

ABSTRACTS OF PRESENTATIONS IN PLENARY SESSIONS

PS-001 R&D TO TACKLE GLOBAL HEALTH CHALLENGES: ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES FOR EDCTP

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10.1136/bmjgh-2016-000260.2

As well documented, the diseases of poverty and Neglected Tropical Diseases (NTDs) cost the lives of millions of people worldwide and threaten the health of millions more. More than 200 million health years of life are lost every single year due to mortality, morbidity and disability. This not only represents an unacceptable burden for the populations concerned, mainly the most impoverished segments of a population, but also impairs health development and all our efforts to reach the Sustainable Development Goals. NTDs and diseases of poverty are clearly part of the overall neglect of people and health and social systems.

The high burden of diseases of poverty and NTDs calls for new efforts in developing effective and efficient approaches to control or even eliminate these diseases. This in turn implies that we must aim at new discoveries and innovations and – at the same time – make most effective use of existing tools as well as of innovative partnerships between the public and the private sectors and between different countries; clearly the niche and responsibility of EDCTP.

The presentation will discuss needs and ongoing efforts in diagnosis, drug and vaccine development against diseases of poverty and NTDs and will also discuss (i) obstacles at the level of health and social systems that prevent access of the populations to new and existing efficacious tools as well as (ii) new approaches in R&D to overcome these obstacles and barriers. While there are great hopes and also substantial advances in drug, diagnostics and vaccine development, R&D does not and should not alone focus on developing new tools, but rather on combining existing and new tools for integrated approaches of diseases control and elimination that are tailored to a given endemic setting and are combined with effective capacity building. The outlook and discussion will emphasize the potential, chances and responsibilities of EDCTP to strengthen effective partnership, capacity building and national and global health development.