

MSF SCIENTIFIC DAYS INTERNATIONAL 2021
Agenda - Medical Research Day 1, 18 May

09:30 UTC

Introduction & Welcome by Vickie Hawkins, Executive Director, MSF UK

09:35 UTC

Session 1 - Different approaches to learning from communities

Session Chair: Kamalini Lokuge, Director, Humanitarian Health Research Initiative, Australian National University

Community engagement ensures that we understand and address the needs of those affected by research. In session 1, we will discuss what we have learnt from the communities at the heart of our research and practice. From CAR, we will present findings on mortality levels in this conflict-affecting setting, and provide insight into the knowledge, attitudes and practices of healthcare workers in relation to abortion care. Looking at both South Sudan and CAR, we will build on previous research to explore how young men and their communities perceive sexual violence and its prevention. Follow online, and join the conversation, as we discuss how community-based research is advancing global health.

1. **High levels of mortality above the emergency threshold, Central African Republic: population-based mortality survey, 2020.** Eve Robinson, Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF), Bangui, Central African Republic (CAR).
2. **Knowledge, attitudes, practices and behaviour of maternity ward staff in relation to comprehensive abortion care in a conflict-affected setting, Bangui, Central African Republic: cross-sectional survey.** Huiwu Chen, Epicentre, Paris, France.
3. **Engaging men in preventing sexual violence in South Sudan and the Central African Republic: a qualitative study.** Emilie Venables, International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), Geneva, Switzerland.

10:50 UTC

Break

11:20 UTC

Session 2 - Keynote + Panel - Dr Abhay & Dr Rani Bang, Founders and Directors of the Society for Education, Action and Research in Community Health (SEARCH)

Session Chair: Tom Ellman, Director Southern Africa Medical Unit, MSF

Dr Abhay Bang was brought up in Mahatma Gandhi's ashram. He completed his medical education with three gold medals, post-graduation in internal medicine and then MPH from The Johns Hopkins University School of Public Health. For the past 35 years he has been the Director of the Society for Education, Action and Research in Community Health (SEARCH), which he co-founded in 1985 with his wife, Dr Rani Bang, in Gadchiroli, a remote district in Maharashtra state, India. They continue to live, provide medical care and conduct research in 134 villages in Gadchiroli.

Dr Rani Bang has made landmark contributions to improving women's lives – as a gynaecologist, a research scientist and a social activist. Her study into the prevalence of gynaecological morbidity in rural Indian women in Gadchiroli, the first of its kind, was published in the Lancet in 1989. It brought the large hidden burden of gynaecological diseases in rural women in developing countries to the attention of the world. She has been a member of several national and international committees on women's health, and is currently a member of the WHO International Advisory Group on Universal Healthcare.

Panelists: Animesh Sinha, HIV, TB & Hepatitis Advisor, MSF UK, Jerome Singh, Professor, Health Law and Ethics Research Interest Group, University of Kwazulu-Natal, Zipporah Ali, Executive Director, Kenya Hospices and Palliative Care Association.

12:40 UTC

Break

13:10 UTC

Session 3 - Covid-19: Health, life and death in a pandemic

Session Chair: Yap Boum, Epicentre Representative for Africa

Despite the profound impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on global health and research, there are still significant gaps in our understanding among certain communities and contexts. In session 3, we'll be discussing how COVID-19 has impacted different communities. From Bangladesh, we'll consider whether the low number of COVID-19 cases among the Rohingya population reflect what has really happened. We'll also zoom into the results from a multi-site study to focus on how communities in Nigeria and Sierra Leone perceive COVID-19's impact on their lives and security. Join the discussion as we share emerging evidence around the impact of COVID-19 among some of the most vulnerable communities.

1. **Community perceptions of COVID-19 prevention and control measures in Nigeria and Sierra Leone: multi-site, community-led qualitative study.** Emily Briskin, Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF), Amsterdam, The Netherlands & Aminu Mohammed Anka, MSF, Anka, Nigeria.
2. **Estimation of SARS-CoV-2 infections and deaths among Rohingya refugees, Kutupalong-Balukhali camps, Bangladesh.** Shaun Truelove, Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore, USA.
3. **Mortality and seroprevalence of SARS-Cov-2 among general population in Omdurman – Sudan. A cross-sectional study.** Wendelin Moser, Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF), Khartoum, Sudan.

14:25 UTC

Day 1 Closing Remarks by Farhat Mantoo, General Director, MSF India

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MSF SCIENTIFIC DAYS INTERNATIONAL 2021
Agenda - Medical Research Day 2, 19 May

09:30 UTC **Introduction** by Petros Isaakidis, Senior Operational Research Advisor, Southern Africa Medical Unit, MSF

09:35 UTC

Session 1 - Malnutrition: new norms, adapted protocols

Session Chair: Alexandra Rutishauser-Perera, Head of Nutrition, Action Against Hunger UK

Questioning existing practices is what drives improvements. In session 1 of the day, we will challenge the evidence around the monitoring and treatment of malnutrition. We will discuss whether recent findings from a trial in DRC support the use of a simpler treatment strategy for malnutrition, and we will hear about research from India that evaluates the current threshold for treatment and discharge of children with malnutrition. Follow online and join the conversation as we challenge the norms in malnutrition.

1. **Optimising malnutrition treatment in children 6-59 months: primary outcome of a randomized trial, Democratic Republic of Congo.** Cecile Cazes, University of Bordeaux, Bordeaux, France.
2. **Evolution of nutritional status in children aged 6-59 months with moderate acute malnutrition in India: a prospective longitudinal cohort study.** Raman Mahajan, Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF), New Delhi, India.
3. **Optimal mid-upper arm circumference-based discharge criteria for community-based-management of severe acute malnutrition in India: a randomized controlled non-inferiority trial.** Elisa Marino, Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF), New Delhi, India

10:50 UTC **Break**

11:20 UTC

Session 2 - Hidden patients and challenges in HIV and TB

Session Chair: Nathan Ford, Scientist, Department of HIV, World Health Organisation

The goal of ending HIV and TB is still far from being achieved. In session 2, we will be exploring emerging findings in the field of HIV and TB. From Eswatini and India, we will investigate the relatively understudied area of asymptomatic Leishmania infection in people living with HIV, and hear exciting findings from a new, easy-to-use and affordable test to detect acute HIV. We will also provide unique insights into the perspectives around the treatment journey for children and adolescents with drug-resistant TB. Join the conversation as we discuss the research findings that are contributing to the fight against HIV and TB.

1. **Prevalence of asymptomatic Leishmania infection in HIV-positive people and progression to symptomatic visceral leishmaniasis in Bihar, India.** Sakib Burza, Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF), New Delhi, India.
2. **Diagnostic performance of lateral flow point-of-care HIV-Combo testing for detection of acute HIV infection in Eswatini.** Bernhard Kerschberger, Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF), Mbabane, Eswatini.
3. **Challenging experiences of children, adolescents, and their caregivers during the treatment journey for drug-resistant tuberculosis: qualitative study, Mumbai, India.** Mrinalini Das, Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF), Mumbai, India.

12:50 UTC **Break**

13:20 UTC

Session 3 - Targeting malaria in fragile and conflict settings

Session Chair: Valentina Buj, Global Malaria and Health Partnerships Advisor, UNICEF

Conflict leads to unprecedented challenges to health and huge surges in diseases like malaria. In the final session of the day, we will hear about the malaria situation across Burundi, CAR and DRC. We will evaluate the benefit of insecticide-treated bed nets, and explore community perspectives around large-scale preventative treatment and its impact. Participate in the conversation as we discuss malaria control strategies in complex emergency settings.

1. **Revision of the epidemiological situation of malaria in Burundi and the potential implications for future control.** Jean-Marie Mafuko, Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF), Brussels, Belgium.
2. **Mass drug administration of long-acting antimalarials among children in Bossangoa health district, Central African Republic: programme description and evaluation.** Eve Robinson, Médecins sans Frontières (MSF), Bangui, Central African Republic (CAR).
3. **Feasibility of large-scale mass drug administration for malaria in Angumu health zone, Ituri, DRC.** Trish Newport, Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF), Geneva, Switzerland.

14:35 UTC **Day 2 Closing Remarks** by Kiran Jobanputra, Head of the Manson Unit, MSF UK, and Deputy Medical Director, MSF Operational Centre Amsterdam

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MSF SCIENTIFIC DAYS INTERNATIONAL 2021
Agenda - Innovation Day 3, 20 May

09:30 UTC **Introduction** by Tammam Aloudat, Senior Strategic Advisor, MSF Access Campaign

09:50 UTC

Session 1 - Striving to develop sustainable and adaptable humanitarian structures

Session Chair: Nan Buzard, Head of Innovation, International Committee of the Red Cross

Sustainability at a system level is essential to be able to adapt and transform in the face of changing conditions. In session 1, we will explore how MSF is striving to develop sustainability, both at the operational and environmental levels. From a toolkit allowing MSF to measure and mitigate our environmental footprint, to a portable cool box that uses off-grid sources of energy to distribute vaccines, join us as we discuss the innovations that are driving sustainability and transforming our organisation.

1. **The Environmental Impact Toolkit: futureproofing MSF through measurement and mitigation.** Sandra Smiley, Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF), Toronto, Canada.
2. **FriGo: an actively cooled, portable cold chain solution for resource limited settings.** Eric Saldanha, Royal College of Art, London, UK

11:05 UTC **Break**

11:35 UTC

Session 2 - Bridging gaps to communities and patients

Session Chair: Pete Masters, Head of Community, Humanitarian OpenStreetMap Team

To adapt to different contexts and address specific needs, communities must be at the centre of humanitarian responses. In session 2, we will hear about the potential of a photography-based tool to understand and address stigma among people with multidrug-resistant TB. We will also explore the role of digital spaces in reaching reach communities and patients, discussing a new toolkit to equip communities to respond to COVID-19, and the use of digital platforms to promote. Follow online, and join the conversation, as we share insights into the innovations that are bridging the gaps to communities and patients.

1. **Photovoice: addressing stigma among people living with drug-resistant tuberculosis in India.** Taanya Mathur, Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF), Mumbai, India.
2. **CommunityFirst Solutions: supporting community-driven responses to COVID-19.** Jessica Farber, SeeChange Initiative, Montreal, Canada.
3. **Overcoming lockdown restrictions by digitising health promotion.** Jakub Hein, Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF), Brussels, Belgium.

12:50 UTC **Break**

13:20 UTC

Session 3 - Digital Health: The opportunities and challenges in humanitarian settings

Session Chair: Massimo Ravasini, Head of Innovation and Project Management, MSF Japan

Apps and smartphones have exponentially driven the development of medical tools, but can these be used in humanitarian settings? In session 3, we will explore how smartphone-based applications could contribute to the fight against antibiotic resistance, and how applications could support adherence to treatment and monitoring of side effects in drug-resistant TB patients. Join us as we share insights into the opportunities and challenges of digital health within humanitarian contexts.

1. **Video/Virtually Observed Therapy for patients with drug-resistant tuberculosis in Eswatini: a rapid response to COVID-19 lockdown measures.** Michelle Daka, Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF), Nhlangano, Eswatini.
2. **Antibiogo: smartphone-based application to tackle antibiotic resistance challenges in low-to-middle income countries.** Nada Malou, Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) Foundation, Paris, France.
3. **A digital portable tablet audiometry monitoring tool for patients with drug-resistant tuberculosis.** Nuria Veloso Cumbi, MSF, Maputo, Mozambique.

14:35 UTC **Day 3 & Conference Closing Remarks** by Kiran Jobanputra, Head of the Manson Unit, MSF UK, and Deputy Medical Director, MSF Operational Centre Amsterdam

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