



# RSTMH

DEDICATED TO GLOBAL HEALTH SINCE 1907

## ONLINE MEETING PROGRAMME

# RSTMH Global Research in Progress

## Thursday 19 June 2025

### Message from the Chief Executive of RSTMH

I'm delighted we have the opportunity to come together for this Global Research in Progress meeting, a key platform for sharing knowledge and fostering collaboration. At RSTMH, our mission is to improve global health through the dissemination of research, supporting those working to strengthen health systems and address the challenges of our time.

RSTMH Global Research in Progress meetings embody our vision of a world where no one is left behind in the pursuit of better health. By bringing together researchers at all stages of their careers, we encourage learning, discussion, and innovation that can drive real-world impact. I'm especially delighted to be welcoming our keynote speaker, Dr Luria Leslie Founou, the RSTMH Emerging Leaders Award 2024 winner.

Whether you are presenting, contributing to the discussion, or listening in, your engagement today helps advance our shared goals. Thank you for being part of this global community, and I look forward to an inspiring and insightful session.

**TAMAR GHOSH**

RSTMH CEO

# ONLINE MEETING PROGRAMME

## RSTMH Global Research in Progress



**Thursday 19 June 2025, 09:00 AM - 1:45 PM BST**

RSTMH Global Research in Progress is a half-day meeting designed for early-career investigators around the world to present their unpublished research to peers and senior experts in all fields of tropical medicine and global health.

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### Feedback for RSTMH Global Research in Progress

Your feedback helps us improve our meetings and events programme. Leave your comments by scanning the QR code or [clicking here](#).



# ONLINE MEETING PROGRAMME

## RSTMH Global Research in Progress



### Today's Programme - Thursday 19 June 2025, 09:00 AM - 1:45 PM BST

#### RSTMH Global Research in Progress, Thu 19 June (09:00 AM - 1:00 PM BST)

09:00 AM BST	<b>Welcome</b> Tamar Ghosh Chief Executive RSTMH
09:10 AM	<b>Keynote &amp; Q&amp;A</b> Dr Luria Leslie Founou Head of Research at the Centre of Expertise and Biological Diagnostic of Cameroon <i>Unravelling the mysteries of antimicrobial resistance in mothers and children in Cameroon</i>
10:15 AM	Break
10:45 AM	<b>Abstract Presenter</b> Faith Ademulegun Achievers University, Owo, Nigeria
11:00 AM	<b>Abstract Presenter</b> Nathan Singano University of Zambia, Zambia
11:15 AM	<b>Abstract Presenter</b> Bhanushree Soni The George Institute for Global Health, Delhi, India
11:30 AM	Q&A
11:45 AM	Break
12:15 PM	<b>Abstract Presenter</b> Gildas le Djimbaye Togde University of N'Djamena, Chad
12:30 PM	<b>Abstract Presenter</b> Dr Ifeoma Ezeugwunne Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Nigeria
12:45 PM	Q&A
1:00 PM	Closing Remarks

#### RSTMH Networking Session, Thu 19 Jun (1:15 - 1:45 PM BST)

1:15 PM BST	Networking Session Opens
1:45 PM	Networking Session Closes

## KEYNOTE: DR LURIA LESLIE FOUNOU

# RSTMH Global Research in Progress



**Unravelling the mysteries of antimicrobial resistance in mothers and children in Cameroon: How can anyone lead change and contribute to a better world.**

### Dr Luria Leslie Founou

Head of Research at the Centre of Expertise and Biological Diagnostic of Cameroon  
RSTMH Emerging Leader Award Recipient 2024

Dr Luria Leslie Founou is a translational researcher and visionary leader committed to a future where every woman who gives birth can watch her child grow, and every child has the opportunity to lead a healthy, thriving life. Her work is anchored in this belief, focusing on reducing maternal and child mortality through innovative diagnostics, prevention strategies, and the containment of infectious diseases particularly those fueled by antimicrobial resistance (AMR).

A clinical microbiologist by training, Luria holds a PhD in Pharmaceutical Microbiology from the University of KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa, and brings over a decade of experience in AMR and infectious disease research. She currently serves as Head of Research at the Centre of Expertise and Biological Diagnostic of Cameroon ([www.cedbcam.com](http://www.cedbcam.com)), where she leads impactful studies at the intersection of science, health systems, and policy.

Luria is a Marie Skłodowska-Curie Postdoctoral Fellow and serves as an advisory member for the World Health Organization's Foodborne Diseases Epidemiology Reference Group. She also holds honorary academic positions at the University of St Andrews (UK) and the University of KwaZulu-Natal (South Africa). Luria is a Fellow of prestigious societies notably the Cameroon Academy of Young Scientists (CAYS), the African Academy of Sciences (AAS), and the Global Young Academy (GYA). Her research has directly benefited thousands of mothers and babies in Cameroon through grant-funded programs she secured as principal investigator. In recognition of her scientific leadership, she has received numerous awards including the RSTMH Emerging Leader Award 2024.

Beyond the laboratory and academia, Luria is the founder of Dare to Dream for Africa ([D2Africa](http://D2Africa)), an EdTech and leadership platform aimed at equipping and uplifting one million African researchers to become innovators, changemakers, and global thought leaders. Through coaching, consulting, and immersive learning, D2Africa empowers underrepresented scientists, especially women, to build thriving careers, foster collective impact, and shape sustainable, African-led solutions to global challenges.

Luria is also co-founder of the African Women in Science (AWinS), an association promoting equity, empowering and mentoring women in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) careers. AWinS vision is to make African role models more visible and lead Africa scientific revolution with women in key positions.

Luria's work is more than scientific, it is systemic and transformational. She is actively building an ecosystem where knowledge is democratized, leadership is inclusive, and science serves as a catalyst for social progress and transformation. Through every project she leads and every life she touches, she is shaping a future where health, opportunity, and dignity are accessible to all, leaving no one behind.

[rstmh.org/dr-luria-leslie-founou](https://rstmh.org/dr-luria-leslie-founou)

**Assessment of Blood and Urine Samples in the Diagnosis of Lassa Fever in Owo, Nigeria****Faith Ademulegun**

Achievers University, Owo, Nigeria

Lassa fever remains a critical public health concern in West Africa, where blood sampling is the standard diagnostic method. However, blood collection poses risks to healthcare workers and patients in resource-limited settings. This study investigated the diagnostic accuracy of urine samples as a safer, non-invasive alternative.

A cross-sectional analysis was conducted with 80 suspected Lassa fever cases (42 females, 38 males). Both urine and blood samples were collected and tested using reverse transcriptase polymerase chain reaction (RT-PCR) to detect viral RNA, targeting the GPC and L genes. Diagnostic accuracy was assessed using Receiver Operating Characteristic (ROC) curve analysis.

Urine samples demonstrated 100% sensitivity and specificity, with an AUROC of 1.0, indicating excellent agreement with blood-based diagnosis. Mean Ct-values for both genes in urine samples closely aligned with those in blood, supporting urine's diagnostic equivalence.

The findings suggest that urine could be a reliable and safer diagnostic tool for Lassa fever, particularly in high-risk or low-resource environments. Wider validation studies are recommended to support its integration into routine diagnostic protocols.

**Faith Ademulegun** is a lecturer at Achievers University in Owo, Nigeria. She completed her first degree in 2021 and recently earned a second degree in 2025. She is currently pursuing a PhD, with her academic interests focused on infectious disease research and public health. As an emerging scholar, she is committed to advancing scientific knowledge and improving health outcomes through teaching, research, and community engagement.

## Beyond Elimination: Assessing Leprosy Knowledge, Attitude and Practice in Two Endemic Districts of Malawi

**Nathan Singano**

University of Zambia, Zambia

Although Malawi achieved national leprosy elimination status in 1994, several districts continue to report new cases. These include children and individuals with Grade 2 Disabilities, suggesting ongoing transmission and delayed diagnosis. The persistence of new cases highlights significant gaps in disease awareness, early detection, and access to care.

This cross-sectional study was conducted in Balaka and Lilongwe districts, using a community survey and GIS analysis to assess knowledge, attitudes, and practices (KAP) related to leprosy, as well as physical access to designated health facilities. Among 334 participants, the majority demonstrated low awareness of leprosy causes and transmission. Stigma remained widespread, with nearly 70 percent of respondents associating the disease with unemployment and social exclusion. Education level was a key factor in improved knowledge and practices.

GIS mapping further revealed that many affected individuals live beyond the immediate reach of specialised care. These findings support the need for decentralised service delivery, task-sharing with community health workers, and targeted public education campaigns to reduce stigma and improve early detection. The study offers practical recommendations for achieving zero leprosy in Malawi through system-level and community-based interventions.



**Nathan Singano** is a public health researcher with a focus on neglected tropical diseases (NTDs). He was awarded the RSTMH/NIHR 2023 Early Career Grant to assess knowledge, attitudes, and practices (KAP) amidst the resurgence of leprosy in Malawi. Passionate about improving health outcomes, Nathan applies his research to inform policy and address the challenges posed by NTDs in low-resource settings.



## ABSTRACT PRESENTERS

# RSTMH Global Research in Progress



## National Integrated Policies for Prevention and Management of Non-Communicable Diseases: An Equity and Intersectionality Focused Policy Analysis

### Bhanushree Soni

The George institute for Global Health, Delhi, India

The UN High-Level Meetings on NCDs have highlighted the need for integrated plans that address inequities linked to age, gender, ethnicity, income, and other factors. We conducted a policy review to assess how well this has been formalised.

We analysed national, integrated NCD policies (in English, from 2014 onward) using the PROGRESS Plus framework to identify equity parameters. We adapted UNDP's Gender Results Effectiveness Scale to rate equity responsiveness across four domains: objectives, strategy, M&E framework, and budget - scoring policies from negative (-1) to transformative (4).

Our review included 64 national plans from 89 countries, including a consolidated EU plan. Commonly addressed equity factors included adolescents, gender, income, occupation, residence, education, religion, and disability. Less attention was given to ethnic minorities, migrants, refugees, indigenous groups, and gender-diverse populations. When included, these groups were mostly addressed through targeted rather than responsive or transformative strategies.

Ahead of the fourth UN HLM, we call for stronger accountability and more inclusive planning. NCD strategies must move beyond targeted measures to truly responsive and transformative approaches that prioritise overlooked groups and tackle the root causes of health inequities.



**Bhanushree Soni** is an early career researcher, currently working as a Research Assistant in the Meta-research and Evidence synthesis unit, at the George institute for Global Health, Delhi, India. She holds degrees in Physiotherapy and Public Health. Her research focuses on intersections of Non-Communicable Diseases (NCD), equity and health systems. Some of her on-going projects are understanding equity gaps in NCD service utilization among Tribals of India, and a global scale equity-analysis of integrated NCD plans.



## ABSTRACT PRESENTERS

# RSTMH Global Research in Progress



## Epidemiological Surveillance of Tuberculosis-HIV Co-Infection and Genotypic Strains of the Mycobacterium Tuberculosis Complex in Four Departments at the Centre Hospitalier Universitaire de Référence Nationale in N'Djamena, Chad

**Gildas le Djimbaye Togde**

University of N'Djamena, Chad

Comorbidity of infectious diseases remains a serious public health issue in Chad. This study aimed to determine the prevalence of HIV/TB co-infection and the frequency of Mycobacterium tuberculosis complex (MTBc) genotypes at the Centre Hospitalier Universitaire de Référence Nationale (CHU-RN) in N'Djamena.

A cross-sectional study was conducted from January to November 2024 across four departments. Samples were tested using GeneXpert MTB/RIF, MGIT culture, and spoligotyping.

Out of 156 patients (65% male, average age 38), 69.2% tested positive for MTBc, with a TB/HIV co-infection rate of 7.4%. The most common strains were the Cameroon strain (43%) and CAS-Delhi (29%), with lineages L3 and L4 identified. Rifampicin resistance was found in 13% of cases.

The findings highlight the need for targeted interventions to reduce transmission and improve management of TB/HIV co-infection.



**Gildas le Djimbaye Togde** is a microbiologist from the University of N'djamena in Chad. He is currently working as intern scientist at the Ministry of Public Health and is working on a PhD to be defended in the coming months. He is currently working on MTBC among cattle breeders and has previously completed a Masters in Bacteriology-virology. In 2024, he registered as student member of the International Union against Tuberculosis and Lung Diseases.

## ABSTRACT PRESENTERS

# RSTMH Global Research in Progress



### Prevalence of Soil Transmitted Helminths Infections Among Primary School Children in Amichi Community, Nnewi South, Anambra State

**Dr Ifeoma Priscilla Ezeugwunne**

Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Nigeria

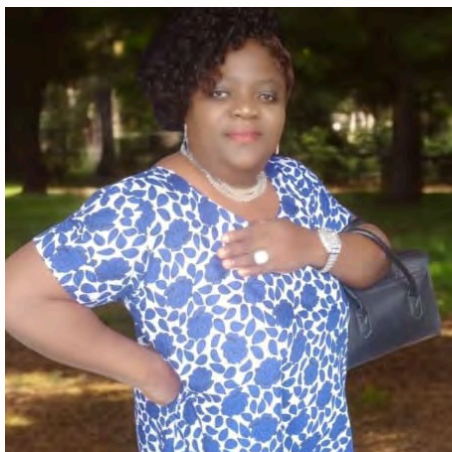
Soil-transmitted helminth (STH) infections remain a major public health issue in low-resource settings. This cross-sectional descriptive study investigated the prevalence of STH infections among primary school children in Amichi Community, Nnewi South, Anambra State, Nigeria, from July to October 2024.

Ninety children (40 boys and 50 girls), aged 1–10 years, were randomly selected from four schools. Stool samples were analysed using saline preparation and preserved in Beyer's solution for delayed analysis.

Prevalence rates varied by school: Uruagu Central (71%), Amichi Central (70%), Ezicama Central (59.1%), and Isoke-Ndida Central (45.5%). The most common STH was *Ascaris lumbricoides* (31.1%), followed by hookworm (17.8%) and *Trichuris trichiura* (11.1%). Infection was highest among children aged 3–5 and 6–8 years (62.5%), with a slightly higher prevalence in girls (62%) than boys (57.5%).

Sanitation type was associated with infection: the bush method had the highest prevalence (72%), followed by pit latrines (61.7%), with water closet systems lowest (35%).

The study recommends improved toilet facilities, access to clean water, and hygiene education to reduce STH infection rates.



**Ifeoma Priscilla Ezeugwunne PhD** is a senior lecturer and researcher in Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Nnewi Campus. She is from Anambra State, Nigeria. She is a Medical Laboratory Scientist, with a specialty in clinical chemistry. She has a PhD and MSc in Chemical Pathology, a Masters in Medical Laboratory Sciences, via clinical chemistry. Her work has been on HIV with or without malaria. Currently, she is working on neglected tropical diseases.

**Become an RSTMH member and show your commitment to tropical medicine and global health**

We support our members through our many activities, including events around the world, the publishing of two journals, and recognising excellence in practice through our grants, medals and awards.

Our members are based in over 100 countries, are at all career stages, and work across a multitude of disciplines and sectors. Member benefits include:

- Being part of a tropical medicine and global health community
- Discounts for RSTMH events and access to travel scholarships
- Access to our peer-reviewed journal, *Transactions*
- Professional networking and opportunities for collaboration
- Eligibility to nominate and be nominated for RSTMH Medals and Awards
- Access to the RSTMH Members Area with exclusive content, announcements, and offers
- A 20% discount on open access fees for our journals *International Health* and *Transactions*
- Eligibility to apply to our Country Ambassador and Student Ambassador programmes
- Access to our online Members Directory
- Enhancements to your professional knowledge
- Opportunities to share your expertise and learn from established experts in the field
- A fortnightly newsletter that contains exclusive news and opportunities for our members
- A 25% discount on thousands of Oxford University Press books
- Supporting RSTMH's vision

Become a member today: [rstmh.org/membership](https://rstmh.org/membership)

**Offer:** Email [nell.dasso@rstmh.org](mailto:nell.dasso@rstmh.org) for a 10% discount on one year of RSTMH membership.

If you're already an RSTMH member, you can join one of our regular online networking sessions:

- RSTMH Early Career Member Networking
- RSTMH Mid- and Senior-Member Networking
- RSTMH Student Member Networking

Find out more: [rstmh.org/events](https://rstmh.org/events)

RSTMH founded our flagship journal *Transactions of the Royal Society of Tropical Medicine & Hygiene* in 1908, a year after the society itself began.

In 2009 (a century later) RSTMH created a new journal called *International Health* to better support the growing areas of interest for our members and communities.

Both journals offer a comprehensive range of multidisciplinary research and review papers, covering topics ranging from public health and infectious diseases to health economics, healthcare systems and more.

Fully indexed, offering fast and ethical publication and with respectable impact factors, the RSTMH journals support our mission to help our global health community communicate and deliver the best and most scientifically sound patient care wherever it is needed in the world.

### **Transactions**

*Transactions of the Royal Society of Tropical Medicine & Hygiene* publishes authoritative and impactful original, peer-reviewed articles and reviews on all aspects of tropical medicine.

### **International Health**

*International Health* publishes original, peer-reviewed articles and reviews on all aspects of global health. These include the social and economic aspects of both infectious and non-communicable diseases, health systems research, policy and implementation, and the evaluation of disease control programmes and healthcare delivery solutions.

### **Journal Special Collections**

We publish special issues, supplements and article collections of both of our journals, *International Health* and *Transactions*.

Find out more: [rstmh.org/journals](https://rstmh.org/journals)

The RSTMH Early Career Grants Programme provides grants every year to those early in their career, from anywhere in the world, to carry out their first piece of research into tropical medicine or global health.

Our grants programme has been established for more than 40 years and has seen significant growth. Since 2017 we have given out more than 800 awards across 66 countries.

**Who are the grants for:** The RSTMH Early Career Grants are aimed at individuals who have not received a research grant of £5,000 or more in their own name before, who are able to develop and deliver their first research project

**Where you are based:** Applications are welcomed from researchers from anywhere in the world

**Grant amount:** The maximum RSTMH Early Career Grant award is £5,000 (including any taxes on relevant purchases)

**Duration of grant project:** Project should take up to one year to be completed and should start within 3 months of receiving funding

**Topic and scope:** The projects can be on any topic related to tropical medicine and global health, from across the research spectrum for example: lab, translation, implementation, and policy

Find out more: [rstmh.org/grants](https://rstmh.org/grants)

**grow your career in global health - browse the latest jobs, courses, grants, scholarships, PHDs and placements**

Global health, now more than ever, needs people with a range of skills and experience. We all face enormous challenges that affect our health, including emerging and existing diseases, weak health systems, and many other factors such as climate change.

*grow* is a collaboration between the Royal Society of Tropical Medicine and Hygiene and Manta Ray Media. Our missions are dedicated to supporting people involved in global health.

With *grow*, you can explore opportunities from many different organisations who are tackling the world's global health challenges. Whatever stage of your career or level of interest, there are many ways to get involved – whether you want to learn, work, volunteer, or carry out research – and many potential opportunities.

Find out more: [growglobal.health](https://growglobal.health)

**We organise and support events around the world that bring together voices from different sectors working in tropical medicine and global health**

Join us for upcoming events including:

**RSTMH Annual Meeting 2025**

25–26 September 2025 | 08:30 AM – 7:00 PM (BST) | London, UK

Attendees will have access to plenary talks, panel discussions, abstract presentations, and networking and career sessions as part of a two-day programme on AI in Global Health.

- Learn from senior experts in global health, research, and policy
- Hear about the impact of AI on health, from prevention to treatment, and across a range of disease and health areas
- Explore how AI is affecting different sectors and organisations including academic institutions
- Take the opportunity to ask for career advice from experts in tropical medicine and global health through drop in sessions
- Connect with peers and speakers during networking sessions
- Share your views to help shape RSTMH's future priorities

This is an in-person event taking place at Coin Street, SE1, London UK.

**RSTMH Global Research in Progress**

November 2025 | Date & Time TBC | Online

Apply to present at our next RSTMH Global Research in Progress meeting, an online event where early career investigators present and discuss their unpublished research in global health.

Find out more: [rstmh.org/events](https://rstmh.org/events)



**RSTMH**

# **Royal Society of Tropical Medicine & Hygiene**



**The Royal Society of Tropical Medicine and Hygiene is a charity and membership society that has been dedicated to improving tropical medicine and global health since 1907**

Our ambition is to save lives and improve health around the world through increased access to and greater equity in global healthcare.

Through our activities we help further our members' careers. We also harness their collective knowledge and expertise to achieve change within the sector. Our members, based in over 90 countries, are at all stages of their careers, working across a multitude of disciplines and from a range of sectors.

Under our new strategy, we want to ensure that we are supporting our members and supporters who are based outside of the UK and are early in their careers. We hope grow will help inspire and support people at all stages of their interest and career, and we will be adding new content to the site for our members.

*"It's a particularly exciting time to explore opportunities in global health. Now, more than ever, we are aware of how global health affects all of us."*

Tamar Ghosh, CEO, RSTMH

Find out more: [rstmh.org](https://rstmh.org)

## **Feedback for RSTMH Global Research in Progress**

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