

3rd International Conference and Exhibition on Clinical & Cellular Immunology

September 29-October 01, 2014 DoubleTree by Hilton Baltimore-BWI Airport, USA

Assessing the sustainability of the expansion of the expanded programme on immunisation in the Gambia

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The aim was to assess the sustainability of the expansion of the Expanded Programme on Immunisation (EPI) in the Gambia. This is a rare policy approach to assess immunization programmes in countries where the sustainability of the introduction of new vaccines is particularly important. The review of the literature in this study has demonstrated that while some tools may prove useful for measuring the component of funding sustainability of immunization programmes, they were insufficient with regard to questions on other aspects of sustainability. To address these issues of sustainability sufficiently in the study, a stakeholder analysis questionnaire was identified from the literature for adoption. Selected indicators of financial sustainability in the literature, in addition to country-specific indicators, were incorporated in the stakeholder analysis questionnaire. Also, a resource map questionnaire was developed, based on the National Health Accounts methodology, to complement the stakeholder analysis tool. This approach provided qualitative information about stakeholders' opinion concerning the issue of whether to use additional resources for improving efficiency in the supply chain rather than introducing new vaccines to determine whose interests should be taken into account, but more importantly to assess where stakeholders think the system works and where it doesn't work, and if different parties have contradictory incentives. It also provided detailed information on the flow and uses of resources within the immunisation system, in addition to data that focus on questions of power, relationships, processes and accountability in the EPI. Thus, this combination of methods can be useful for systematic assessment of the sustainability of EPI systems and the efficiency of having multiple organisations running programmes.

Biography

Francis Sarr is Head of the Department of Nursing & Reproductive Health, University of The Gambia. In addition to his professional preparation, he was educated at the University of Wales, Cardiff (MEd, Curriculum Development & Educational Administration), London University School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine (MSc & Post-Graduate Diploma, Public Health), London University Institute of Child Health (Nutrition & Child Health Cert.) and London South Bank University (PhD, Public Health concentration). He is a Fellow of the West African College of Nursing. He has published 5 articles in reputed journals and a book on community health education for health professionals.

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Standardization of interferon-gamma assay for diagnosis of bovine tuberculosis in Egypt

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Bovine tuberculosis (bTB) is a chronic disease of animals caused primarily by *Mycobacterium bovis* (*M. bovis*), a member of the *M. tuberculosis* complex. In Egypt, bTB continues to cause significant losses in the cattle industry and a major public health problem. There are critical gaps in the current Egyptian national bTB surveillance program (NbTBBS) as it based only on the use of single cervical tuberculin test (SCT) with a mammalian type of PPD. Despite of its world wide application, the IFN- γ assay has not been applied in Egypt until today. This assay is a fully validated test by the OIE, EU and USDA as an ancillary test to the tuberculin skin tests. The objective of this study was to determine appropriate cut-off values for protein purified derivatives (PPD) and ESAT6-CFP10 antigens to obtain optimal results of IFN- γ assay in terms of sensitivity and specificity to complement official skin-test screening in Egypt. The sensitivity and specificity (Ser and Spr) of PPD and antigen cocktail-based IFN- γ assays (IFN- γ -BA and IFN- γ -EC) were analyzed by different cut-off points, relative to gold standards bTB positive confirmation (culture and PCR), retrospectively using blood samples collected from 34 SCT reactors from recognized bTB-infected zones in five high bTB prevalence governorates during the 2011, 2012 and 2013. The absolute specificity (Sp) was studied using blood samples collected from 14 cattle from one bTB-free herd from a bTB-free zone. Results revealed the use of IFN- γ -EC provided high sensitivity but equal specificity, comparable to the estimates obtained for IFN- γ -BA. Data analysis suggested the use of (PPDbOD>0.1, PPDbOD-NILOD>0.05 and PPDbOD>PPDaOD) strategy to get optimal IFN- γ -BA results {PPD-Ser (90%) and PPD-Spr (100.0%)}, and (ECOD-NILOD \geq 0.1) strategy to get optimal IFN- γ -EC results {EC-Ser (97%) and EC-Spr (100.0%)}. In conclusion, this is the first report determine the appropriate cut-off points to optimize use of the of IFN- γ assay as a serial test for diagnosis of bTB in Egypt.

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