

Routine Health Information Network, Inc
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RHINO
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Board of Directors' Meeting Minutes

January 4, 2013
Boston, MA

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Board Members Present: Theo Lippeveld (chairman), Nancy Pielemeier, Sian Curtis, Jean-Pierre Delamalle, Vincent Shaw, Sally Stansfield, Barbara Turner, Elizabeth J. Ashbourne, Peter Speyer (could not attend the full meeting)

Board Members Unable to Attend: Joel Lamstein

RHINO Secretariat Present: Evis Farka Haake

The Board of Directors' Meeting was held in Boston at the John Snow, Inc (JSI) office. Both Theo Lippeveld, Chairman of the Board of Directors, and Evis Farka Haake from the RHINO Secretariat were physically present at the JSI office. The following Board Members joined by phone for the duration of the meeting, from 10:00 am - 11:30 am: Nancy Pielemeier, Sian Curtis, Jean-Pierre Delamalle, Vincent Shaw, Sally Stansfield, Barbara Turner, Elizabeth J. Ashbourne, and Peter Speyer (for the first 15 minutes).

1. Welcome

The Chairman opened the meeting by welcoming all the members and wishing them a Happy New Year.

2. Changes in RHINO Secretariat

The Chairman informed the Board Members on the recent changes on the RHINO secretariat. Matthew Parker left JSI and moved to Arizona. Natasha Kanagat is working on other activities and will be less available to support RHINO activities. Evis Farka Haake was brought in to replace them and is proposed to be the main point of contact for RHINO. The Board members welcomed her on the RHINO secretariat.

3. Agenda

The Board Chairman, Mr. Lippeveld, presented the agenda (see appendix 1) and invited the Board Members to suggest other topics and issues that they wanted to discuss.

Board Members approved the proposed meeting agenda and agreed to the voting on new Board Members terms of extension via phone.

4. Discussion of the Annual Report

The Board Chairman gave a review of the activities that RHINO held during 2012. Below is a list of topics that were discussed and the key points made for each one.

RHINO Forums

Mr. Lippeveld summarized the two online forums that happened in 2012: (1) *Developing Data Management Standards for RHIS*; and (2) *The role of Private Sector in RHIS*. During the discussion, the Board Members noted that the two online forums were very useful. The work on finalizing the guidelines for RHIS data management standards is undertaken by MEASURE

Evaluation experts (see below). There is a lot of interest on the role of the private sector in RHIS and it could be quite powerful to focus consistently on this topic. MEASURE Evaluation is putting this topic on high priority for the next year. Vincent Shaw underscored that DHIS2, a RHIS data management application which is now used in many countries in Africa and Asia, can easily be adapted to cater for private health facilities.

mHealth

Several Board Members noted that mHealth is another topic that is receiving a lot of attention. It is a critical issue we should embrace but it does need standardization. However, the role of mHealth in routine reporting is not clear. The data capacity on cell phones is limited. Also, mHealth applications sometimes undermine national RHIS. One of the Board Members noted that in rural northern areas of Nigeria, mHealth is being used as complementary to national systems. Otherwise, people found it easy to submit data via cellphone. It might not be possible to use mHealth for full facility-based data routine reporting, but we can definitely look into its role on epidemic surveillance, and in community based reporting (limited data size).

It was also remarked that USAID has 72 projects that involve mHealth and World Bank has substantial funds invested in mHealth projects related to health system strengthening (HSS). Also, Deloitte is working with Academies of Science in many African countries on mobilizing funding for topics such as mHealth.

It would be interesting to look into the connection between mHealth and RHIS. It is important that this work has a bottom up approach starting from countries and spreading into a regional effort. If we can get a few countries interested in mHealth and RHIS, we can appeal to the regional missions and local donors for project funding.

Secretariat Action: Write a couple of pages on RHIS and mHealth that can be circulated to the Academies of Science in some African countries that might be interested in working with RHINO and funding activities.

Research and Development

USAID has asked MEASURE Evaluation to produce guidelines on standardized data management processes in RHIS, so when countries are building their information systems, they can have a reference in how to standardize the processes for their system design and software requirements. In 2012 an expert workshop was organized in Johannesburg, South Africa, and a first draft of the guidelines was produced based on the findings of the workshop. USAID has provided MEASURE Evaluation additional funding to continue this work. Originally led by Theo Lippeveld, the lead has been taken over by David Boone (david_boone@jsi.com). The next step is to contextualize the guidelines based on country experiences in the form of case studies and best practices. RHINO is fully supportive of this work and invites the Board members to comment on the draft guidelines.

Secretariat Action: Send out to draft guidelines to the RHINO Board members.

5. Fund raising Status

The Board Chairman noted that last year, the RHINO Secretariat did a lot of work in identifying and applying for grants but it all ended with 'no good fit'. The only stable source of funding for RHINO has been the USAID funded MEASURE Evaluation project. It was noted that there is a problem of terminology in writing up grant proposals since donors more easily fund vertical disease proposal.

It was mentioned that maybe the Institute of Health and Metrics might be interested in picking up some RHIS activities that they are interested in. If other groups are interested, they can give funds to RHINO. Because RHINO is an NGO, it can diversify its funding. The Chairman suggested that the organizations of the Board Members represent might like to give funding to specific activities rather than through Institutional Membership contributions.

It was also noted by Jean-Pierre Delamalle that it is important to increase collaboration with other organizations than US government funded ones. It is important to have organizations with other funding sources to become members of the board, such as European, Asian, or African ones in order to make the image of RHINO more international. The image is too much geared towards USAID for the moment.

The Board Chairman noted that RHINO is financially stable to continue the current support for knowledge management activities such as RHINO forums, list serv, and bibliography. However, there are not enough funds to diversify the activity portfolio in the future.

Secretariat Action: Based on past funding proposals, to update the funding advocacy document in a two page report to circulate to Board members and to potential donors.

6. Moving Forward: Board Guidance and Action

- The RHINO Board is committed to support diversification of the Board Membership to expand to organizations from Europe, Asia, and Africa.
- The RHINO Board unanimously agreed to make an amendment to bylaws to suspend temporarily annual institutional membership fees for the next year. In the mean time Board members are encouraged to provide funding to RHINO for specific projects or activities.
- The Board Chairman is discussing with Peter Speyer on presenting the draft guidelines on RHIS data management standards at the Annual GHME conference in June 2013.
- Board members are invited to send information on RHIS related events and training courses to Evis Haake evis_haake@jsi.com. She will post these on the RHINO website.

8. Re-election of the Board Membership

It was agreed at the beginning of the meeting that the re-election of the Board Members would proceed via phone.

As such, the terms of Theo Lippeveld as a Board Member and Board Chairman, and of Jean-Pierre Delamalle were unanimously extended to December 2014. The Board Member terms of Sian Curtis, Elisabeth J. Ashbourne, and Peter Speyer were extended unanimously to June 2015. Joel Lamstein volunteered to end his membership of the RHINO Board of Directors, due to schedule conflicts. The Board Members took note of this and agreed. Nancy Pielemeier and Elisabeth J Ashbourne, who became independent consultants, offered to examine with their respective former organizations to the possibility of proposing an additional Board member representing Abt Associates and the World Bank.

The Board voted in Evis Farka Haake as RHINO Secretary and the signer on all RHINO documents including the Board minutes.

The new constitution of the Board and terms of the Board Members in 2013 looks as follows:

Theo Lippeveld, Chairman of RHINO	December 2014
Sian Curtis, <i>MEASURE/Evaluation</i>	June 2015
Jean-Pierre Delamalle, <i>AEDES</i>	December 2014
Nancy Pielemeier, <i>Independent</i>	February 2014
Vincent Shaw, <i>Health Information System Programs (HISP)</i>	February 2014
Sally Stansfield, <i>Health Metrics Network (HMN)</i>	February 2014
Barbara Turner, <i>University Research Corporation (URC)</i>	February 2014
Elizabeth J. Ashbourne, <i>Independent</i>	June 2015
Peter Speyer, <i>Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation</i>	June 2015

Observer:

Najeeb Al-Shorbaji, *Director Knowledge Management and Sharing, WHO*

Ex Officio:

Evis Haake, *RHINO secretariat*


9. Next Board Meeting

The next meeting will happen at the beginning of December to make it easier for everyone to attend. The logistics of this meeting are to be determined. In the mean time, the RHINO Board Chairman will connect with different Board Members on one to one basis to discuss issues and needs.

10. Closure

The Board Chairman closed the meeting at 11:30 am.

Signature by Evis Farka Haake


RHINO Secretariat

APPENDIX 1



ROUTINE HEALTH INFORMATION NETWORK e-BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING, JANUARY 4, 2013

AGENDA

TIME	ITEM	DOC	PURPOSE
10:00 - 10:05	Welcome and update <i>Theo Lippeveld</i>		Information
10:05-10:15	Minutes, Board Meeting, December 19, 2011 <i>Theo Lippeveld</i>	BD2011/12/1	Information
10:15-10:20	Meeting Agenda <i>Theo Lippeveld</i>	BD2013/1/1	Approval
10:20-10:35	Overview 2012 activities <i>Theo Lippeveld</i>	BD2013/1/2	Information
10:35 - 10:55	RHINO Board Elections <i>Theo Lippeveld</i>		Information
10:55 - 11:00	Closure		Information

APPENDIX II

<i>RHINO NGO Statement for Year 2012</i>	
REVENUES	
Bank Balance	37,790
Membership Payment (AEDES)	2000
Membership Payment (John Snow, Inc.)	4000
Membership Payment (Abt. Associates)	4000
Membership Payment (University Research Co., LLC)	4000
Membership Payment (Pathfinder International)	1000
Total	52,790
EXPENSES	
NGO Fees (Paid to Commonwealth of Mass, Form PC + Annual Report)	50.00
Accountant (Norm Fougere)	1000
<i>RHINO NGO Bank Account (as of January 2013)</i>	51,740