



Neglected Tropical Diseases:

Progress, Opportunity, Innovation and Challenge in the Era of Universal Health Coverage

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Special satellite seminar

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16:00-17:00

@TMGH 1F Main seminar room



Neglected Tropical Diseases (NTDs) have been included in the Health Targets of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), recognizing their impact as impediments to health and development of the poorest 1-2 billion; the NTDs interface with and are integral to the success of many of the SDGs-poverty alleviation, education, water and sanitation, partnerships, food security. Over the past decade there has been increased resources to implement NTD programmes and significant success has been achieved in defining strategies and implementing programmes. However, both basic and operational research is still required reflecting the need for new tools but also to address the challenges of increasing uptake of donated medicines in complex and diverse settings which require innovative approaches to up scaling delivery, surveillance and monitoring and evaluation and unexpected epidemiological challenges. The challenge will be to incorporate new tools into implementation within health systems requiring more rapid appreciation of the factors which drive success-WHO approval of new tools, resources to deliver them and the requisite strengthening of capacity in endemic countries. The World Health Organization created a Roadmap in 2012 to achieve

certain targets for elimination and eradication by 2020 and defined the necessary strategies in a WHA Resolution in 2013. The challenges that elimination programmes face and the research required to accelerate progress will be discussed in the light of geopolitical events, environmental change, competition for health resources as health policy changes and new biological information—all factors which impact on rapidly approaching targets. The elimination “end game” and eradication defined as “zero global incidence of infection” poses a unique challenge- how do we prove a negative ? Such targets must be achieved in remote, conflict affected and geographically difficult regions with limited health services and communication. This talk will discuss the success to date, the research required to address the challenges, the need for innovation and innovative approaches and the current global health policy environment. The focus over the coming decade will be to address the aspiration of Universal Health Coverage and demonstrate the importance of maintaining the momentum of NTD programmes within that framework.