Minutes - Strategy day Centre for International Health

Monday 3rd February 2020 0830-1400

Venue: CIH Assembly area, 5th floor Overlege Danielsens Hus


Centre for International Health (CIH) needs a new strategy document – not only because the previous one ends in 2019, but because we see a shift at CIH: Old professors leave, new ones have come. The funding situation is different. Our society is different. We need to be more visible and give more political input. We have different students than before. We need a new strategy and it is needed to discuss: How will CIH look like in 5 years?

1. Welcome presentations / by the Centre director Bente E. Moen.

2. Our new vision and mission / by Melf-Jacob Kühl/Ingunn Engebretsen/Anne Berit Kolmannskog. Melf presented a new suggestions form the working group.

Current vision:
“CIH’s research and teaching in Global Health will result in better health in the underprivileged populations of the world.”

Current Mission:
CIH’s main tasks are to
• Initiate, lead and coordinate health research and teaching that is particularly relevant for the underprivileged populations of the world.
• Lead research, teaching, researcher training and leader development in partnership with institutions in low- and middle-income countries, as well as contributing to institution development in partner countries.
• Function as a debate forum for Global Health questions through seminars, conferences, etc.”

New suggestion from the working group
Vision
“To provide excellent Global Health Research and Training Contributing to sustainable and equitable societies”

Mission: CIH’s main tasks are to
- Coordinate and conduct Global health research within scientific partnership
- Teach, supervise and facilitate learning in Global health
- Disseminate research and engage in health policy
- Investigate innovative approaches for sustainable and equitable societies

It was underlined that innovation is included as the Faculty of Medicine as well as UiB put much weight on innovation these days.

From the discussion: The general feedback for the attendees where positive but there are still remaining issues, under follow remarks presented:
- Both the vision and the vision work well as a starting point. We need to make a distinction between our activities and what we want to achieve. The current formulations contain too much information about activity. Suggest removing the first line of the vision or rephrase it.
  
  • The last sentence lacks the description of our target population. Who do we want to work for? Important to remember that our work should led to improvement for those how need improvement the most and not necessarily those who lack good health in Norway. We want our contributions to improve health on an individual-based level in these settings.
  
  • We must find acceptable descriptions of the target group. Words discussed: underprivileged, low-income countries, poor, marginalized, all words with strong historical associations. We must avoid defining groups differently from how they themselves would wish to describe themselves, being sensitive to the diversity in any given populations.
  
  • What is the end goal for the vision? The question is, what do we want to achieve? We want to improve health. Health must be a keyword in the vision.
  
  • We want to improved health not only among the poor.
  
  • The word health must be read widely and reflect a spectrum of activities so to make it possible to include new initiatives from research colleagues that foster interdisciplinary.
  
  • The word inequitable should be considered.
  
  • What tools would we use to achieve the vision? Focus on methods. Global health research can be seen as a tool to reach healthy and equable societies.

The way forward – process: A new version of the vision and mission will be sent out to everybody on e-mail, please feel free to offer feedback. CIH Vision and mission should be ready by May. The center has two important meetings in May, one in the advisory group and one by the board where vision and mission must be presented.

3. **The School of Global health in Copenhagen,**
by professor Flemming Konradsen, follow by discussion.

Flemming Konradsen, is a professor of international environmental health at the University of Copenhagen, (UoC) and director of the Copenhagen School of Global Health. [https://globalhealth.ku.dk/](https://globalhealth.ku.dk/)

Copenhagen School of Global Health has experienced many of the same challenges to the field of interest as CIH the last couple of years. In his talk Konradsen reflected on these experiences targeting the questions “How are we and where do we want to go from here?” on three levels. 1. University level, 2. Educational and courses, and 3. Research at the department. The term Global health needs to be visible at the institutional level to ensure consistency in the way the institution promote and advertise the global perspective in its overall activities. There is a shift towards a need for more advertisement and promotion of the institution as the competition for grants and student is getting more and more competitive. Strategic planning is becoming important. At UoC the global health perspective is introduced in all programs. They also address the digital agenda, climate change, decolonialization, SDGs, student well-being, and helping students getting a job as postgraduates. Partnership in research as shifted from being numeros, around 17 reduced to about seven, reflected in more dedication and quality. New global health related topics is included, migration, Nordic tourism, climate, infections, comorbidity, NCDs, diabetes mellitus and so forth. The new topics represent a shift in scientific priorities and may contribute to difficult discussions internally in the department. Important to be aware of topics and priorities among founders. Global health today demands of everybody to take responsibility for our own actions in the world.

4. **Group work**

**Discussion: How can we at CIH improve our position and achieve what we want?**
The participants were divided into four groups asked to discuss the following topics and give some key words back in a plenum discussion after lunch.
Research; the group was led by Ingvild Sandøy:
The term “Global health” is challenging to define. How to position yourself within this terminology? Is there a need to delineate our research methodically or thematically? To principals can be utilized in this aspect, burden of disease and low-income settings. Our work should result in better health among those who needs it most. But important to remember that we are not static in the way we work. This is important when talking about partnerships. How do we want to work with our partners? In our research we want to be including but still maintain a focus on High burden of disease, equity, social challenges and impact. Our research is applied. The SDGs give our research direction. A SWAT analysis of our research would be useful strategically. We do not need to build expertise in every aspect of our research yourself but work in partnership to put our ideas into action.

Innovation; the group was led by Tehmina Mustafa:
Innovation is a buzz word of today that needs to be addressed so it can capture CIH unique activity. What activities at CIH are innovative? Are we a god partner for innovators? Do we look for commercialization of our research results and if yes will it give us conflicts of interests? CIH have the opportunity to partnership for scale-up with the industry but do we want to? We need to reflect on our fear for commercialization.

Education; the group was led by Karen Marie Moland:
Our master program reflects the changing terminology in the field of global health. The student group differs from before. We need to keep reflecting on the contents of the courses we offer students at master and PhD level to make sure we stay relevant and give our students an identity. A visible profile is important to stay attractive for new student groups and an SWAT analysis of our master program would be useful strategically. The future debate must address teaching capacity within CIH.

Dissemination; the group was led by Cecilie Svanes:
Dissemination is one of four main activities of scientific staff at UiB and is important. UiB and the Faculty of Medicine have both communication departments with dedicated resources that can help communicate research results on web and in the media. We have help with web pages locally at CIH – the need for help is large.