

Webinar

BIOSECURITY R&D: LESSONS FROM THE U.S. FROM PRE-COVID TO POST-COVID

15 December 2021

Q&A Session with the Participants

16:02:34

From Global Health Centre Research, Graduate Institute Geneva:

Welcome to our webinar series at the Global Health Centre, The Graduate Institute of Geneva. Thank you for joining us. The recording and materials from the webinar, including the slides and information shared in the chat, will be made available at <https://www.knowledgeportalia.org/webinars>

If you have any questions or comments, please type them in the chat box (don't forget to select "everyone" so that all the attendees can see it). You can also use the "raise hand" button if you wish to pose a question orally.

- For a research synthesis on the topic produced by the Global Health Centre, please refer to Sunyoto, Temmy, Marcela Vieira, Suerie Moon, and Anna Bezruki. 2020. "Research Synthesis: Biosecurity R&D." Knowledge Portal on Innovation and Access to Medicines, Global Health Centre, Graduate Institute of Geneva. <https://www.knowledgeportalia.org/biosecurityrd>.
- Dr. Larsen is a globally recognized leader in the area of public health preparedness with more than 20 years' experience. As Vice President, Strategic Portfolio Development at Venatorx Pharmaceuticals, Dr. Larsen is responsible for identifying new growth opportunities and translating the company's rich internal programs toward strategic public and private partnerships. Previously, Dr. Larsen served as Deputy Director of the Division of CBRN Medical Countermeasures within the Biomedical Advanced Research Development Authority (BARDA).
- The research paper being presented today by Dr. Joseph Larsen is available at: Larsen, Joseph C., and Gary L. Disbrow. 2017. "Project BioShield and the Biomedical Advanced Research Development Authority: A 10-Year Progress Report on Meeting US Preparedness Objectives for Threat Agents". Clinical Infectious Diseases, Volume 64, Issue 10, <https://doi.org/10.1093/cid/cix097>

16:25:27

From Edward Hammond to Everyone: Is the price per course paid by BioShield made public, and how is that price arrived at? Or do the companies and a small government bureaucracy secretly decide together how much money the private sector makes? For example, I've tried to determine the price per dose being paid by the US biodefense program for many drugs, including Regeneron's Ebola mAbs, and the information isn't available. Is (semi)secret pricing a good idea? Don't the super-high prices paid by BARDA set a company expectation / pricing level that makes those drugs more costly for others? After all, if Regeneron sold

Inmazedb affordably to Africa, it would be hard for the company to continue to get huge money per course from US national security sources, no?

16:27:15

From Adrián Alonso Ruiz: Other than financial incentives, were there other policies implemented to support the development of these products and create the market for medical countermeasures (regulatory pathways, regulatory support, manufacturing capacity, etc)?

16:28:55

From Vitor Ido: The biosecurity model is mostly focused on national security. Can other countries replicate the model without a securitization focus? Can it be redesigned to address global access needs? Thank you!!

16:28:55

From Melissa Coyle: Was the BARDA funding for Ebola used to procure vaccines? Or more for development and general Ebola preparedness?

16:29:32

From Joseph Larsen: It supported both

16:29:36

From Global Health Centre Research, Graduate Institute Geneva: Daniel P. Gross is an academic economist working at the nexus of strategy, economics, and public policy. His research studies the drivers and consequences of innovation, with a three-part program examining the effects of automation on workers, firms, and labour markets; the historical origins of U.S. leadership in science and technology since the second World War; and the use of incentives and other tools in managing creative workers within organizations. His work frequently uses historical examples of industries undergoing significant technological change as a lens into the present and future. Professor Gross has a growing body of work that specifically studies crisis innovation policy and strategy, and the effects of crisis R&D efforts on post-crisis innovation, entrepreneurship, industry dynamics, regional economies, and science policy. From 2016 to 2020, he was an Assistant Professor of Business Administration at Harvard Business School. In the 2020-2021 academic year, he joined Duke's Fuqua School of Business.

The research paper being presented today by Prof. Daniel P; Gross is available at: Gross, Daniel P., and Bhaven N. Sampat. 2021. "Crisis Innovation Policy from World War II to COVID-19." Forthcoming in NBER Entrepreneurship and Innovation Policy and the Economy. Cambridge, MA: National Bureau of Economic Research. <https://doi.org/10.3386/w28915>.

Related papers are available at:

- https://www.dropbox.com/s/g0lfujh9h209cej/EIPE_final.pdf?dl=0
- https://www.dropbox.com/s/c0feiq6lh2ry1q6/OCI_20210710.pdf?dl=0
- https://www.dropbox.com/s/l6bscawdr4brsdz/ITEF_20200602.pdf?dl=0

16:36:56

From Marcin Rodzinka-Verhelle: Here in Europe, we are about to establish HERA (so called BARDA sister agency). We heard from the EU officials it will operate with "Europe first" approach. What would be your advice to make it more globally useful?

16:37:23

From Edward Hammond: George Merck of the University of Wisconsin, and Merck the company, closes the circle on BARDA, so to speak, as the director of the US offensive biological weapons program during the Second World War.

16:40:04

From Edward Hammond: Manhattan Project, exactly. This is the problem with warrior and war analogies, and dependence on national security programs for R&D. There may not be offense intent, but the interest is not pure.

16:40:10

From Aymeric Conry: I am wondering, wars in the past were a way to stimulate competition and finally improve life in daily life, once the wars have ended, with the examples you just mentioned. But it seems the improvements were possible with technologies and tools. Nowadays, improvements are needed for civil life first, such as with the need of a Covid efficient vaccine. What could be the most efficient way, nowadays, to stimulate a civil race for an efficient vaccine or treatment?

16:40:39

From Sara Amara: In addition to funding, did BARDA's early support of SARS-CoV-2 vaccine candidates accelerate their development, or was it part of the broader Operation Warp Speed effort?

16:47:26

From Andreas Wulf: The Penicillin history is particularly interesting: the global Access to it was pushed by the WHO giving its political weight towards distributing the Knowledge of production to Indian companies rather than keeping it exclusively to Pfizer - this is similar to the debates on the TRIPS Waiver today, How do you see this?

16:49:15

From Edward Hammond: People one Capitol Hill some of whom are now also under investigation for insider trading.

16:52:46

From Edward Hammond: Not so far accessible under FOIA in later cases, in the recent BARDA regime cost per dose is apparently considered national security information, because there is reluctance to divulge number of doses being procured.

16:56:23

From Edward Hammond: Like J&J's contractor in Baltimore, Emergent Biosolutions. Incapable of performing core task it was funded to do by the US biodefense program.

17:01:07

From Global Health Centre Research, Graduate Institute Geneva: Thank you for joining our webinar today. After the webinar, you will be directed to a survey page. We kindly ask you to take a few minutes to answer the questions to give us your feedback and suggestions for improvement. The recording and materials from the webinar, including the slides and information shared in the chat, will be made available at <https://www.knowledgeportalia.org/webinars>

You can:

- Subscribe to our mailing list: <https://graduateinstitute.ch/globalhealth>
- View all our upcoming events: <https://graduateinstitute.ch/GHC-events>
- Access research projects and publications: <https://graduateinstitute.ch/globalhealth>