



ERADICATION OF YAWS

Procedures for verification and certification of interruption of transmission

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**World Health
Organization**

Eradication of yaws: procedures for verification and certification of interruption of transmission

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Preface

In 2012, the Director-General of the World Health Organization (WHO) launched a roadmap for accelerating work to overcome neglected tropical diseases at a partners' meeting in London, United Kingdom, with a target set for the eradication of yaws by 2020. A publication in the *Lancet* that year on the efficacy of a single dose of azithromycin for the treatment of yaws was a major advance in the history of the disease and has renewed interest in its eradication. In 2013, the Sixty-sixth World Health Assembly adopted resolution WHA66.12 on neglected tropical diseases in support of WHO's roadmap. In this resolution, yaws is targeted for eradication by 2020.

In response to these developments, the WHO Department of Control of Neglected Tropical Diseases organized a consultation (Morges, Switzerland, 5–7 March 2012) to prepare a strategy for yaws eradication as the basis for national eradication plans. In light of the new development, the International Task Force for Disease Eradication at its 20th meeting (Atlanta, USA, 27 November 2012) reviewed the current global status of yaws and endorsed the new eradication strategy.

At a consultative meeting of experts (Geneva, 20–22 March 2013), two documents were developed to guide the yaws eradication process: a guide for programme managers on the eradication of yaws; and procedures for verification and certification of interruption of yaws transmission.

Some 43 participants from 17 countries deliberated in depth to finalize both documents. Participants included national yaws focal points in endemic countries, experts on yaws, and regional and selected WHO country staff responsible for yaws eradication within the portfolio of the neglected tropical diseases programme. Since then, these documents have undergone extensive review taking into consideration accumulated experiences gained during the pilot implementation of the Morges Strategy in a number of countries.

This document is intended to guide international verification teams and yaws eradication programme managers in verifying interruption of transmission of the disease.

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