

MEETING ABSTRACTS

Rapid Response Mobile Laboratories (RRML): Standardization as a Tool to Maximize Interoperability

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Background/Introduction: Rapid Response Mobile Laboratories (RRML) are a crucial component of preparedness and response to health emergencies, both as a stand-alone asset and in conjunction with other rapid response capacities. The development of an RRML classification system in 2019¹ both defines laboratory structure and provides a foundation for the development of RRML minimum standards under the umbrella of the WHO Global Outbreak Alert and Response Network (GOARN).

Objectives: These minimum standards define the requirements for RRMLs/GOARN in the field and facilitate their interoperability with other important operational assets of WHO, including Emergency Medical Teams (EMTs), contributing to the overall response and to enhanced collaboration among national and international health partners.

Method/Description: The development of minimum standards brought together over 30 technical experts in various disciplines from European GOARN partner institutions to conduct a systematic applied literature review and consolidate field experiences and lessons learned from infectious disease outbreaks globally, as well as addressing the complete RRML deployment life cycle² and for each RRML type.

The RRML minimum standards focus on four workstreams: Operational Support & Logistics; Laboratory Information Management System; Biosafety & Biosecurity; and Quality Management Systems.

Results/Outcomes: This standardization will ensure predictable response in the field and is the first step in strengthening RRML interoperability with other capacities and members of the global health emergency workforce, such as EMTs and Rapid Response Teams, as well as national-level counterparts.

Conclusion: The standards contribute to strengthening of National Laboratory capacities, provide the basis for a forthcoming monitoring and evaluation Framework, and WHO RRML recognition process.

References (optional)

1. World Health Organization. Regional Office for Europe. Guidance for rapid response mobile laboratory (RRML) classification. World Health Organization. Regional Office for Europe. 2021. <https://apps.who.int/iris/handle/10665/339845>.
2. Vybornova O, Gala JL. Structured decision-making for the management of a biological fieldable laboratory during outbreaks: a case for European Union Civil Protection Mechanism (EUCPM). *Environment Systems and Decisions*. 2019;39(1):65-76.

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