

## An International Congress on Leishmania & Leishmaniasis www.worldleish.org

#### **EVALUATIVE COMMENTS FROM SC MEMBERS**

The bulleted comments are attributed to reviewers, each randomly assigned with a number in brackets Find the list of SC members as reviewers in "About us"

	Significance of the diseases							
	Bangladesh	Iran			Spain			
•	VL in the World (9)	•	Highly significant disease to region (14) Both CL and VL endemic (3)(5) (18) Mainly CL endemic/Significant CL focus (2) (8) Highly endemic/high impact for CL, moderately or less for VL (1) (4)	•	Disease endemic region (14) VL, co-infections, canine L. (1) presence of CL and VL; historical focus of HIV co-infection; canine leishmaniasis (3) (18) Mainly VL and CanL are endemic. VL epidemic occurred recently (9)			
•	One of the main endemic countries of VL involved in regional control program (5) One of the 3 countries of VL elimination program (3)	•	Leishmanization and WHO vaccine trials; large number L. tropica cases (5) (18) VL, CL and CanL are endemic (9)	•	Cases are increasing particularly evidence of an unexpected ongoing outbreak is stated. (12) (15) Ground breaking work on HIV/VL co-			
•	Bangladesh is one of the signatories to the KA elimination program in south Asia. Since this is one of the most important ongoing efforts in leishmaniasis control, the meeting would be an excellent opportunity to interact with the personnel involved and to view first hand these activities (13) (18)	•	Anthroponotic cutaneous leishmaniasis and canine VL are endemic in this country. (10) Iran is an endemic region for all forms of leishmanial disease. They have an enormous experience with leishmanaization, dx and treatment for all forms of disease. They have many groups from all over the country that	•	infections, canine VL, and epidemiology leishmaniasis (5) The country is endemic mainly for human and canine VL. One third of the human VL cases are HIV co-infections. There was a recent outbreak of CL. Spain has many outstanding programs devoted to research and training in these diseases. (13) (18)			
•	The incidence of leishmaniasis is decreasing (12) (14) (18)	•		• • •	Sporadic (2) very low impact (4) Human VL is hypoendemic. Some Leishmania-HIV cases; canine VL is more of a problem. (10) Mostly a veterinary problem (8)			



	Benefits of WL6 to the organizing country								
Bangladesh			Iran		Spain				
	Well justified. (10) WL6 will increase clinical and basic research in kala-azar prevention and control, and promote general education in leishmaniasis. (15) (18) High benefit to pay attention to VL (9)/ publicizing VL control efforts (5) (18) political impact expected to be high; very high benefit for the Elimination programme (4) (2) (3) Epidemiology, Clinical and Vector Control sessions have impact on the local research community, chances for students to find host laboratories (1) High benefit to local researchers/students (5); provide local scientists with access to international experts (8) (18)	•	Well justified. (10) WL6 will increase clinical and basic research in kala-azar prevention and control, and promote general education in leishmaniasis. (15) Benefits may be expected (4) Political impact expected to be high (3) Benefit CL research & control (2) Research on VL/CL is desirable; Benefit to international students (9) Benefit for integration of local researchers/students into international community (5) The meeting will provide a unique	•	Well justified. (10) WL6 will increase clinical and basic research in kala-azar prevention and control, and promote general education in leishmaniasis. (15) Many active groups on leish in Spain (3). Both Basic & applied research (2) Spain is endemic for zoonotic and anthroponotic Leishmania. There are reports of ongoing outbreak. WL6 will help in increasing awareness. (1) (14) (12) Publicize leishmaniasis in Spain and help continued efforts in obtaining research funds (5) Good opportunity to find new grants for researchers (9)				
•	WL6 will help in raising public awareness on kala-azar prevention and control program, building political and government commitment to eliminate kala-azar from Bangladesh etc (8) (12) Benefit scientists from other Leishmania endemic SE countries. (14)	•	collaborations with the active leishmaniacs community in Iran (1) WL6 will give chances to Iranian scientists and students to meet international scientists. It will open a new window for them to initiate collaboration with scientists from other parts of the world. (12) (18)  Aid scientists from Iran and other countries in conflict region to connect with other researchers (14)	•	Not many benefits (4) Less impact than others (18) Researchers and students already have excellent opportunities for collaborations (1)				



			Organizers and local committed	e	
	Bangladesh		Iran		Spain
	Suitable (9) Excellent people. (10) Capable, and well detailed proposal (5) Many of the top local Leishmmania experts (8) All the high officials of the Govt agencies and Institutes are involved (12) and also international committee (18) Excellent, diverse group of clinicians and scientists. (13) Govt as well as leading academic	•	Part health officials, part active researchers (1) Excellent capable, people (5) (10) Int'l track record is better (3) many and very motivated leishmaniacs from different institutions (4) Many of the top local Leishmania experts (8) Excellent, diverse group of clinicians and scientists. (13)	•	Excellent (9)  Very competent, excellent proposal (5)/distinguished investigators (18) excellent research network (2) Outstanding team and institutions (14) The local organizing committee is relatively strong. Several national and international institutes are involved. (15) (12) Many very motivated leishmaniacs from different institutions (4) Well-known scientists; academic and PPP
	institutions (14) Good organization that involves high officials, agencies and Institutes. (15)  Mostly health officials (1) Difficult coordination between institutions (2) Low int'l track record, except some experts (3)	•	Poorly presented (12) Not well organized. (15) Proposal looks incomplete and lacks detail (5) Difficult coordination between institutions (2) There are some gaps to explain (9)	•	(research and control) (3) Organization is in the hands of leishmaniasis experts, supported by wide range of experts (1) The involvement of DNDi is a big plus, in addition to local experts (8) (10) The two institutional sponsors, WHOCC and DNDi, play crucial roles in the global Leishmaniasis research and control effort. The local organizing committee is a diverse
•	Cannot see much scientific expertise (4)	•	Better to have < 3 individuals/one institution instead of many local organizers in charge for decision-making. Is the National Leishmaniasis Research Network an Institution? (18)  Not much international contribution (21)		group of clinicialns and scientists from all over the country (13)



Accessibility of the meeting location							
Bangladesh	Iran	Spain					
<ul> <li>Dhaka is the capital city easily accessible (14)</li> <li>Dhaka is a major international destination (13) and accessible from different parts of the globe (12), largely from Europe (18)</li> <li>Not centrally located (3) for direct flights from a large number of countries (18)</li> <li>Accessibility to Dhaka is modest. (15)</li> <li>High transportation fee (9)</li> <li>Highest air fares of three applicants (5)</li> <li>Too far for traveling for the majority of the attendees and quite expensive in general (10) (13)</li> <li>Cumbersome connections, expensive air travel to and from Dhaka, extremely long travel from the Americas (1)</li> <li>Difficult environment (4)</li> <li>Huge daily traffic jam (2)</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Moderate transportation costs (5) (9)</li> <li>Poorly defined (12) (15)</li> <li>Not clearly described (14)</li> <li>Not centrally located; accessibility issues for some countries (3)/limited number of direct flights from most endemic countries (18)</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Location seems easily accessible (14)/most accessible of all (18)</li> <li>All conditions ind transportation looks good for all participants (9)</li> <li>Madrid is quite a central location connected very well with the rest of Europe, North and South America, Middle East and North Africa. (10)</li> <li>Centrally located with respect to the 3 main endemic regions for leish (3)</li> <li>Equidistant for participants from the Americas and Asian countries, very good connectivity to African and European countries (1) easily accessible for scientists/fellows from different countries. (15)</li> <li>Lowest air fares from most locations with good global transportation connections (5)</li> <li>Toledo is a relatively small city and easily accessible from Madrid –40 min. Bus ride from airport (13)</li> <li>Well-organized maps easy to follow and transports are charted to reach the venue from Madrid. (12) (15)</li> <li>Most hotels are at walking distance from the congress centre. (10)</li> <li>It requires additional travel from the international airport (4), although readily reachable (18)</li> <li>Outside the capital but good highway (2)</li> </ul>					



	Venue and meeting facilities							
	Bangladesh	Iran	Spain					
•	Conf. Center (BICC) has good meeting facilities (18	<ul> <li>Dedicated congress venue (1)/ Milar         Tower has seminar rooms for international meetings (18)     </li> <li>Venue &amp; facilities look good (5), (2) (9), Superb (4), Outstanding (14) and world-class (8)</li> <li>Large conference facility in Tehran.         One large hall and many smaller halls. (13)     </li> <li>Venues can accommodate large number of delegates. (12) (15)</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Dedicated congress venue in central location of a moderately sized city (1)</li> <li>The El Greco congress centre looks great (10) (18). Venue, location and facilities look very good (15), excellent (2) (8) (9), superb (4) and outstanding (14)</li> <li>Everything will be done in a single location and the venue can accommodate large number of delegates. (12) the auditorium for plenary sessions looks very good (925 people) (10)</li> <li>The number of rooms will facilitate all the</li> </ul>					
•	Not clearly described (9) Not certain from the description how many seminar rooms (40 capacity) available to facilitate meetings + satellites? (3) (5) They gave numbers of total slots, but not a good breakdown. This could be important.	in each hall, poster area (?) (5)	<ul> <li>meetings + satellites (3)</li> <li>Outstanding conference center in Toledo: a large but not too large main hall (900 capacity), many smaller halls and meeting rooms; good proximity to restaurants and hotels (13)</li> </ul>					
	(6)							
•	Seminar room 3 seems a bit small (8) (10) Not clear if projectors/screens exist in each room, poster area (?)		<ul> <li>3 additional semirar rooms (110, 144, 400 people). 110 or 144 may be at the limit for</li> </ul>					
•	The BICC auditorium for the plenary sessions is not suitable for a meeting (a theater with 2 levels). Poster sessions in the hotel? Not a good idea. (10)		<ul> <li>some concurrent sessions?(10)</li> <li>Room division slightly worse than other facilities, poster area present (5)</li> </ul>					
•	The facility is perhaps too large and formal for World Leish which with likely <1000 participants would benefit form a smaller more intimate venue. (13)							
•	Venue 2 miles from the nearest hotel (1) difficult to access (2) September is a busy time for academia and there is also the Woods Hole parasitology meeting during the same period (10).							



	Hotel/Transportation/ Environment							
	Bangladesh	Iran	Spain					
•	Hotels adequate size and quite near (21) The hotels suggested are nice (6) The five star hotels look fine and reasonably priced (13).	<ul> <li>Looks suitable (9)</li> <li>Room rates very affordable (1) (14)</li> <li>Cost of hotel 50-150\$ (12) (15): Good range hotel prices (5)</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Very good facilities (2)/enough hotel rooms (21)</li> <li>Information on the hotels is clear. Cost reasonable (14)</li> <li>Cost of hotel 100-150\$ is very reasonable. (15)</li> </ul>					
	only 5 stars hotels? this will restrict access (3); Hotel costs at 160-260\$ (12)? too high (1), seem to be relatively high (15), very expensive (9) and certainly more expensive compared to other venues (14). In general, too expensive (4) for some attendees (8) Students can have difficulties for accommodation (10).	h  Hotel details are lacking (14) (15) (3): hotel locations not mentioned/Hotel- venue transport not clear (1) (18). No information provided about the hotels and their proximity to the conference	<ul> <li>Large hotel capacity close to conference center (10); many 3-5 star hotels (13)</li> <li>3 to 5 stars hotels (with good info); a wide variety of options is available for various budgets (1)(8)(9)(18)/ good range hotel prices, environment excellent (5) UNESCO Heritage Site (18)/will foster democratic access (3)</li> </ul>					
•	Not enough information for hotel-venue distance and transportation (18). Hotels are some 21 minutes by car to the conference center. I was not certain what transportation is planned. There are other hotels a bit closer though. (6)	TIOW WILLIOCAL CLESS CUSTOLLIS ATTECT	<ul> <li>Well-arranged transport system, weather is pleasant (12)/Hotels mostly short commute to and from venue (1)(5) (18)</li> </ul>					
•	Availability of good inexpensive accommodations for students near location of conference unclear (5)		<ul> <li>Hotel capacity is not so huge (4)</li> <li>Toledo is a very touristic place and there are plenty of hotels. The problem is that all these hotels have small capacity (max 85 rooms),</li> </ul>					
•	No information on budget hotels for student participants and colleagues traveling on a small budget, hotel (1) (18)		which means that participants will be quite dispersed in many hotels around. Is there any larger hotel outside the old city to					
•	A few cheaper 4 star hotels were listed, though their proximity to conference site is not known (13).		accommodate more people? The organizers mention that the city hotels can accommodate more than 3500 people and					
•	Huge daily traffic jam (2). Taxi and other public transport in Dhaka may be chaotic and unreliable (13)		<ul><li>in principle there should not be a problem.</li><li>(10)</li><li>Extra travel from Madrid to Toledo for some</li></ul>					
•	The organizers propose to include in the registration fees accommodation for all 1,750 expcted participants for the duration of the meeting?? This amount (\$850,000) does not seem a realistic plan to me. (10)		participants. (5)					



	Budget, Financial plan and sources							
Bangladesh			Iran		Spain			
	Rather detailed (3)/Superb (4)/well-defined (18) Plan is good (5) (21)/actually a reasonable, well-considered(6) and well-developed (8) budget. Very detailed budget. There is a plan to apply for financial support from local, national and international sources (10). Seven private sector organizations were listed as possible sponsors. Detailed plan for scholarship awards (13)/funding form government sources (5)  Too uncertain (2) Too expensive (3)/Costs much higher than other proposals (5) (18) Registration: 500\$ for academics and 300\$ for students (seem to be relatively high) (1)(5) (9) (12) (15) (21) However, the cost of the meeting (1.83 M\$ vs. 505,000 Euros for the meeting in Toledo) the proposal seems to include all expenses (meals and accommodation) in the registration fee covering food & hotels(?) (10) It is not clear whether they will be able to find this money (the 1.2M\$??, the remaining 630K will be from the registration). Not a very realistic financial plan. (10) Anticipating more participants. In budget—include costs for 6 days/nights for all participants—however, it does not seem that		Registration: 250\$ for academics and 100\$ for students (12) (15) lowest (10) (14) suitable (9)/affordable for colleagues and students, includes lunch (1) government funding sources (5)/Adequate – organizers have ideas about sources (21) One local pharmaceutical company has agreed to support the Congress. (13)  Registration fees seem too low. (10) Budget too tentative (2) (21)/ No details (8) (14)/ not available (3)/ not much detailed and requires confirmation (4) (18)  No budget breakdown, it is implied that the government will foot the bill (1) Fund-raising activities – not described (18)  Not clear there is a full assessment of costs. Indicate that total costs covered by Ministry of Health and Medical Education – will also raise other funds. Not clear what this means. Is this a backup with anticipation that only certain costs are covered? (6)		Superb (4)/well-thought-out (6)/Well-articulated and detailed budget plan (8)(10)(14)(21)(18)/modest (1) not too expensive; very professional (3) based on realistic attendance predictions (1) Registration: 500\$ for academics and 300\$ for students (2) (13)/good funding sources (9)/affordable for colleagues and students  Foundation is a positive part. (15).  The organizers propose several sources, also international, and provide support letters from different societies and institutions within Spain (10).  Finding support from DNDi, Bill Melinda Gates Highly reliable (2). DNDi participation is an advantage in bringing LDC participants and raising outside funds (2)(5) (12). Other partners such as BMGF will contribute (14)  Budget shows a surplus of 216000 \$. Part of the budget will be spent for students from resource-poor countries. (12)  Nine local and national funding sources listed. Strong likelihood of support for participants from resource-poor countries because of DNDi commitment to capacity building. (13)			
•	this is actually what is part of the operational costs (6)  Budget shows it still needs to raise significant amount of funds, 1.18 million \$ from sources.  (12)			•	Registration fee a little high (9) They could offer more scholarships to support students from endemic countries. (10)			
•	Estimate of student participants is low. The predicted contributor list is vague (1) Food costs in mentioned hotel are also high (9)							



Program management and sci. theme								
Bangladesh	Iran	Spain						
<ul> <li>Full score for all, considering its participant-dependence/positive outcome of previous WLs (18)</li> <li>adequate (5) /Suitable (9)/Satisfactory. (10)</li> <li>Sufficient information is provided. (15)</li> <li>Generally good (4)/Very good (14)</li> <li>Helpdesk, travel assistance, emergency medical service etc will be there (12)</li> <li>Visit to endemic site is an important activity of the meeting (18)</li> <li>Few gaps (2)</li> </ul>	participant-dependence/positive outcome of previous WLs (18)  Very good (14)  Generally good (4)  30 student fellowships (5)	<ul> <li>Full score for all, considering its participant-dependence/positive outcome of previous WLs (18)</li> <li>Excellent. (10)/Outstanding (14)</li> <li>Very detailed plan (9)/Well-developed &amp; comprehensive (2)</li> <li>The scientific programs/theme are good (15) and well-designed (21)</li> <li>Strong vision and how to reach it (3)</li> <li>Clear ideas for a comprehensive scientific programme (4)</li> <li>Well thought out, very detailed proposal, most scholarships for students (5)</li> <li>Toledo Congress Centre has the state-of-the</li> </ul>						
<ul> <li>No information provided (1) (3)</li> <li>only 20 student fellowships (5)</li> <li>Very little detail of sessions/tracks/themes etc. (8)</li> </ul>		facilities. Helpdesk will be available throughout the meeting and emergency services are there. (12)  Little detail of sessions/themes etc. (8)						



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#### Overall comments/Other specific issues of concern:

#### Other specific issues of concern:

- In some cases, a lack of detail or information made it difficult to accurately assess and compare the 3 venues (6)
   While Worldleish encourages and welcomes all participants, it is inappropriate to accommodate non-leishmaniac participants in excess of 50%, as they will not benefit from the scientific programs (4)
- WorldLeish should be held in countries open to all nationalities. For both Bangladesh and Iran, there are visa issues, which may
  discourage the participation of those from some countries (5), e. g. US and Israeli scientists?
- Security is a concern in Dhaka according to some who visited that city on business. (1) Will the security situation in Bangladesh continue to
  deteriorate? (8)

#### Overall comments:

- (18) Applications from Bangladesh and Spain are more thorough and detailed. Iran is politically stable now, but disturbances in the area
  might keep some potential participants away? Geographical novelty of Bangladesh for WL6 is perhaps weak, considering that WL5 was
  last held in Lucknow, which is also in the Indian subcontinent. Spain did an outstanding job for a great meeting.
- (12) Overall, Spain has produced a very detailed and well organized plan for the WL6. They have produced letter of support from different organizations and it is evident from their application that they have the best plan for WL6 amongst these three countries.
- (15) The Spain group has presented the strongest proposal, with sufficient detail and organization plans for the WL6. The supporting letters from different organizations are in place. The disease impact and basic/clinical research in Spain also make it a better selection than the other two countries.



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#### **Tabulated summary scores from the contributing SC members**

Reviewer #	Bangladesh	Iran	Spain
1.	23	28	30
2.	27	25	36
3.	21	18	37
4.	31	31	31
5.	34	33	38
6.	32	20	37
7.	25	18	29
8.	27	30	38
9.	26	21	35
10.	23	17	31
11.	28	28	37
12.	32	33	37
13.	23	19	34
14.	18	27	35
15.	37	34	38,5
16.	20	28	32
17.	36.5	35	38.5
18.	32	28	39
Average	27.53	26.58	35.17

#### **Overall Ranking according to:**

- Significance of the diseases
- Benefits of WL6 to the organizing country
- Organizers and local committee
- Accessibility of the meeting location

- Venue and meeting facilities
- Hotel/Transportation/ Environment
- Budget: Financial plan and sources
- Program management and sci. theme