

Royal Society of Tropical Medicine and Hygiene

STRATEGY 2017-2022



History and context

Since 1907, the Royal Society of Tropical Medicine and Hygiene (RSTMH) has been dedicated to improving tropical medicine and global health. Through our network of members across the world, we facilitate research, share knowledge, guide lifelong careers, and drive impact.

As a respected Society at the heart of the tropical medicine and global health community, we connect people and organisations who work, or are interested in, these areas. We're an independent organisation and have a unique role in convening diverse stakeholders from many sectors and disciplines.

We play a role in all stages of global health practice from initial research and development, publication and showcasing, implementation, debate, and impact. Our work includes funding and disseminating multidisciplinary research through peer-reviewed journals and a calendar of meetings and events. We provide grants for UK and international research, and award medals for excellence in practice, and to recognise emerging talent.

The Society, located in London, is governed by a Board of Trustees. RSTMH received a 'Royal' designation from King George V in 1920, and the royal connection has been maintained ever since - Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II is our Patron, and HRH The Princess Royal is an Honorary Fellow.

Purpose of Strategy

This document is the result of a review of our strategy which involved RSTMH's Board of Trustees, staff team, members, former members, and non-members. The six-month process included a comprehensive survey with approximately 200 respondents, and over 100 interviews.

Through our review we revisited how we describe ourself, our ambitions, and how we work. This provides a new vision, mission and scope, which drive a new strategic approach and plans.

The strategic review confirmed that RSTMH is generally thought of very positively. We are seen as expert, professional, and relevant, though we could be more modern, efficient, and outspoken. We have around 950 members from 43 countries, and a wider network of around 20,000 people interested in our work, including speakers, authors, grants applicants and recipients. Communicating with, and involving our members and networks is crucial, and in particular we need to engage better with early career professionals, those based outside of London, and the UK, and those from a wider range of sectors and disciplines. Our current activities are well regarded however, we should provide greater opportunities for networking and career development. This review provides the opportunity to respond to what we were told, and better support our members and supporters achieve greater impact.

Scope of our work

For more than 100 years, RSTMH has been constantly adapting to the changing face of tropical medicine and global health. As our world becomes more interconnected and interdependent, we must consider a wider approach to improving health through multiple disciplines and sectors. Using the Sustainable Development Goals as our context, we recognise the importance of our links with animal and planetary health, and the underlying social, structural, economic and environmental factors that determine health around the globe.

This strategy will guide our work from 2017 to 2022, realigning our targets and direction, and reinforcing our position as a leading network in the tropical medicine and global health community.

A revised vision and mission

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

Our mission is to be at the heart of the tropical medicine and global health community providing the knowledge and networks, across all disciplines, that drive impact.

Priority thematic areas of focus

As a result of our review, we've identified 6 areas of tropical medicine and global health where it is felt more attention is needed, and where we believe RSTMH has the potential to deliver value and impact. Though not exclusive, these will be our priorities, for the next five years:

- Neglected tropical diseases, with a particular focus on their overlap with non-communicable diseases and the sustainable development goals
- Malaria, with a particular focus on drug resistance
- One Health and wider planetary health. The consideration of human health alongside animal health, and the environment, in the context of social, economic and political factors
- Topical issues including, but not limited to, emerging diseases
- Drug resistant infections
- Areas where we feel our unique and independent role as convenor would be useful

Strategic approach

Our overarching approach for the next five years is to better understand and utilise the collective knowledge and expertise of our members and networks. To build on our existing strengths and realise our potential.

Strategic priorities

Our approach will be delivered through three main priorities, each met through a number of goals, delivered by key activities, which we have detailed below:

Strategic priority 1: Strengthen our existing relationships with members, networks, and partners

Goal 1: Engage with members and supporters, in tailored ways, to deliver increased value

- Improve our ongoing programmes of engagement with members
- Develop new ways to engage with our members, for example through digital channels, or delivering more activities outside of the UK
- Develop new activities that respond to members needs, for example evaluate mentoring and career development for early career professionals
- Establish programmes to better engage with our wider networks and supporters, including meeting attendees, authors and reviewers, small grants recipients, and medal awardees

Goal 2: Strengthen mutually beneficial partnerships across sectors and disciplines

- Evaluate and strengthen ongoing partnerships with organisations and institutions in the UK and beyond
- Establish collaborations with new potential partners that help achieve improved impact for our members, for RSTMH and for global health

Strategic priority 2: Deliver better impact for global health, RSTMH and our members

Goal 1: Establish clear impact goals and measures across all current and new activities

- Set impact objectives and measurement criteria across themes, activities and audiences
- Establish systems to measure outcomes and impact from individual activities
- Establish an integrated approach to planning and delivery across all work
- Review all activities to ensure alignment with strategic goals and priorities
- Initiate quarterly reviews across all activities, capturing impact and revising plans

Goal 2: Optimise our existing work to deliver impact from our outcomes

- Move biennial meeting to an annual meeting of 2-3 days from 2018
- Align our activities to provide the best opportunity to achieve impact
- Work with key stakeholders to position RSTMH as an authority and leading voice in the UK on tropical medicine and global health
- Proactively identify more opportunities to network and share information
- Establish infrastructure to enable our members to be spokespeople on key aspects of tropical medicine, and global health
- Utilise our website, digital platforms and content to showcase our collective expertise, better engage, and extend and amplifying our voice

Strategic priority 3: Improve RSTMH's infrastructure

Goal 1: Implement improved, integrated, efficient internal systems

- Identify and implement a new database, and integrate it with our website, internal systems and platforms
- Review the management structure, ensuring a link from goals to plans
- Implement an automated platform to submit research and applications

Goal 2: Ensure our governance structure is representative of members, activities and priorities

- Refresh Terms of Reference of all Committees and recruit for any gaps
- Re-establish our Education and Training Committee
- Establish a new Policy and Advocacy Committee
- Establish routes to governance for early career, and international, members
- Encourage greater diversity on our Board and Committees

Goal 3: Ensure all activities meet financial targets and objectives

- Set budgets for all activities, with clear ownership and monthly monitoring, evaluation and learning mechanisms
- Establish a system for evaluating potential work against strategic objectives



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