

Management Response

Evaluation Title	Evaluation of the WHO Neglected Tropical Diseases Programme
Commissioning Unit	WHO Evaluation Office
Link to the evaluation	https://www.who.int/docs/default-source/documents/evaluation/evaluation-ntd-report.pdf?sfvrsn=351a363f_2
Evaluation Plan	WHO Organization-wide evaluation workplan for 2018-2019
Unit Responsible for providing the management response	Director's Office, WHO Department of Control of Neglected Tropical Diseases Division of Universal Health Coverage/Communicable and Noncommunicable Diseases (UCN/NTD)
<p>Overall Management Response:</p> <p>Overall response by Senior Management to suggestions made by the evaluators was good, and recommendations were broadly accepted.</p> <p>In general, action is already underway with regard to normative aspects (e.g. the development of the new NTD road map 2021-2030) and programmatic shifts (e.g. the new departmental structure, operational since 1 January 2020). Programme management functions are being progressively strengthened and the recruitment of an NTD Programme Manager is expected soon.</p>	
First Management Response Status: <i>In progress</i>	Updated Management Response Status: <i>In progress</i>
First Management Response Date: 25 April 2020	Updated Management Response Date: <i>4 May 2021</i>
Overall update on the actions taken since April 2020	<p>Actions taken over the past 12 months have focused on a progressive reshaping of the public health approach to NTDs. The new NTD road map 2021-2030 was the outcome of a wide consultative process, which contributed to strengthen WHO's role and its relationship with key stakeholders, and culminated with its launch on 28 January (Recommendation 1). In line with the road map's spirit, efforts were made to break programmatic silos and strengthen cross-cutting and inter-sectoral activities, as a natural consequence of the restructuring of the NTD department; this is exemplified, among others, by ongoing collaboration with other departments (Recommendation 2). Finally, a series of companion documents to the NTD road map is set to provide the tools to ensure that countries and all stakeholders align with the shared vision promoted by WHO (Recommendation 3).</p>

Recommendations and Action Plan

Recommendation 1: An updated Roadmap, as well as the London Declaration-type document, is needed to help to keep momentum for NTDs.

- i. The focus of the Roadmap and WHO NTD Programme should broaden beyond a focus on MDA for PC diseases, to include further articulation and implementation of the other four strategies of the WHO NTD Programme (integrated disease management/case management, WASH, vector control, and zoonosis) with clear, achievable community mobilization and strategies for all NTDs. Sustainability targets need to be built into the strategy.
- ii. The importance of integration across the 20 NTDs should be a focus of the new Roadmap, linking the NTD work to the GPW13, UHC, HSS and the SDGs.

The list of NTDs included in the Roadmap for Implementation and in the WHO NTD Programme needs to be safeguarded. The WHO Secretariat and its partners need to ensure adequate resources and support for the NTDs that are included on the list.

Management response	Partially accepted. Only because we do not accept the recommended London Declaration-type document which is restrictive to only 10 NTDs and not the entire group of 20. The new road map 2021-30 is fully aligned with GPW13, UHC and SDGs, and promotes mainstreaming of NTD services into national health systems as a way to reinforce both NTD programmes and the overall health system. Envisaged actions are detailed below, with an overall timeline up to June 2020				
Status	<i>In progress</i>				
Key actions	Responsible	Timeline	Status	Comments	Update since April 2020
Initiate a global consultative process with member states, stakeholders and NTD and public health experts	Director and Regional NTD Advisers	April 2018 - August 2019	<i>Implemented</i>	The road map consultative process included inputs from over 100 expert interviews and 300 responses from online consultations, meetings with national NTD managers and partnerships	No update required
Present the draft road map 2021-30 to the NTD Strategic and Technical Review Group (STAG-NTD)	Director NTD	September 2019	<i>Implemented</i>	STAG-NTD reviews and approves the NTD road map 2021-30	No update required
Finalize the road map 2021-30 and present for consultation by the member states	Director NTD	February 2020	<i>Implemented</i>	At the request of the 146 EB, the NTD road map 2021-30 will be reviewed by the 73 rd WHA.	No update required
Launch the road map	Director NTD	June 2020	<i>Implemented</i>	The road map is planned to be launched in a high-profile event in June for its widest circulation and visibility	Both WHA endorsement and launch had to be postponed because of the COVID-19 pandemic. The road map was eventually endorsed by WHA73 on 13 November 2020, and was officially launched on 28 January 2021 through a high-level virtual event.

					<p>The document is available here: https://apps.who.int/iris/handle/10665/338565</p> <p>The video of the launch is available here: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HZ64fviWMCA</p>
Develop an investment case for the road map 2021-30	Director NTD	December 2020	<i>In progress</i>	The document will facilitate and strengthen advocacy and resource mobilization to accelerate action towards the 2030 targets and to sustain progress, especially for diseases that are approaching elimination.	The NTD investment case is in its final stages. More time was required to add a section dedicated to funding request. Its publication as a companion document of the NTD road map is expected in Q3 2021.

Recommendation 2: The WHO NTD Programme should consider further integration across NTDs.

- i. To facilitate integration across NTDs, including within the WHO NTD Programme: providing integrated guidelines (e.g. across strategies) and supporting their implementation, planning across diseases in an integrated manner, and ensuring that staffing aligns with integrated strategies across diseases.
- From a partnership perspective, WHO should encourage donors to adopt an integrated approach to NTDs and ensure intersectoral collaboration within WHO and externally to support work on NTDs.

Management response	<p>Accepted.</p> <p>2.1 The NTD department has further progressed in implementing this recommendation in a more rational and structured way. The fundamental changes towards integration of the various disease-specific NTD programmes have been implemented by reshaping the structure of the department from being focused on disease categorization into being more function and platform-oriented.</p> <p>2.2 From the wider NTD community perspective – in order to guide and encourage Member States and development partners including donors, the fundamental measure or action taken was the development of the NTD road map 2021-2030 with clear strategic shifts across 3 areas as described below.</p>				
Status	2.1 Implemented and 2.2 in progress – we recognize that integration is a continuous process				
Key actions	Responsible	Timeline	Status	Comments	Update since April 2020
Restructuring the NTD Department units	Director NTD	By 31 December 2019	Implemented	Structural change has already happened by envisaging a platform and an approach for integrated service delivery. What remains is filling some of the mission critical positions reflecting the new cross cutting functions established by the process of WHO Transformation, with the aim of aligning the department work to the wider organizational goal.	No update required

Significant shifts in addressing NTDs	Director NTD	<p>NTD roadmap document by May 2020</p> <p>Implementation of the recommended actions & new approaches, 2021-2030</p>	<p><i>Implemented</i></p> <p><i>In progress</i></p>	<p>The development of the NTD road map 2021-2030 has been completed with extensive consultative process of Member States, experts, partners, the wider NTD community and the public. The road map is the key document providing strategic directions and approaches to the work of the mentioned stakeholders and WHO, and entails three significant shifts in the delivery of NTD interventions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Programmatic progress across NTDs: shift from a process orientation, where success is measured based on actions taken, to an impact orientation, where success is measured based on real-life impacts covering all NTDs. 2. Cross-cutting approaches: shift from disease-specific perspectives considering individual diseases in isolation, towards a platform-based, holistic approach based on universal health coverage and integrating cross-cutting themes and shared resources. Primary cross-cutting approaches include: integrating across NTDs and within national health systems, coordinating among NTD ecosystem stakeholders and non-NTD vertical programmes, and lastly strengthening country systems, global and regional resources and expertise in NTDs. 3. Operating model and culture: to achieve the overarching, cross-cutting and disease targets, a shift is proposed in the operating model and culture: from an outside donor-led agenda where external stakeholders determine NTD priorities to a country-owned agenda where countries actively integrate NTDs in their health sector planning and budgeting. 	No update required
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Ongoing discussion with donors to support WHO's and Member States' cross-cutting and intersectoral approach	Director NTD	Ongoing process (<i>during renewal of grant agreements and new proposal submissions to donors</i>)	<i>In progress</i>	WHO/NTD is currently in negotiation with existing and new donors to provide support for the new approaches, particularly for improving integration across NTDs and with other communicable diseases and the broader UHC and health system and also for multisectoral interventions on vector control, WASH, Food safety, education etc.	Extensive groundwork has been carried out to strengthen cross-cutting and intersectoral approaches to NTDs, thanks to the publication of a technical document on NTDs and mental health , and a revised strategy on NTDs and WASH . Activities have also been jointly implemented in collaboration with UNAIDS, GMP and WHE. Director, NTD, has been engaging partners, stakeholders and donors, and advocating for reprioritization of NTD investments according to the programmatic shifts identified by the new NTD road map.
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Recommendation 3: A stronger overall integrated programme management function at NTD HQ level to ensure efficiencies, moving from coordination to collaboration and integration of NTDs, and ensure sustainability.

- i. Consider a formal mechanism to coordinate internally at WHO HQ to ensure intersectoral collaboration and integration that will further address NTDs (e.g. with programmes on WASH, surgery, mental health, UHC), as well as research needs (e.g. by formulating a well-articulated research partnership with TDR).
- ii. The NTD Programme should conduct a clear stakeholder analysis with articulated strategies about external engagement to ensure that diseases/sub-groups collaboratively engage stakeholders in a more harmonized, consistent and integrated way.
- iii. The WHO NTD Programme should have a well-articulated programme logic model and a specific, detailed performance measurement framework to ensure management has performance data for decision-making.
- iv. The WHO NTD Programme should assess the logistical support role it provides (i.e. whether it fits within WHO's core functions, and if it is adequately resourced at all levels of WHO).
- v. As country-level NTD surveillance data is critical, surveillance systems will become more important as the WHO NTD Programme moves towards elimination and eradication. WHO should work with partners and countries to strengthen NTD surveillance systems at country levels.

The WHO NTD Programme needs to set the conditions for sustainability, which are defined clearly (e.g. domestic institutionalization, drug procurement) and integrated into the WHO NTD Programme.

Management response	Accepted Envisaged actions are detailed below, with an overall timeline up to 2022 NTD programme manager is being recruited to facilitate implementation of Recommendation 3
Status	<i>In progress</i>

Key actions	Responsible	Timeline	Status	Comments	Update since Sept 2020
Coordinate internally at WHO HQ to ensure intersectoral collaboration and integration to further address NTDs	Director NTD	In place by April 2019	<i>Implemented</i>	Directors of relevant departments (or their nominees) participate in meetings of the NTD Strategic and Technical Advisory Group. As an example of the fruits of this collaboration, an updated WASH&NTDs Global Strategy is being developed in partnership with WHO/PHE as a companion document to the 2021-2030 NTD Roadmap.	No update required
Formulate a well-articulated research partnership with TDR	NTD Chief Scientist	By end 2020	<i>In progress</i>	Development, in collaboration with TDR and other partners, of a Research Framework as a companion document to the 2021-2030 NTD Roadmap, has been planned but has not yet been undertaken.	“Ending the neglect to attain the Sustainable Development Goals: A research & development blueprint for neglected tropical diseases 2021–2030” has been cleared by QNS and assigned number GPHG 1304. Its publication is expected by Q4 2021.
Conduct a stakeholder analysis and articulate strategies about external engagement	NTD Programme manager/ Information Officer	By end 2020	<i>Implemented</i>	Consultation with the wider partners’ community has started as part of the preparatory work conducted in view of the launch and implementation of the NTD road map 2021-30.	Extensive consultations have taken place between WHO and stakeholders with regard to shaping the road map and launching it during a high-level virtual event. A consultant focusing on advocacy and relationship with stakeholders has joined DOF and is supporting Director, NTD with regard to WHO’s strategic engagement with the global NTD community.
Develop a well-articulated programme logic model and a specific, detailed performance measurement framework	NTD Programme manager	Awaiting formal adoption	<i>In progress</i>	The 2021-2030 NTD Roadmap and its companion Monitoring and Evaluation Framework document meet these needs.	“A framework for monitoring and evaluating progress of the road map for neglected tropical diseases 2021–2030” is being finalized and will be released by Q2 2021. A virtual presentation to the global NTD community is planned for June/July 2021.
Assess the logistical support role that the Department provides	Director NTD	By May 2019	<i>Implemented</i>	This assessment was undertaken as part of the WHO Transformation process, which subsumed the “Functional Alignment” exercise that the Department had itself commenced just prior to the launch of the Transformation. Logistical support for procurement of NTD medical products is an essential function of the Department; it is, unfortunately, the nature of NTDs that	No update required

				without this role being performed by WHO, the majority of persons affected by NTDs would not have access to essential medicines and diagnostics.	
Work with partners and countries to strengthen NTD surveillance systems at country levels	Director NTD	By end 2022	<i>In progress</i>	Surveillance systems are complex enterprises. The fitness-for-purpose of data collection platforms for NTDs varies markedly from one disease to another; for some (e.g., dracunculiasis, HAT, trachoma), they are already strong. For some others, basic diagnostic development is still needed, or systems for quality control and quality assurance must be created or adapted whilst working in partnership with a multitude of existing stakeholders.	Standardization and harmonization of NTD indicators has been strengthened to facilitate their mainstreaming into existing health information management and disease surveillance/reporting systems. Data management practices for different NTDs are being progressively integrated to minimize reporting burden on programmes. Progress has been made to layout a standardized approach to identify gaps and fill needs for diagnostics for NTDs, in close coordination with the global partners community. The drafting and web consultation for two TPPs for lymphatic filariasis and two TPPs for onchocerciasis has been completed. For two TPPs for schistosomiasis and one TPP for STH, public consultations have been completed and reviews are being finalized based on comments received. TPPs for skin NTDs (Buruli ulcer, cutaneous leishmaniasis, and leprosy) are being drafted for public consultation. TPPs for emergency vector control targeting Aedes mosquitoes and the TPP for snake antivenom products for sub-Saharan Africa are being finalized.
Set the conditions for sustainability	Director NTD	By end 2020	<i>Implemented</i>	A Sustainability Framework is being developed as a companion document to the 2021-2030 NTD Roadmap.	“Ending the neglect to attain the sustainable development goals: a sustainability framework for action against neglected tropical diseases 2021-2030” was released by WHO on 28 January 2021 , as a companion document to the NTD road map. The document is available here: https://apps.who.int/iris/handle/10665/338886