Supranational TB Reference Laboratory Network,
recent progress

Armand Van Deun
The Union & Antwerp SRL
SRL network expansion
6 in Americas
13 in Europe
5 in Western Pacific
2 in SE Asia
2 in Africa
1 in Eastern Mediterranean

Coordinating Centre
SRL
Current status of the SRLN

• Still very few in low-income
  – Africa: only Algeria and S. Africa

• Pipeline
  – Oman: first successful proficiency testing round
  – TBCAP supported labs in Africa
TBCAP SRLN projects

• 3 projects focusing on Africa
  – East African NRL: targeting new SRL
  – Benin NRL: targeting new SRL
  – optimization of SRLN in Africa
    • identify suitable candidates
    • regularization and rationalization of SRL-NRL links

• Ending soon; expected output:
  – one new SRL technically ready
  – + one conditional to completion of renovation
  – two to three more good candidates
TBCAP SRLN projects (2)

- Further work required
  - assessment visits candidates
  - further tutoring if required
    - under new TBCARE project?
  - NRL-SRL links regularization
    - confusing response on current links via questionnaire
    - consultation WHO & SRL ongoing
    - endpoint: formal agreements signed and endorsed
OTHER ACHIEVEMENTS
SRLN Terms of Reference

• Consensus reached on revised TOR, April SRL meeting
  – TB control focus, following WHO recommendations
  – various aspects of quality assured good laboratory practice
  – provide TA covering all main techniques and activities important for national TB programmes (eventually in collaboration)

• Together with consensus on eligibility criteria
  – TOR endorsed by MoH in-country
  – technical capacity meeting WHO standards; sufficient work volume
  – rounds participation; proven DST proficiency in at least 2 rounds
  – TA link with at least 2 countries
SRL Technical Working Group

• To address DST challenges met, for instance
  – interpretation of difficult to classify strains
  – drugs to be covered in DRS and DST proficiency testing

• To compile data on non-SRL PT

• To rationalise distribution of panel strains

Workgroup coordination: Antwerp SRL
SRLN and technical assistance

- SRLN recognised as an important resource for lab capacity building

- Need to promote activities as a network
  - different capacities, e.g. microscopy network, or molecular expertise...
  - rationalization, efficiency

- Funding mechanisms explored
  - ad hoc solution: channel existing TA funds to SRL
  - DRS and EXPAND funds
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