

The first High-level Meeting to Defeat Meningitis by 2030

26 April 2024 | 10:00 to 17:00 CET
Institut Pasteur | Paris, France

See more on the [event webpage](#).



Overview

Meningitis is deadly and debilitating; it strikes quickly, has serious health, economic and social consequences, and affects people of all ages in all countries of the world. Bacterial meningitis, one of the deadliest forms of the disease, can cause epidemics, lead to death within 24 hours, and leave one in five patients with lifelong disability after infection.

The World Health Organization's first high-level meeting to defeat meningitis will be hosted by the government of France under the *High Patronage of Mr Emmanuel MACRON, President of the French Republic* at the Institut Pasteur on Friday, 26 April 2024.

This meeting will feature remarks from Dr. Tedros Ghebreyesus, Director-General, WHO, French government officials, key partner organizations and people with lived experience, including Paralympic athletes and special guests.

Leaders will convene from across sectors, including:

WHO Member States

Key implementing technical partners

Philanthropic organizations and donors

Civil society organizations and patient groups

Private Sector

Academia and research institutions

Objectives

The high-level meeting is a global call to action to boost commitments from a wide range of stakeholders towards defeating meningitis. The goal is to raise significant awareness and resources and propel forward implementation of the global [road map](#). This may include commitments to accelerate key implementation activities, direct support, and technical support, including further integration of meningitis control activities into existing programmes.

The Road Map to Defeat Meningitis by 2030

The immediate and long-term health system costs of meningitis are profound, and the cost to households can drive families into poverty. Meningitis reinforces the inequity that is a reality for the world's most marginalized groups, thus contributing to the stunting of global development.

In 2017, representatives from governments, global health organizations, public health bodies, academia, the private sector, and civil society called for a global vision to defeat meningitis as a public health threat. WHO took up the call for action and – alongside global partners and experts involved in meningitis prevention and control – developed the Defeating Meningitis by 2030 global road map. The road map was approved during the 73rd World Health Assembly in the first ever resolution on meningitis.

The road map is an evidence-based and concrete plan. Its implementation will have a substantial impact on global health, including reinforcing wider initiatives, such as those aimed at strengthening primary health care and health systems, increasing immunization coverage, improving global health security, fighting antimicrobial resistance, and advocating for the rights of people with disabilities. The road map will also complement other global health strategies, such as those addressing sepsis, pneumonia, tuberculosis, and HIV.

Investing in meningitis will prevent cases of disease and long-lasting sequelae – and will save lives.

Investing in the road map will gradually achieve the following by 2030:

The “meningitis belt” – made up of 26 countries across sub-Saharan Africa that are disproportionately impacted by meningitis – will become history.

2 750 000 cases and 900 000 deaths

caused by vaccine-preventable meningitis will be averted.

800 000

meningitis sequelae will be averted.

72 000 000

disability-adjusted life years (DALYs) will be averted.

Between USD

\$3.8-10 billion

will be saved in medical costs.

Between USD

\$86-100.4 billion

will be saved in indirect costs.



Programme



09:00 - 10:00 CET | Welcome & Registration

10:00 - 12:00 CET | Scientific Conference of Meningitis

This session will focus on the critical aspects of the road map, highlighting the challenges as well as the successes and milestones reached. And how to achieve the goals still ahead.

Specific areas of discussion:

- Reducing cases of meningitis and deaths from meningitis. Do we have the vaccines, diagnostics and treatments needed?
- Stopping meningitis epidemics - and ending them for good.
- Living a fulfilling life after meningitis for everyone, everywhere.

12:00 - 13:30 CET | Lunch

13:30 - 15:00 CET | High-level Engagement Session

This session will serve to align efforts across all partners working to achieve a world free of meningitis. This will include testimonials from patients, families, and athletes, launch of the Global road map investment case and announcement of formal commitments.

While still a draft agenda, the programme will address these specific areas of focus:

- Defeating meningitis by 2030 and the Sustainable Development Goals.
- Strengthening primary healthcare through efforts to defeat meningitis. Defeating meningitis with improved primary healthcare.
- Implementing the global road map, experiences from the ground.

15:00 - 17:00 CET | Networking Reception

Making a Commitment



Given its suddenness, severity, dire consequences, and epidemic potential, meningitis is a high-profile disease for all countries in the world.

This high-level meeting provides a platform for all stakeholders to commit to defeating meningitis. The commitments will be highlighted through one of several methods including live statements, recorded messages and posted to the WHO webpage.

WHO will work with stakeholders as needed to support the development of their commitments.

The deadline for submitting commitments is Friday 19 April, 2024. This deadline enables the communication teams to ensure each commitment receives the preparation required for amplification and gratitude it deserves in progressing the action to defeat meningitis.

Contact for more information: meningitis2030@who.int

