



Minutes of the Steering Group Meeting Oslo, 6-8 May 2011

Attending:	Arild Bjørndal, Mark Lipsey, Gary Ritter, Sandra Wilson, Terri Pigott, Peter Tugwell, David Wilson, Aron Shlonsky, Paul Montgomery, Merete Konnerup, Mette Deding, Eamonn Noonan, William Turner, Emily Tanner-Smith,
Apologies:	Gill Clark, Nick Royle, Paul Connolly, David Weisburd
Guests:	Sabina Wollscheid, Karianne Thune Hammerstrøm
Minutes:	Eamonn Noonan, Bjørn Tommy Tollånes

01. Adoption of minutes

The minutes of the previous meeting, in Keystone in October 2010, were approved.

02. Election of co-chair

Candidate(s): Mark Lipsey

Decision:

- Mark Lipsey is elected for a new period, which will run for two years to May 2013.

Discussion points:

- There is a need to clarify the definition of membership, particularly as regards who is entitled to vote. A common definition and criteria across all Coordinating Groups is desirable.
- The provisions in the Governance Plan about term limits for membership of the SG should be reexamined to take due account of a situation where an individual's role within a CG changes.
- The co-chairs are also Editors-in-chief. We need to define this role in more detail (See Keystone Minutes / 10b).
- The secretariat can assist CGs conduct elections. The secretariat has sent a note to CGs to set out what needs to be done in this respect.
- The secretariat will arrange an election for the other co-chair in the autumn.

Reports from Coordinating Groups

03a. Crime and Justice CG

See attached report.

Discussion points:

- A number of projects are at final revision stage. 6-8 reviews should be ready for publication this year.
- There are relatively few new titles, and the group is concerned about the pipeline; there is a sense



that the easy fields have been tilled.

- The issue of registering titles on risk factors for delinquency has arisen, entailing a shift in focus to diagnostic or prognostic reviews. This has important methodological implications.
- Martin Killias has been elected co-chair, succeeding Peter Grabowsky. The Group has also elected David Wilson to succeed David Weisburd, with effect from November 2012.

03b. Education CG

See attached report.

Discussion points:

- A number of reviews will be ready for publication in the coming months.
- A proposal involving funding for reviews and for communications work is being prepared. The communications part would involve, among other things, giving updates on relevant new research.
- It was suggested that the focus should primarily be on Campbell reviews, and that care must be taken to avoid giving a seal of approval to reports that may not have been equally rigorously reviewed. It is important to maintain the distinction between high quality systematic reviews and other research reports.
- There is no shortage of topics, but the challenge is to recruit authors, and to secure funding. Strategies for recruiting new lead authors were discussed.
- The prospect of the archives of the What Works Clearinghouse being opened for outside use was discussed.

03c. Methods CG

See attached report.

Discussion points:

- The Methods Editor now has a panel of graduate students who can assist with editorial work.
- Qualitative synthesis methods were discussed. One option is to do qualitative reviews outside a quantitative review; this is the Cochrane approach. Cochrane has authorized pilot studies for this, and there is an active discussion on improving guidelines in this area.
- It was noted that additions to Campbell guidelines require the approval of the Steering Group.
- As regards inclusion criteria for studies, it was noted that the intention is to look at all empirical evidence, and then to drill down to effectiveness. It is easier to interpret RCTs than other study designs, and to check for bias; but this does not imply that one needs to justify looking at other designs. The importance of describing eligibility criteria in enough detail was underlined. The protocol has to be sufficiently specific that a different team could conduct the coding and end up with the same selection of studies. Editors need to help authors achieve this clarity.
- Terminology varies from health sector to social sciences, and clear definitions of terms would help.
- It is important to find space for editors to discuss these issues.



03d. Social Welfare CG

See attached report.

Discussion points:

- The Group reported that it has adopted the Cochrane Handbook. A discussion on how this decision was taken and communicated, and on what it meant in practice. It was pointed out that the Handbook is a resource, but not a policy as such. It does not provide an answer to all editorial questions. Different views were expressed on the inclusion of non-randomised studies; the SW group suggests that their inclusion has to be specifically justified; others pointed out that at least one Cochrane group (EPOC) routinely includes certain quasi-experimental designs.
- There is a need for more detailed methodological guidance for editors and authors, and for a more detailed description of the editorial process.
- On Co-registration with Cochrane entities, the overriding importance of an early decision on whether to opt for co-registration was underlined. This is also because the Archie and RevMan platforms are obligatory for reviews published by Cochrane. It was however noted that Cochrane does not always require a protocol, if the team involved is of high level. It is also important to establish at the outset which is the primary editorial base. Work on a given project should then follow one process, in the primary editorial base, to the completed/accepted review. The secondary entity has the right, but not the obligation, to then publish the completed review, in accordance to its usual criteria. The dual status of CDPLP – a entity which is part of both Collaborations – was noted.
- Arild Bjørndal and Peter Tugwell will follow up the principles and the practicalities of Co-registration with the Cochrane side, with input from the SWCG.
- The Group is considering refocusing the Leonard E. Gibbs Award. It hopes to raise funds for a fellowship, rather than for a prize to a completed review. It was noted that Norwegian rules clearly forbid a direct contribution from Oslo to an endowment.
- Options for enhancing the group's editorial infrastructure were discussed; difficulties with existing arrangements were noted.
- The need for all thematic Groups to engage fully with the toolbox system was emphasized.
- Modalities for the election of co-chairs were discussed. Ideally, a letter of nomination and CV for each candidate should be required. It is essential to have a clear and up to date list of who is entitled to vote. In general, CGs are themselves responsible for the election of co-chairs. Oslo can publicise the call for nominations and assist the running of elections. A document setting out tasks and responsibilities in this process has been circulated.
- Four reviews are nearing completion and should ready for publication in the coming months

03e. Users Group

See attached report.

Discussion points:

- The group has been in a state of transition, and needs new blood. It was noted that a proposal for substantial funding for effectiveness research from Denmark was under consideration; this may have important consequences for the group's activities.



- The group is arranging a user's panel for the August symposium.

03f. International Development CG

Decision points: Approval of group's governance plan.

Decision:

- The IDCG's governance plan was approved, with minor editorial corrections.

Discussion points:

- A significant portion of the new package of systematic reviews being funded by development agencies are assigned to Campbell, through the International Development Group and other groups.

Production of reviews

04. Production of reviews, including revision of policy briefs

Decisions/Activities:

Notification to Editors-in-chief:

- Protocols and reviews that are viewed as ready to approve will be transmitted to the editors-in-chief before acceptance letters go to the authors. This will be done at the same time that the CG co-chairs and/or editorial or advisory board receive them. If there is no response from either EIC within a week, EIC approval will be assumed and notification to the authors will proceed. Notification will also be sent to the Managing Editor of the Online Library (Hammerstrøm).
- As decided previously, reviews, once approved by the respective Coordinating Group, will be sent to the Editor-in-Chiefs for consideration and to the Managing Editor for publication.
- The Governance Plan predates the creation of the online monograph series and the designation of editors-in-chief. Its provisions on approval of reviews accordingly need to be reconsidered.

Supports to authors and editors:

- It was agreed that a concise policy statement should be prepared as support for each element of the protocol, with the appropriate links to useful material, such as our policy documents, the Cochrane Handbook, and journal articles. This should be coordinated by the methods group; head office can provide funding for the work involved.

Simplified Methods edit:

- The Keystone meeting decided on a simplified procedure on methods. This expedited procedure is optional and CG editors need not use it. It should not be used in a case where the editors are not comfortable doing the methods review themselves.
- It was pointed out that Editors must notify the methods editor they opt for this (i.e. when they handle the methods review themselves), and will in so doing provide a copy of the document at issue. The methods editor will notify the CG editor promptly if she/he does not agree that it is



appropriate for it to bypass methods review.

- It was noted that the simplified procedure has helped the Methods Group's flow of work; the prior backlog has been cleared.

Announcement of peer-reviewed status of reviews:

- It should be made clear at every opportunity that Campbell Systematic Reviews are extensively peer-reviewed. This should be stated prominently on the front page of the Library and in the colophon pages. The colophon should also indicate the responsible editor for each review.
- All editors and managing editors who handle title registration, protocols, and reviews will enter the appropriate data into the toolbox. If they encounter problems with the toolbox works they will notify Bjørn Tommy, who will fix the problem as a matter of priority.

Enhanced support to review teams:

- Targeted training, mentoring and technical assistance are essential in particular for new authors. We need to develop ways to provide this also via conference calls and video linkups. There is a need for accessible tools on specific topics, such as effect sizes and information retrieval. Podcasts can play a role here. We have also begun to make clips available on You tube. It was noted that authors tend to see their editor as the gatekeeper, and can be reluctant to see him/her as a mentor. One possibility to designate a team for "enhanced support".
- The Editors-in-chief invited editors to consult with them on editorial matters as and when necessary.

Financial support for review projects:

- Continued funding for Head Office in Oslo is dependent on us delivering results that are relevant for Norway. Funding from Norway to individual review projects will occasionally be possible; in such cases, payments will be made on completion of the agreed work.
- New forms of targeted support to individual reviews was discussed. This could involve, for example, designation of a Mentor, such as an experienced author; online training (e.g. how to write a protocol); funding of a Trial Search Coordinator; small financial incentives (e.g. a completion bonus, funded participation in the colloquium)
- CGs should inform the CEO of review projects that merit financial support, for example in the following areas:
 - assignment of a mentor
 - travel subsidy to a Campbell training workshop
 - support for a systematic search, access to a specialized database, purchase of critical studies
- In the event that funding is available, such requests will be considered on a case by case basis. The relevance of a review project for Norway remains a key consideration.

Policy on inactive projects:

- There is a need to establish a policy on how to deal with inactive projects. CGs are encouraged to suggest elements for a common policy in this area.
- Some CGs write to authors after an agreed time to ask if they have left the project and to



indicate that it will be deregistered, unless they reply with a plan for completion of the work. It is proposed that this be done on an annual basis.

- It was noted that CG Managing Editors can at any time run a report from the toolbox that lists projects which have been dormant for over a year.
- Ideally, other authors should be allowed to work on the de-registered topics.
- It is important to clarify issues of copyright in such cases.

Policy on updating reviews:

- The need to review policy on updating reviews was discussed.
- We should try to avoid situations where Co-registered reviews are updated on the Cochrane side but not in the Campbell Library. In such cases the relevant Cochrane group should be invited to send the updated review to the Online Librarian (Hammerstrøm).
- Earlier versions cannot simply be de-published, given that they will be listed in authors' CVs.
- An update including new studies is subject to the same editorial process, including peer review, as a draft review.
- It was suggested that three years can be too short a time as a standard interval for an update, when the date of the systematic search is more recent.
- Present procedures mandate a firm commitment to update. This however is unenforced and unenforceable. It may be preferable as an alternative to recommend consideration of an update. This approach could also open the possibility for another author to undertake an update.
- A routine should be created to flag reviews overdue. This can be integrated in the toolbox.

Dissemination

05. Dissemination activities; and the Online Library

Action points

A portal to the online monograph series

- Mark Lipsey will send Bjørn Tommy Tollånes a draft of the Campbell Systematic Reviews page that will have the appearance of the online pages for typical journals, to be added to the Campbell website as the main portal to the monograph series. This will be circulated for comment. Tollånes will explore the possibility of a tailored search capability on that page, yielding only completed reviews (visitors are primarily interested in completed reviews). Greater prominence for reviews is desired.

Discussion points:

- The library is being actively used to locate and download reviews. We have between 250-300 users a day, and have had 30,000 visitors this year to date. Visits increase after we circulate newsletters.
- The newsletter has a new editor, Sabine Wollscheid. Almost all content is generated by head office; more needs to be provided by CGs.
- The capabilities of the browser function were discussed.
- Among the most frequently consulted reviews are:



- [Kinship Care for the Safety, Permanency, and Well-Being of Children Removed from the Home for Maltreatment](#), 4,000 downloads
- [Interventions for Children, Youth, and Parents to Prevent and Reduce Cyber Abuse](#), 4,350 downloads
- Consideration should be given to a system to notify authors of the number of downloads of their work.

Networking

06. Colloquium

a. Status of the Mini-Colloquium programme (August 2011)

Planning continues for a joint symposium with the Centre for Evidence Based Crime Policy at George Mason University.

Action points:

- Each CG will organize one or more panels for the symposium. Designated representatives (Peter, Aron, Gary, David, Merete) will coordinate with the local committee, and with Arild, Mark, and Terri.
- Eamonn and Bjørn Tommy will liaise with the Cynthia Lum and the local committee on organizational arrangements.

b. Campbell Collaboration Awards

Boruch and Mosteller awards

Comments/discussion:

- Candidates to the rewards were presented and the voting members SG cast their votes. In accordance with precedent, absent voting members will be given the opportunity to vote electronically by a designated deadline. When polling closes, votes will be tallied and the winners will be announced.
- The winners will be invited to attend the August symposium to receive their award.
- Nominations of other candidates will automatically be carried forward one year.

c. Next Colloquium (2012)

Decision:

- Copenhagen was agreed as the venue for the 2012 colloquium, to be hosted by SFI Campbell. The dates are 28 May to 1 June.
- The possibility of a symposium later in the year in Dhaka will be explored.

07. Partnerships

a) Cochrane

Deferred.

b) SFI Campbell

See attached report.



Comments/discussion:

- SFI Campbell considers that better guidelines are essential in particular on how to handle qualitative studies (see discussion on the Methods Group report, above).

c) Center for evidence translation

Action points:

- Catherine Gallagher will be invited to speak to the SG at the August meeting about the newly created Cochrane College on Health and Social Policy and its relation to Campbell.
- There is a shared interest in the dissemination of good evidence and good reviews. The SG welcomed this initiative.

Administration

08. CEO/HeadOffice report

a) Annual report

b) New research unit in Oslo

c) Budget overview

See attached reports.

Action points:

- The CEO will provide additional details regarding the funding provided for head office in Norway.

Discussion:

- The budget for operating costs remains approximately the same as last year. There was a slight overrun in 2010. The strategy is to maintain current levels of funding for editorial infrastructure, including external reviewing.
- Seed funding for specific review projects in the past met with mixed success. Future funding of this kind will be paid out on completion of the agreed work.
- The development of new and additional sources of funding remains an overriding priority.

The group then convened as the Board of Directors of the Campbell Collaboration in its status as a registered 501c3 foundation (minuted separately.)

09. Review of Governance Plan

Process for a review of the Governance Plan and Strategic Plan.

Action points:

- The CEO and Lipsey will review the governance plan and circulate it with suggested revisions for comments and suggestions. The resulting proposals will be put to the SG for consideration.



- Bjørndal will review the strategic plan and circulate it with suggested revisions for comments and suggestions. The resulting proposals will be put to the SG for consideration.

10. Any other business

Discussion points:

- The inclusion of editors in the SG meeting was welcomed.
- Suggestions for improving the follow up of SG decisions were discussed.

11. Next meeting

Action points:

- The next SG meeting takes place at George Mason University, Fairfax, Virginia, on Saturday 13 and Sunday 14 August 2011.
- A meeting of editors will also be convened *en marge* of the SG meeting.