

REGIONAL ACTION FRAMEWORK for

Control and Elimination of Neglected Tropical Diseases in the Western Pacific



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ABBREVIATIONS

CL-SWASH	community-led initiative to eliminate schistosomiasis with water, sanitation and hygiene
DEC	diethylcarbamazine citrate
G2D	grade 2 disability
GPELF	Global Programme to Eliminate Lymphatic Filariasis
MDA	mass drug administration
NTD	neglected tropical disease
PACELF	Pacific Programme to Eliminate Lymphatic Filariasis
RPRG	Regional Programme Review Group
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SOP	standard operating procedure
WASH	water, sanitation and hygiene
WHO	World Health Organization
WSP	water safety planning

FOREWORD

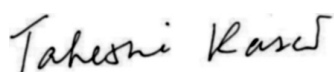
Neglected tropical diseases (NTDs) are a diverse group of disease conditions that most heavily affect people living without access to adequate sanitation, basic infrastructure and health services. But these diseases can be effectively controlled, eliminated or eradicated through a combination of effective public health interventions.

In 2012, the World Health Organization (WHO) Regional Committee for the Western Pacific endorsed the *Regional Action Plan for Neglected Tropical Diseases in the Western Pacific Region (2012–2016)*, setting disease-specific elimination and control goals in the Region. Since then, the Region has seen remarkable progress, primarily through preventive chemotherapy or mass drug administration. More than 40 million people in the Region have been reached with preventive chemotherapy for at least one NTD every year. Eleven more countries and areas in the Region have achieved elimination of lymphatic filariasis and/or trachoma as a public health problem.

With these achievements, the NTD landscape and programmatic needs in the Region are changing. To address these changes, I am pleased to present the *Regional Action Framework for Control and Elimination of Neglected Tropical Diseases in the Western Pacific*, which was endorsed by the Regional Committee in 2018. For diseases with proven elimination strategies and tools, a focused approach continues to accelerate their elimination. For control and elimination of many other diseases, however, efforts are needed to gradually shift from dependence on preventive chemotherapy to a whole-of-system approach with multisectoral interventions and service delivery. This includes enhancing the water supply and sanitation coverage, delivering veterinary public health and vector-control interventions, and increasing access to vaccines and antisera for all vulnerable and affected populations in the Region.

NTDs proliferate in underdeveloped settings where people have little or no access to adequate health care, clean water, sanitation, housing, education and information. The presence of NTDs could be viewed as a proxy for poverty and a weak or nonexistent health system. To control and eliminate NTDs, we must ensure that marginalized and neglected populations, those most in need, are equitably reached by appropriate health services and no one is left behind. In other words, success in fighting NTDs can act as a litmus test for progress on universal health coverage.

Working together, we can build health systems capable of providing universal and equitable access to essential NTD interventions and services, particularly among hard-to-reach, marginalized and vulnerable populations, to ensure that the Western Pacific Region is free of NTDs.



Takeshi Kasai, MD, Ph.D.
Regional Director

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Neglected tropical diseases (NTDs) are a diverse group of disease conditions that are most common in tropical and subtropical regions. These diseases most heavily affect people living without access to adequate sanitation, basic infrastructure and health services. In addition to significant morbidity and mortality, these diseases can lead to stigma and discrimination in communities.

The World Health Organization (WHO) prioritizes 20 diseases affecting more than 1 billion people in 149 countries as NTDs. Of these, 15 are endemic in 28 countries and areas in the Western Pacific Region. These diseases are prioritized not only because of the magnitude and impact of their burden, but also because they are amenable to broad control, elimination or eradication by delivering one or more of the five interventions recommended by WHO. The interventions are: (1) preventive chemotherapy; (2) case management and rehabilitation; (3) vector and intermediate host control; (4) veterinary public health; and (5) safe water, sanitation and hygiene.

In 2012, WHO and partners adopted *Accelerating Work to Overcome the Global Impact of Neglected Tropical Diseases: A Roadmap for Implementation*. The Roadmap set out goals and targets to be reached by 2020 and strategies for each NTD based on World Health Assembly resolutions and global initiatives. In the same year, the Regional Committee endorsed the *Regional Action Plan for Neglected Tropical Diseases in the Western Pacific Region (2012–2016)* (WPR/RC63.R4), setting disease-specific elimination and control goals, in line with the NTD Roadmap.

Since then, the Western Pacific Region has seen remarkable progress, primarily through preventive chemotherapy or mass drug administration. From 2016 to 2018, nine countries

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