



**PMAC** | PRINCE MAHIDOL  
AWARD CONFERENCE **2018**



## **PARALLEL SESSION 2.5**

**REDUCING THE GAP: ADDRESSING NEGLECTED DISEASE; NEGLECTED  
POPULATIONS**



## | BACKGROUND

Preventable, endemic diseases are rarely prioritized for surveillance as they do not pose a risk of epidemic or pandemic outbreak. This is a failing on two levels: (1) the presence of preventable diseases acts an indicator of the overall state of the health system; and (2) the knowledge of 'usual' allows for detection of the unusual. Strengthening surveillance and other systems for endemic diseases, infectious or otherwise, provides necessary infrastructure to combat the existing and target the emerging. In addition, most of these subsisting populations live in close proximity with their animals and experience a double burden, disease in their animals and disease in their families and communities. A pro-poor initiative on a massive scale, control of NTDs has much to offer in terms of what can be adapted, innovated and built in low-resource settings most burdened by NTDs in an agenda that makes poverty alleviation its overarching objective and aims to leave no one behind.

The success celebrated for some of the NTDs shows that it is possible to build private-public partnerships that lead to concrete results, such as the Global Partners' Meeting on NTDs based on the theme "Collaborate. Accelerate. Eliminate". This encapsulates an exemplary informal collaboration that marks a 'turning point' in global efforts to control and eliminate poverty-related diseases.

The discussion will center on forging cross-sectoral partnerships to tackle NTDs and "diseases of poverty", and will include a range of elements crucial to an effective collaboration across sectors such as financing, research and development, production and delivery of vaccinations and treatment, disease surveillance, role of local communities and other actors on the field. It will elucidate the incentives of building effective cross-sectoral and public-private partnerships by using the case of NTDs. Lessons may be derived from the NTD experience to other areas requiring cross-sectoral partnerships in health where a population-based intervention is appropriate.

## | OBJECTIVES

Marginalized and neglected populations bear the epidemic risk of infectious diseases especially neglected tropical diseases. They are more exposed to disease vectors as well as have less access to effective and timely health care. Without addressing prevention, detection and response among this segment of the population, the world cannot be safe from infectious disease. This session aims to discuss successful examples of cross-sectoral partnerships across human and animal health sectors to tackle "diseases of poverty" including financing, vaccine development, and distribution as well as delivery. It will also address how to target this neglected segment of the population against the threat of infectious diseases. Intervention based approaches through specific diseases can be discussed as well as tackling access and inclusion into the health system through a social determinants approach. Tackling NTDs is addressing the causes of poverty and the pathways to reach the poorest and most vulnerable in society those that will have slower access to universal health coverage and would be a pathway to strengthen health systems, human, animal and environmental.



Moderator

## Natalie Phaholyothin

*Associate Director*

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Natalie Phaholyothin is an Associate Director at The Rockefeller Foundation's Asia Regional Office. She oversees the overall health portfolio in Asia. She manages the Transforming Health Systems (THS) program which aims to support countries towards Universal Health Coverage (UHC). Natalie works closely with THS's partners to build capacity, generate evidence for policy making and create sustainable partnerships and networks for health systems strengthening and UHC. She works closely to support the growing network of health systems practitioners, the Joint Learning Network (JLN), in its endeavors to bring in-country knowledge to solve common problems that countries face towards implementation of UHC programs. Through RF's pioneering Disease Surveillance Networks (DSN) initiative, she facilitated the institutionalization of a regional disease surveillance network - the Mekong Basin Disease Surveillance Network (MBDS) which is now the MBDS Foundation. The MBDS Foundation and the network in which it serves have been instrumental in building capacities at cross border areas in the Greater Mekong Sub-region to monitor, track and prevent infectious disease outbreaks through community engagement and innovative solutions. In addition, Natalie is involved in the emerging health program of the Foundation that will focus on community health and leverage the power of digital solutions.