Countdown Steering Committee meeting, 14-15 January 2019, Washington DC

Note for the Record


The participants weathered a Washington DC snowstorm for the annual steering committee meeting of the Countdown to discuss seven agenda points. The meeting was co-chaired by Zulfi Bhutta and John Grove. Zulfi has been co-chair since 2006 and was thanked for his great contributions to the Countdown for more than a decade! Catherine Kyobutungi, director of the African Population Health Research Centre, is succeeding Zulfi as the academic co-chair.

The main issues were presented in nine documents shared in advance to the meeting. The main points are summarized in the middle column of the table below. The outcomes of the discussions are summarized in the right column.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Agenda items</th>
<th>Main inputs</th>
<th>Outcomes discussion</th>
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</table>
| Review of 2018 outputs | o Major advances in regional initiatives in LAC and sub-Saharan Africa engaging 50+ countries and conducting 6 analysis workshops in 2018  
o 25 papers on monitoring & measurement published or submitted  
o 35 papers in preparation through technical working groups and regional initiatives  
o Supplement for BMJ Global Health on measurement in review stage (7 papers)  
o Country profiles and report launched in Jan 18; ECD profiles launched in May 18; Equity profiles in Jan 18  
o Countdown global measurement conference, 100 participants, Feb 2018  
o Multiple collaborative engagements: C-section series Lancet (AKU), BRANCH on conflicts (Toronto), transforming child and adolescent health (Toronto, WHO, UNICEF), multisectoral approaches (PMNCH, BMJ series); joint financing working group (PMNCH), ECD working group (Wits Univ, UNICEF), AH commission (Lancet), ICM (JHU), MONITOR, CHAT (WHO)  
o Analyses for IAP, UNICEF, PAHO  
o Expansion indicators, stratifiers and datasets at database Center for Equity in Health, Pelotas | ✤ The shift in emphasis to regional initiatives is now much more visible and beginning to bring results  
 ✤ The current regional partner institutions (APHRC, WAHO, Pelotas) are critical in further expanding into countries  
 ✤ The Countdown work with regions and countries is best referred to as collaboration for evidence generation and capacity strengthening, rather than just capacity building.  
 ✤ Need for a broader discussion on capacity strengthening including analysis and Countdown should be part of such discussions initiated by e.g. HDC or WHO |
| Country list | - Current list is 81 countries with highest burden of maternal and child deaths  
- Leads to some awkward exclusions (e.g. Syria) and does not align with SDG agenda  
- Pelotas database now includes larger number of countries  
- UNICEF and WHO usually work with income country classifications rather than the Countdown country list | - Broaden focus to all low- and middle-income countries, with flexible approach  
- Continue to use mortality burden/share for communication, and use other framings depending on the topic  
- Use SDG targets to guide focus  
- Consider high income countries if needed (e.g. within country focus) |
|---|---|---|
| Countdown country profiles | - General country profile production led by UNICEF with Countdown inputs  
- Coordination between UNICEF and WHO ongoing, both are working on dynamic databases which can generate country profiles  
- Pelotas updates the equity profiles on a regular basis, and WHO Health Equity Monitor now allows production of selected analytical outputs | - Good way to communicate statistics on progress and inequalities (also concluded from a review in 2015)  
- Work with UNICEF on general profiles, ECD profiles – regular updating but also important to consider good moments to launch;  
- Continue updating of equity profiles (Pelotas) and link with WHO Health Equity Monitor |
| GFF – Countdown collaboration | - A concept note was presented by GFF and Countdown to 2030, aiming to engage the Countdown in technical collaborations with country institutions for analysis and communication to inform annual and midterm reviews in 20 countries during 2019-2023 with strong regional involvement  
- The current draft has been shared for inputs within the Countdown and also with Global Fund and GAVI | - Need for a detailed plan, which is also more specific about the inputs of CD partners  
- Develop common framework for working with countries early on  
- MoH is one partner, also consider other sectors  
- Include gap identification as one of the outputs  
- Sharpen focus of possible CD engagement in implementation or embedded research  
- Use HDC approach, working with all relevant partners, with CD focusing on the analysis part linked to reviews and other decision-making processes |
| Countdown 2019-23 priorities | - Initial strategic ideas for a new phase of the Countdown (2019-2023) were presented including the global agenda (research on measurement and monitoring, collaborations with multiple partnerships and partners) and the regional / country agenda (focusing on GFF – CD collaboration)  
- Initial ideas for transition of current technical working groups into technical task forces to support both measurement agenda and country work | - Need for clear strategy on how the CD collaborates and partnerships  
- WHO and UNICEF continue as central CD stakeholders; World Bank (GFF) country collaboration;  
- Explore stronger engagement UNFPA (SRH)  
- Strengthen collaboration with PMNCH: advocacy and communication strategy, link to accountability, working with countries and regions, financial tracking  
- FP2020, nutrition projects (A&T, Transform, GNR), humanitarian emergencies (BRANCH and others), maternal health and others |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Global reporting and Countdown role</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>o Agreement that in general global reporting needs to be more focused and harmonized around Global Strategy Reporting led by H6</td>
<td>▶ Several suggestions for the Countdown research paper series for January 2020</td>
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<td>o PMNCH is looking into ways to harmonize and strengthen global reporting</td>
<td>▶ WHO will contribute a general progress paper (to be discussed)</td>
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<td>o Countdown has no plans for continuing global reports, but an outline for a research paper series to be launched early 2020 was presented</td>
<td>▶ Current set of about 10 papers needs to pay more attention to try to explain progress and performance</td>
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<tr>
<td>o In 2020 there may be a global H6 report (TBC); UNFPA will produce a report on state of world midwifery and WHO on State of Nursing (both for WHA); UHC progress reporting also likely to continue</td>
<td>▶ Consider other Countdown areas such as ECD to provide a complete picture</td>
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<td>▶ Ensure attention for maternal health and gender &amp; NCD</td>
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<td>▶ Take into account other work such as the BRANCH conflict consortium and GNR</td>
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<tr>
<th>2019 plan and recommendations</th>
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<tr>
<td>o Preparation of strategy and plan for CD 2019-23 including the GFF-CD collaboration to work in 20 countries</td>
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<td>o Develop CD research paper series for Jan 2020 in collaboration with PMNCH, WHO, UNICEF and other CD partners – focus on leaving no one behind</td>
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<td>o Contribute to global reporting and other analyses (e.g. IAP) as requested and feasible</td>
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<td>o Finalize current technical workplans including publications</td>
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<td>o Organize at least 4 regional workshops (facility data, nutrition, ASRH, female headed households)</td>
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<td>o Revisit and improve the articulation of CD collaborations (with MoU or set of activities if useful)</td>
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<td>o Continue resource mobilization for specific CD activities</td>
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<td>o Contribute to efforts to improve and streamline the production of general and specific profiles</td>
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### MONDAY, 14 JANUARY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Presenters</th>
<th>Documents</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9:00 – 9:15</td>
<td>Welcome and introductions</td>
<td>Co-Chairs Zulfi Bhutta and John Grove</td>
<td>Doc1: NFR last SC meeting Doc2: Matrix of activities and linkages</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Discussion</td>
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<td>10:30-11:00</td>
<td>Coffee break</td>
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<td>Regional partnerships: Countdown, regional and country institutions</td>
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<td>11:00 – 12:30</td>
<td>Regional networks: African Populatio &amp; Health Research Centre and Countdown</td>
<td>Catherine Kyobutungi, APHRC</td>
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<td>Federal University of Pelotas</td>
<td>Aluisio Barros (remote), U Pelotas</td>
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<td>West Africa Health Organization</td>
<td>Agbessi Amouzou, Johns Hopkins University</td>
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<td>Makerere University</td>
<td>Peter Waiswa, Makerere University</td>
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<td>Discussion: links with partner regional strategies relevant for analysis and use of data</td>
<td>Steering Committee</td>
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<td>12:30 -13:00</td>
<td>Country profiles and databases: progress and Countdown contribution (general, equity, ECD, adolescents etc.)</td>
<td>Ties Boerma, Countdown Mark Hereward, UNICEF Anshu Banerjee and John Grove, WHO</td>
<td>Doc5a: Example CD country profile 2018 Doc5b: Example CD country equity profile</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Countdown country list: to revise or not to revise</td>
<td>Ties Boerma, Countdown</td>
<td>CD Country list</td>
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<td>Discussion</td>
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<td>13:00 – 14:00</td>
<td>Lunch break</td>
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# MONDAY, 14 JANUARY (continued)

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<th>Time</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Countdown and GFF collaboration</strong></td>
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<td>14:00 – 16:00</td>
<td>Update on GFF strategy and priorities</td>
<td>Mariam Claeson, GFF / World Bank</td>
<td>Doc6: Concept note GFF – CD collaboration</td>
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<td></td>
<td>GFF M&amp;E framework and country engagement</td>
<td>Kimberly Boer, GFF / World Bank</td>
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<td>Countdown – GFF collaboration</td>
<td>Ties Boerma, Countdown</td>
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<td>16:00 – 16:30</td>
<td>Coffee break</td>
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<td>16:30 – 17:30</td>
<td>Implications for Countdown</td>
<td>Ties Boerma, Countdown</td>
<td>Doc7: Strategic and structural implications for CD</td>
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<td>19:00</td>
<td>Dinner</td>
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# TUESDAY, 15 JANUARY

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Presenters</th>
<th>Documents</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9:00 – 10:30</td>
<td>Global monitoring</td>
<td>PMNCH Ann Starrs WHO Anshu Banerjee, John Grove UNICEF Mark Hereward / Stefan Pedersen, IAP Nicolas Alipui</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Global landscape and plans in context of Global Strategy</td>
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<td>Countdown plans for 2020</td>
<td>Ties Boerma, Countdown</td>
<td>Doc8: CD plans for Series 2020</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Coffee break</td>
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<tr>
<td>11:00-12:30</td>
<td>Countdown governance, communication and strategic priorities 2019-2023</td>
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<td>Revisiting the 2019-2023 plans</td>
<td>Discussion</td>
<td>Doc9: CD Governance</td>
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<td>Governance implications; change of chair</td>
<td>Ties Boerma</td>
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<td>Communication</td>
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<td>Resource mobilization</td>
<td>All</td>
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<tr>
<td>12:30</td>
<td>Closure and lunch</td>
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List of documents

1. Note for the Record Countdown to 2030 Steering Committee Meeting, February 13, 2018 @ UNICEF HQ, NYC
2. Countdown table of activities and partnerships
3. Summary of outputs in 2018
4. List of (planned) publications 2018
5. Example CD country profile 2018
   a. Generic CD country profile Dec 2017 - Uganda
   b. CD country equity profile Dec 2017 - Uganda
6. Countdown to 2030 Country list
7. Concept note GFF – CD collaboration
8. CD plans for Series 2020
9. Countdown to 2030 Governance
10. Countdown to 2030 structural proposals

Countdown to 2030 List of 81 countries with 90% of the burden of child deaths and 95% of the burden of maternal deaths

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>LIST OF COUNTDOWN TO 2030 COUNTRIES</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>Afghanistan</td>
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<td>Algeria</td>
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<td>Angola</td>
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<td>Azerbaijan</td>
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<td>Bangladesh</td>
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<td>Benin</td>
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<td>Bolivia</td>
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<td>Burkina Faso</td>
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<td>Cambodia</td>
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<td>Cameroon</td>
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<td>Central African Republic</td>
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<td>Chad</td>
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<td>Comoros</td>
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<td>Congo, Dem. Rep.</td>
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<td>Djibouti</td>
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Countdown to 2030's Steering Committee Meeting

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Countdown to 2030
Women’s, Children’s & Adolescents’ Health

Countdown to 2030’s Steering Committee Meeting

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