

# malERA: a research agenda for malaria eradication

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A collection of 12 reviews, comprising three reflective pieces and nine research and development agendas, is published as part of a sponsored Supplement on 25 January 2011 in *PLoS Medicine*. This Collection highlights the outcomes of a series of consultations among more than 250 experts that were undertaken by the Malaria Eradication Research Agenda (malERA) initiative.

The introductory article by Pedro L. Alonso, CRESIB-Hospital Clínic, University of Barcelona, Barcelona, Spain and colleagues, "A Research Agenda to Underpin Malaria Eradication" sets the malERA program in context. The nine research and development agendas define the priority research areas for eight different thematic areas including basic science and enabling technologies; drugs; vaccines; vector control; health systems and operational research; modelling; diagnoses and diagnostics; and monitoring, evaluation and surveillance. An additional paper identifies research priorities that are common to several of the thematic areas.

The Collection includes an analysis from Jose Najera (formerly at the WHO, Geneva) and colleagues, of the last Global Malaria Eradication Programme and outlines lessons for future eradication programs. A second analysis by Myron M. Levine, University of Maryland School of [Medicine](#), Baltimore, USA and colleagues, examines the role research has played in eradication or elimination initiatives for smallpox, poliomyelitis, and measles and from this analysis derives nine cross-cutting lessons for malaria eradication.

Pedro L. Alonso comments: "As chair of the malERA Steering Committee, I am delighted to see published this R&D agenda for malaria eradication, after an intense and perhaps unprecedented consultative process that lasted two years and involved more than 250 of the leading scientists in the malaria field and beyond".

Marcel Tanner, Swiss Tropical Institute, Basel, Switzerland (co-chair of the malERA Steering Committee), adds: "I am confident that the definition of this set of key research and development priorities will contribute to paving the way for the ultimate goal of malaria elimination and eradication. Elimination and finally eradication are public health objectives we can not afford not to dream of. The research agenda we publish today shows the strong commitment felt within the research and scientific communities and complements the Global Action Plan for elimination/eradication".

The Malaria Eradication Research Agenda (malERA) initiative aimed to complement existing research agendas that are primarily aimed at reducing the global burden of morbidity and mortality due to malaria (the traditional goal of malaria control) with a set of research and development priorities that identify knowledge gaps and tools needed for worldwide eradication of malaria.

The malERA consultation process was led by a Steering Committee composed of 14 independent scientists (chaired by Pedro L. Alonso), an International Advisory Committee (chaired by Myron M. Levine) that included veterans from eradication and elimination campaigns of both malaria and other diseases, and a Leadership Council comprising Dr. Margaret Chan, Director-General of the World Health Organization, Dr. Tadataka Yamada, President of the Global Health Program of the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, Dr. Anthony S. Fauci, Director of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, Dr. Mark Walport, Director of the Wellcome Trust, and Dr. Awa Coll-Seck, Executive

Director of the Roll Back [Malaria](#) Partnership Board.

**More information:** Alonso PL, Brown G, Arevalo-Herrera M, Binka F, Chitnis C, et al. (2011) A Research Agenda to Underpin Malaria Eradication. PLoS Med 8(1): e1000406. [doi:10.1371/journal.pmed.1000406](https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pmed.1000406)

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