
	9. AOB	-Dr Jigmi Singay							
		-do-							
<u>Closing Session</u>									
3:50-4:00	Final comments of the participants	-Chair							
	Closing remarks by the Chair of the MTWG meeting								

6. List of Participants

Malaria Technical Working Group (MTWG) Meeting (virtual) 20 December 2021

List of participants

S.No	Name	Designation	Organization	Country	Email Address
1	Prof.Dr.Mohammad Abul Faiz	Former Global Fund Board Member		Bangladesh	drmafaiz@gmail.com
2	Mr Tobgye	Program Analyst	Vector-borne Disease Control Program	Bhutan	tobgye@health.gov.bt
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4	Dr. Naresh Kumar Gill	Deputy Director	NCVBDC	India	nareshgill.nvbdcp@yahoo.com
5	Dr Vinod Choudhary	Medical Officer	NCVBDC	India	drvinodnvbdcp@gmail.com
6	Dr. Manisha	National Consultant	NCVBDC	India	
7	Mr. Maria Do Rosario de Fatima Mota	National Malaria Control Program	Ministry of Health, Dili, Timor-Leste	Timor-Leste	mariamora.nmp@gmail.com
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12	Dr Jigmi Singay	Executive Secretary Cum Coordinator	SRCMF Secretariat	India	
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