

The Global Elimination or Eradication Acceleration Review (GEAR) framework:

Developing an evaluation tool to support progress against NTD Elimination or Eradication goals

Lessons Learned from the GEAR Oncho Pilot
(June 2022)



Agenda

- 1 Overview of GEAR process and lessons learned
- 2 Overview of outcomes from applying GEAR process to oncho program
- 3 Next steps

GEAR Feedback

1



Review process: how it worked and potential for future use

2



Results: oncho specific review with feedback on partnership and program

GEAR Pilot Process Feedback



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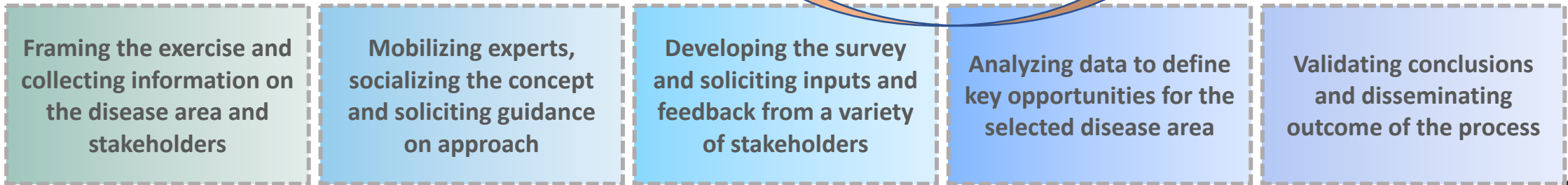
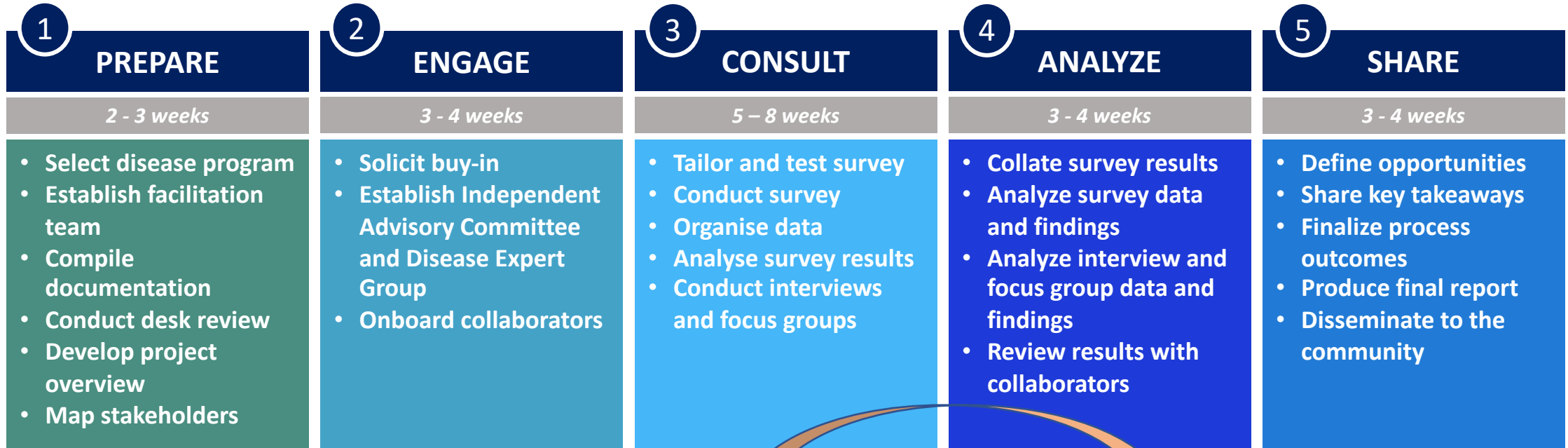
Summary

Project purpose: To design an evaluation framework and an independent review process to be used by E&E efforts to guide strategic improvement and increase impact.

Goal: If potential for improvement is demonstrated and adopted, this will result in improved efficiency and effectiveness of disease elimination and eradication efforts.

Who was involved in the GEAR oncho pilot?

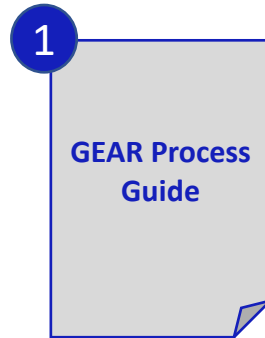
- **Facilitating team:** Bridges and GLIDE
- **Disease Specific Expert Group**
 - Laston Sitima; Mauricio Sauerbrey; Thomas Lakwo; Yankum Dadzie; Joseph Kamgno; Frank Richards; Paul Cantey; Didier Bakajika; Uche Amazigo; Daniel Boakye; Louise Hamill; Darin Evans; Mary Nyamongo
- **Independent Advisory Group**
 - Rana Jawad Asghar; Bill Foege; Dyann Wirth; Regina Addey; Beb Nwoke; Paul Cantey; Ploi Swatdisuk
- **Disease community stakeholders**



Some Lessons Learned from the Oncho Pilot

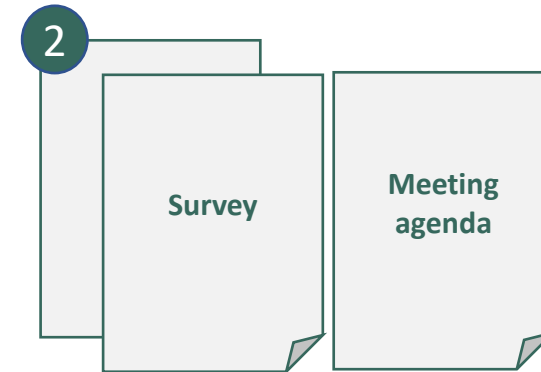
- Facilitation team must be objective but also informed on the disease area in order to map stakeholders and engage them as well as rework the questions to be disease specific
- Anticipate language needs when bringing together facilitation team and accommodate
- Limit open-ended answers and explore more detail in focus groups and interviews.
- Use survey findings to identify the areas that need further exploration in focus groups and which questions need to be answered
- Interviewer must be aware of disease subject matter in order to guide conversation
- Optional open ended comment blocks can identify weak questions or important diverging opinions
- Different groups may need findings divided in different ways to be of most relevance
- Challenging for evaluation team to stick to the evaluation role- i.e. desire to go beyond looking at the challenges and opportunities. Need to constantly remind the team to allow the disease community to own the problem solving

Tools for future use of GEAR



GEAR process Guide

- guiding principles
- step-by-step descriptions
- detailed sub-tasks
- expected outcomes
- tips based on our early lessons learned



Links to resources

Examples and templates developed during 2021-22 with oncho available for tailoring to other disease areas



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GEAR Oncho
Specific
Outcomes and
Opportunities
for
Improvements



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Basis for the Survey Design on Seven Strategic Lessons from E&E Programs

1. Know and test your assumptions

2. Understand the context-specific infrastructure

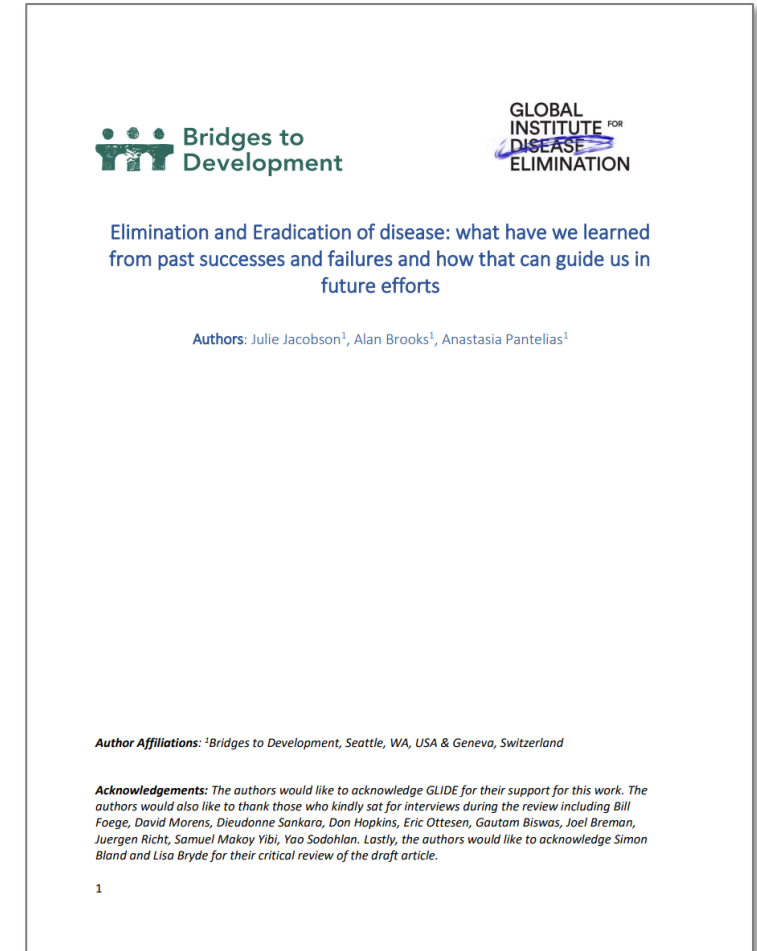
3. Engage communities and adapt locally

4. Continuously test and adapt your tools

5. Expect the unexpected

6. People and partnership matter

7. Think about and plan for the last mile



Focus Groups and Interviews

Focus Groups:

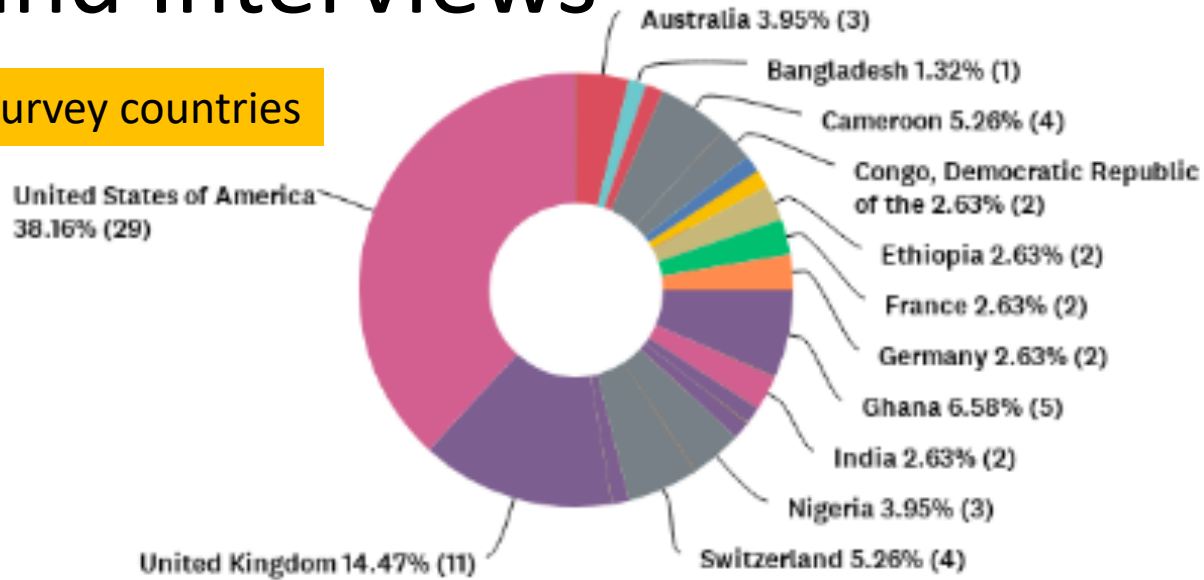
- National Oncho Elimination Committees (NOECs)
- Country Program Managers
(French, English, Portuguese separately)
- Last Mile/ End Game Countries
- Vector/ Environmental Control
- Researchers

Interviews:

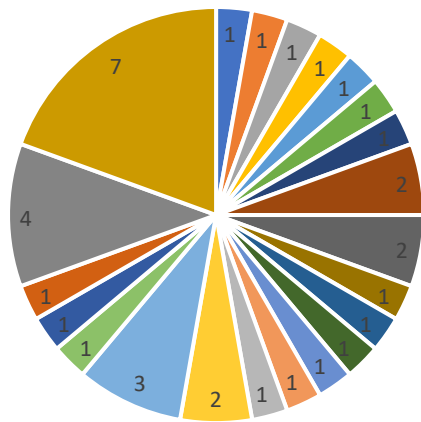
- **Maria Rebollo**, WHO
- **Daniel Dagne & Dieudonne Sankara**, WHO
- **Yao Sodahlon**, MDP
- **Jamie Tallant**, Reaching the Last Mile/ END Fund
- **Christy Hanson**, BMGF

Diverse Participants in Survey and Focus Groups and Interviews

Survey countries

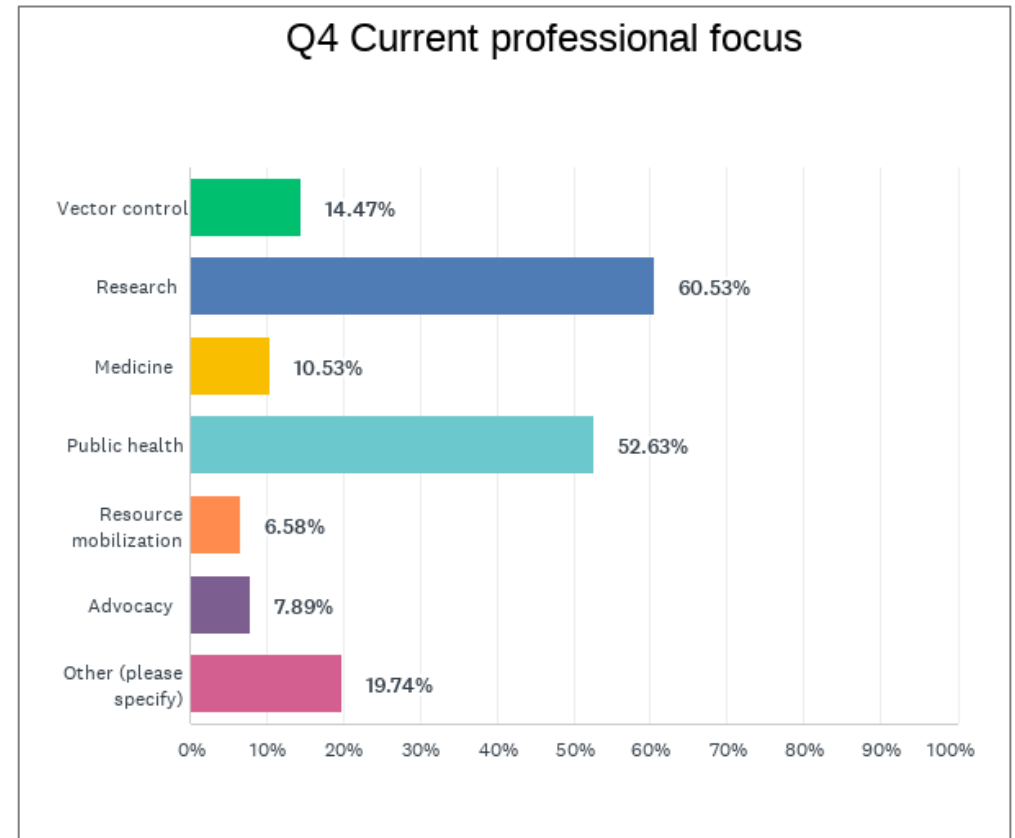


- Angola
- Benin
- Brazil
- Burkina Faso
- Cameroon
- Chad
- Colombia
- DRC
- Ecuador
- Ethiopia
- Ghana



Focus Groups and Interviews countries

Q4 Current professional focus



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Overview of Key Outcomes

Strong support for:

- Coordinated global level partnership
- Updated strategy for oncho elimination
- Harmonized research agenda

WHO requests results presented on two elements:

- | | |
|---------------|-----------|
| • Partnership | • Program |
|---------------|-----------|



Assets to the Oncho Elimination Efforts

- **Dedicated partners**
- **A lot of experience**
- **Well understood program gaps and weaknesses**
- **Desire for stronger partnership and leadership**
- **Opportunities/lessons to learn from the heterogeneity of the program approaches over the last few years**

Feedback on Partnership

- **Weaknesses in partnership, a lot of confusion on the partnership and what is the partnership**
- **Lack of leadership noted**
- **Weakness at WHO without focal point and due to regional divisions**
- **Not a process for rewarding good management or good people**
- **Not a clear process to ensure measuring of endpoint, delivery of intervention, or supervision**
- **Comments about too many different partnerships**

Summary points:

- No global partnership on oncho
- Multiple smaller partnerships may exist by NOT a global partnership
- Many missed opportunities without better coordination
- Smaller partnerships provide good examples to pull from to inform global partnership

Partnership- What is Wanted

Partnership Elements

- Engage all stakeholders in partnership towards the shared goal
 - Mechanism to communicate across all levels of the program to share experience and learn
 - Engage communities and adapt locally
 - Process to quickly adapt and scale up new interventions or tools
 - Mitigate risks and share successes
 - Share challenges and issues for research agenda
- **Info and experience sharing (local, national, global)**
 - **Clarify roles & responsibilities and define the partnership**
 - **Pulling from past experience with elements from OEPA, APOC**
 - Shared protocols
 - Program review
 - Sharing across programs
 - Cross border discussions
 - Group problem solving
 - Strong TA to individual programs annually reviewed
 - Capacity support
 - Data management
 - Political will generation
 - Vector support
 - Lab capacity



Feedback on the Program

Data

- Outdated data used to direct programs
- Need for more timely data to drive decision making

Capacity Building

- Need for capacity building, particularly in vectors and labs

Country Situations

- Poor political will in lagging countries
- Lusophone countries left behind
- Hardest places left behind

Community

- Program funding fractionated- different thing available in different places based on resources and partners
- A lot of heterogeneity in program implementation
- Each country, partner, and funder are independent actors making decisions about program elements
- NOECs separate with no forum to connect & share

Guidance

- Lacking/inadequate interim guidance for programs in particular WRT vectors and post treatment/elimination surveillance

Noted Strategic Blind Spots

No strategy/ plans to:

- Detect changes in transmission-transmission assumed stable
- Detect cases or transmission outside of specified areas (outliers)
- Detect re-emergence
- Detect changes in efficacy or sensitivity of tools

To Address Program Weaknesses opportunity for the oncho community

1. Update and define the **oncho elimination strategy**
2. Create a **research agenda** to support the strategy and elimination goal

Strategy- What is Wanted

Strategy elements

- Define the stages of the program and interventions for each stage
 - Guidance for decision on moving from one program stage to another
 - Understand the context-specific infrastructure and how to adapt
 - Quickly adapt and guide scale up of new tools or interventions with M&E
- **To improve strategy learning from the field experience**
 - **Include approaches for all aspects of the transmission cycle**
 - **To support adaptation to local contexts**
 - **To get new tools and strategies to field more efficiently**
 - **To improve detection of changes in transmission and potential resistance with response to the changes included in the strategy**
 - **To improve communication between all levels and clarity on partnership**

Research Agenda to Support Elimination Goal- What is Wanted

Research Agenda Areas

- Plan for the last mile
 - Define the M&E strategy
 - Define ways to detect and understand the unexpected
 - Know and test assumptions
 - Continually adapt and test tools
 - Consider local adaptation for broader application
 - Develop tools for all stages of the program
 - Define criteria for decision on moving from one program stage to another
- **Target research on main program needs focused on decision making between program stages**
 - **Allow research to be conducted for cross comparison and compiling of results across studies to accelerate guidance to programs**
 - **Support access to resources for priority issues**
 - **Facilitate annual review of progress, identification of new issues and collaboration**

Summary Guidance for Strong E&E Program

Partnership



- Engage all stakeholders in partnership towards the shared goal
- Mechanism to communicate across all levels of the program to share experience and learn
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- Process to quickly adapt and scale up new interventions or tools
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Strategy



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Research Agenda

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Next Steps

- **Follow up survey to the community on the GEAR oncho pilot**
- **Get further feedback from oncho and NTD community on both the GEAR tools and process as well as Oncho specific feedback at COR-NTD in Oct**
- **Coordinate with new WHO Oncho Focal Point on using oncho feedback to strengthen elimination efforts- Maria Rebollo**