

Royal Society of Tropical Medicine and Hygiene

STRATEGY 2023-2028



RSTMH
DEDICATED TO GLOBAL HEALTH SINCE 1907

History and context

Since 1907, the Royal Society of Tropical Medicine and Hygiene (RSTMH) has been dedicated to improving tropical medicine and global health. With our network of members and Fellows across the world, we work to improve access and equity in health, especially for those in low-resource settings.

Our work is focused on funding and showcasing the research and delivery of global health and tropical medicine through our grants programme, peer-reviewed journals, and communication channels. Through our meetings, events, and training, we help share knowledge and expertise as well as improve skills and networks. We also use our networks to connect and convene individuals and organisations, across sectors and disciplines, to address our important challenges.

By supporting the careers of our members and Fellows we help them achieve progress on our shared goals. In addition, the learnings from our activities and our networks help us identify the awareness, research, funding, and policies that require change.

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 through our Royal Patronage, and with HRH The Princess Royal as an Honorary Fellow.

Development of Strategy

This document is the result of a review of our last five-year strategy which involved consulting RSTMH's Board of Trustees, team, Committees, Ambassadors and volunteers, as well as our members and Fellows, past members, and supporters.

We gathered feedback on our successes, areas where we could improve, and on potential new activities. We discussed the scope of our work, and our priorities for the coming five years.

We have made good progress in achieving our goals. This would not have been possible without the support and time of our hundreds of volunteers, including our Board, Editorial Boards and Committees, and our Ambassadors and Global Assessors. We have improved our accessibility through holding more events outside of the UK and supporting those early in their careers, and those based outside of the UK.

We have doubled our network of members and Fellows and increased our profile and awareness. Although our income still does not cover our costs, we have reduced this gap by 75 percent, and our income has grown to around £1.7m. This is largely due to securing additional funding for our grants programme which enabled us to give out more than 200 grants in 2022.

Alongside these successes was a recognition that we must continue to provide tailored opportunities to improve the skills, experience and networks for our members and Fellows, and convert more of what we learn into actions to achieve our goals.

Scope of our work

For more than 100 years, RSTMH has been constantly adapting to the changing world of tropical medicine and global health. We understand the need for a wider approach to improving health, and the importance of addressing underlying social, structural, economic, and environmental factors that determine health outcomes.

The scope of our work includes any health issue that is important in low-resource settings and to our members and Fellows. This encompasses communicable and non-communicable diseases, and other areas of global health.

Our 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

In our last strategy, we prioritised six areas of tropical medicine and global health where we felt more attention was needed, and where RSTMH had the potential to add value. These were the neglected tropical diseases, drug resistance including in malaria, One Health and planetary health, emerging diseases and outbreaks. RSTMH shall continue to work on these areas, and will also consider cross-cutting issues such as stigma and climate change which impact many diseases and health outcomes.

We will focus our time and capacity on areas of disease and health where we can achieve the most impact in low-resource settings.

Strategic approach

Our approach for the next five years is to continue to enhance and utilise the knowledge and expertise of our members, Fellows and networks to maximise our impact.

Strategic aims

This strategy builds on the successes of the last strategy, making improvements where we can, and developing new activities which we think will increase the progress towards achieving our goals.

Our approach will be delivered through three main aims, under which are a number of areas of focus. These aims will provide a sense of direction throughout the five-year period. Within this, we will produce an annual plan of key activities and targets, sharing our main priorities for the year with our members and Fellows, and the budget and performance indicators with our Board of Trustees.

Strategic aim 1: Improve the skills, experience, and networks of our members and Fellows

- Provide more opportunities for members and Fellows to share their expertise with one another
- Increase in-person and online networking through meetings and events, especially for student, early career, and LMIC members
- Develop more opportunities for members and Fellows to develop new skills and knowledge through our grants, scientific journals, and training
- Ensure our existing and new activities provide additional value to our members and Fellows
- Develop a mentorship programme to further support the careers, skills, and knowledge of our members and Fellows
- Develop a new global meetings and events programme which provides greater in-person and also online activities

Strategic aim 2: Deliver impact for those in low-resource settings and for the global health and tropical medicine community

- Develop activities and benefits to encourage more people across the community to become members of the Society and help us fulfil our goals
- Ensure our work is directly influenced by the knowledge of those living and working in low resource settings
- Utilise our profile and networks to promote and convene more multi-disciplinary discussions and activities
- Develop advocacy and policy plans based on the outcomes and findings of our work, to meet our goals
- Ensure the outcomes of our activities contribute to improving awareness, funding, research, or policy change
- Strengthen our networks and partnerships across regions, organisations and disciplines


Strategic aim 3: Ensure RSTMH has the capacity and resources to sustainably deliver its strategy

- Deliver a surplus budget where our income covers our operational costs so we can continue to deliver our work and goals
- Maintain and monitor budgets and forecasts to ensure sound financial management
- Optimise our systems and processes to enhance our effectiveness and efficiency
- Ensure we have the right expertise and capacity across our team and volunteer networks to deliver our work
- Further develop systems that will help us to identify learnings across our activities, to drive impact
- Improve monitoring and evaluation across all activities to ensure we meet our goals

The list of activities above is not exhaustive and may change throughout the 5-year period to better meet the strategic aims mentioned. Our activities focus on improving health in low-resource settings and on where we can deliver the most impact. This may be driven by our members' and Fellows' expertise, our networks and partnerships, or where we feel we can add most value.



Royal Society of Tropical
Medicine and Hygiene
Northumberland House
303-306 High Holborn
London
WC1V 7JZ
Tel: + 44 (0)20 7405 2628
tamar.ghosh@rstmh.org
www.rstmh.org

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