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NOTM



Networking global health
professionals

NEWS OF THE MONTH - JULY 2026

Dear Readers,

Summer is in full swing across Europe, bringing with it conference plans, new funding opportunities, and hopefully for many of you a well earned break. This July edition of the FESTMIH News of the Month brings together a wide range of developments across global health **policy**, research, professional opportunities, events, and **digital learning**. We begin with a landmark decision by the **United Nations Human Rights Council**, which has adopted its first-ever resolution formally recognising neglected tropical diseases as both a public health and a human rights issue. Our Good News of the Month then highlights compelling new evidence from England showing that **HPV** vaccination is not only reducing cervical cancer incidence, but is also associated with a substantial decline in mortality among young women.

For researchers and professionals looking for new opportunities, this edition features the **WHO's call for experts** to join its new Technical Advisory Group on Leishmaniasis, as well as the **LEGO Foundation Fellowship**, which offers major support for research on child development in crisis settings, neurodiversity, and an increasingly AI-enabled world.

Our **Events** section looks ahead to the XIV SEMTSI Congress in Salamanca, where experts will discuss the changing landscape of tropical medicine in Spain and Europe under the theme "Tropical Spain: Challenges and Opportunities." In the Digital section, we introduce the redesigned **Women in Global Health website** and Harvard's self-paced course on Statistics and R for life scientists.

As always, NOTM is at its best when it is community-driven. If you have a call, course, event, publication, or digital resource you would like to see featured in the next edition, please share it with us before the 10th of the month.

We wish all our readers a relaxing summer, safe travels, inspiring encounters, and a wonderful holiday season wherever the coming weeks may take you.

Warm regards,
The FESTMIH NOTM Team

TOPICS

Global Health Policy & Advocacy

UN Human Rights
Council News

Good News of the Month

A Cancer-Prevention
Milestone

Global Career and Funding Opportunities

Wide range of
international grants,
fellowships, awards, and
career calls

Events

- XIV SEMTSI Congress 2026
- EDCTP, TB, ECTMIH

Digital

- Women in Global Health
- Statistics and R



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Key Points

- The UN Human Rights Council has adopted its first dedicated resolution on neglected tropical diseases (NTDs).
- The resolution formally links NTDs with human rights, dignity, equality and social inclusion.
- Malawi led the initiative together with Burkina Faso, Kenya, Tanzania, The Gambia and Morocco.
- The Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights will conduct a consultation and develop recommendations for future action.



The United Nations Human Rights Council has adopted the first-ever resolution specifically addressing the relationship between human rights and neglected tropical diseases. The decision represents an important shift in the international response to NTDs: these diseases are no longer being framed solely as medical challenges, but also as consequences and drivers of inequality, discrimination and exclusion.

Led by Malawi and supported by Burkina Faso, Kenya, Tanzania, The Gambia and Morocco, the resolution highlights the strong leadership of African countries in the global movement to eliminate NTDs. More than one billion people worldwide are affected by these diseases, with the greatest burden falling on communities experiencing poverty, inadequate healthcare, unsafe water, poor sanitation and insecure housing.

These underlying conditions increase exposure to infection and make diagnosis, treatment and prevention more difficult. At the same time, NTDs can deepen existing inequalities by causing chronic illness, disability, disfigurement and preventable death. People affected may experience stigma, exclusion from education and employment, reduced income and barriers to participation in society.

The resolution therefore recognises that eliminating NTDs is closely connected to the fulfilment of several fundamental rights—not only the right to health, but also access to safe water, sanitation, adequate housing, education, information and essential medicines.

Its adoption may help raise the political profile of NTDs within both national and international policy agendas. It is also expected to strengthen accountability, encourage cross-sector collaboration and support greater mobilisation of political and financial resources. This is particularly important at a time when research, prevention and treatment programmes for many NTDs remain underfunded.

A central element of the resolution is a request for the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights to conduct a formal consultation on the links between human rights and NTDs. The resulting report is expected to provide recommendations for governments, UN agencies and partner organisations on how rights-based principles can be more effectively integrated into NTD policies and programmes.

The resolution builds on substantial progress already achieved. Sixty-three countries have eliminated at least one NTD, demonstrating that sustained political commitment, investment and partnership can deliver measurable results. Malawi, which led the resolution, eliminated trachoma as a public health problem in 2022 and has also achieved important progress against lymphatic filariasis and leprosy.

However, the resolution itself is only a starting point. Its long-term value will depend on whether its principles are translated into stronger national policies, adequate budgets, equitable access to services and meaningful participation by affected communities.

By formally recognising NTDs as both a public health and a human rights concern, the Human Rights Council has sent a clear message: no person should be denied dignity, opportunity or inclusion because of a preventable and treatable disease.

[Read the Full
Announcement](#)



A Cancer-Prevention Milestone: HPV Vaccination Is Saving Lives

For years, the success of HPV vaccination was measured mainly in fewer infections, precancerous lesions and cervical cancer diagnoses. A new nationwide analysis from England now provides something even more powerful: evidence that vaccination is also preventing deaths.

[Read Article](#)

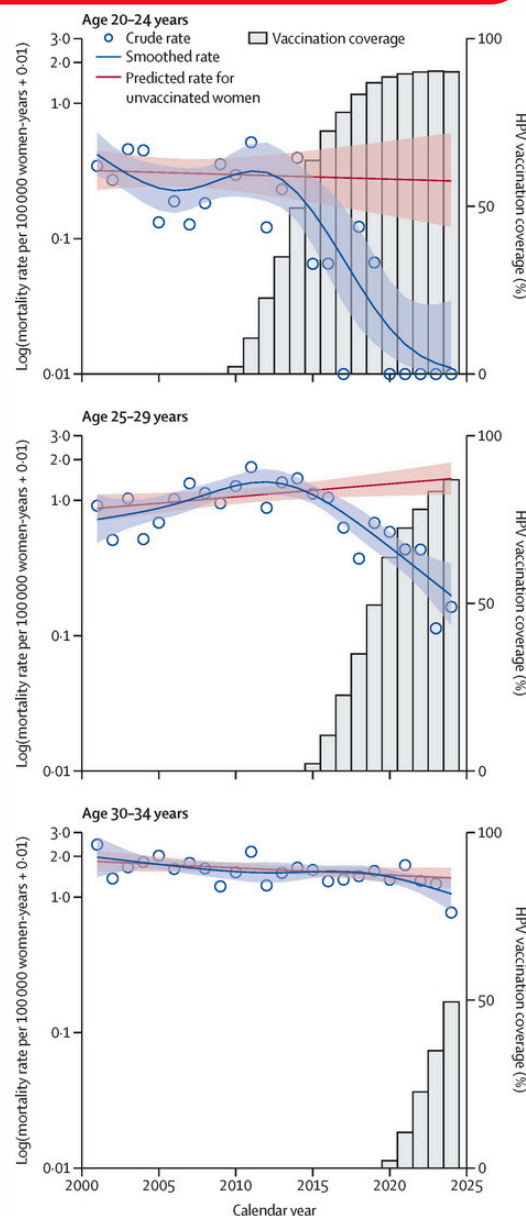
Key Points

- No cervical cancer deaths were recorded among women aged 20–24 in England between 2020 and 2024.
- Without vaccination, researchers estimated that around 23 deaths would have occurred in this age group.
- England's HPV vaccination programme has already been associated with approximately 200 deaths prevented.
- The progress is remarkable—but falling vaccination coverage could put future gains at risk.

Researchers analysed cervical cancer mortality data from 2001 to 2024 and compared trends among women aged 20–24, 25–29 and 30–34 years with the proportion of each group that had received HPV vaccination during adolescence. England introduced routine vaccination for girls aged 12–13 in 2008, alongside a catch-up programme for older teenagers. The clearest result was seen in the youngest group. Between 2020 and 2024, not a single cervical cancer death was recorded among women aged 20–24. Based on mortality rates before vaccinated cohorts reached adulthood, approximately 23 deaths would have been expected. Mortality had already fallen by 80% in this age group in 2015–2019, while women aged 25–29 experienced a 69% reduction in 2020–2024. Across all eligible cohorts, the researchers estimated that the vaccination programme was associated with preventing around 200 cervical cancer deaths in England by the end of 2024. The benefit is expected to grow substantially as vaccinated generations age into the decades when cervical cancer becomes more common.

The findings also reinforce why vaccination is most effective when given early. Those vaccinated routinely at 12–13 years showed the strongest protection, while the effect was less certain among women vaccinated later through catch-up programmes. This is biologically plausible: the vaccine prevents infection but does not treat an HPV infection that has already been acquired.

Age-specific scatter plots of crude mortality rates by year of death, including smoothed curves and predicted rates for unvaccinated women



The study is observational and based on population-level vaccination coverage rather than individual vaccination records. Zero deaths in one young age group therefore does not mean that cervical cancer has been eradicated, and the researchers caution that the exact figure may partly reflect the small number of deaths normally seen at these ages. Nevertheless, the timing and scale of the decline—together with extensive evidence that HPV vaccination prevents infection, precancer and invasive cancer—make a compelling case that the programme is saving lives. There is, however, no room for complacency. HPV vaccine coverage among girls in England was close to 89% before the COVID-19 pandemic, but reached only 75.5% by school year 10 in 2024–2025. The WHO target is 90% of girls vaccinated by age 15, alongside high screening and treatment coverage. Vaccination and cervical screening therefore remain complementary—not competing—tools. This is what successful prevention looks like: a cancer becoming rarer before it develops, and lives being saved long before patients ever enter an oncology ward.

Year of death	Age 20–24 years			Age 25–29 years			Age 30–34 years		
	Deaths	Women-years (millions)	Rate per 100 000 women-years	Deaths	Women-years (millions)	Rate per 100 000 women-years	Deaths	Women-years (millions)	Rate per 100 000 women-years
2000*–04	25	7.72	0.32	59	8.22	0.72	171	9.59	1.78
2005–09	16	8.49	0.19	88	8.63	1.02	141	8.57	1.65
2010–14	27	8.95	0.30	123	9.22	1.33	145	9.06	1.60
2015–19	5	8.95	0.06	73	9.63	0.76	140	9.75	1.44
2020–24	0	8.54	0.00	32	9.59	0.33	131	10.33	1.27

Vaccination coverage

None

1–50%

51–87%

88–91%

Age-specific mortality counts, women-years, and crude rates for 2000–24 by 5-year period of death



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GLOBAL CAREER & FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

Call for Experts: WHO Technical Advisory Group on Leishmaniasis

The World Health Organization (WHO) is establishing a new Technical Advisory Group on Leishmaniasis to provide independent strategic and scientific guidance. The multidisciplinary group (up to 25 members) will advise WHO on prevention, control, research priorities, and elimination strategies for these neglected tropical diseases, which affect up to 1 million people annually.

WHO is looking for international scientists, healthcare professionals, and regulators with expertise in epidemiology, clinical parasitology, vector control, humanitarian response, and health systems.

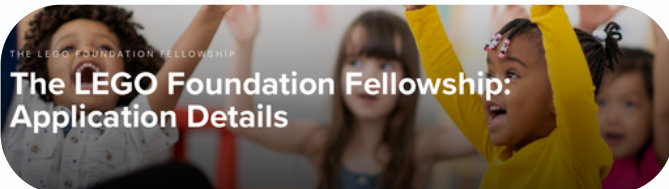
Key Facts:

- **Role:** Serve as an independent expert in a personal capacity (non-remunerated; travel expenses covered for annual 2-3 day meetings in Geneva or other locations).
- **Required Documents:** Cover letter (without employer letterhead), CV, and a signed WHO Declaration of Interests (DOI) form.
- **Submission Email:** Send applications to neglected.diseases@who.int with the subject line "Expression of interest for the Technical Advisory Group on Leishmaniasis".
- **Deadline:** July 24, 2026 (12:00 AM midnight, Geneva time).

[More Information](#)



World Health
Organization



[Apply here](#)

The LEGO Foundation Fellowship

The Social Science Research Council (SSRC), in partnership with the LEGO Foundation, has launched a new global initiative supporting early- and mid-career researchers. The LEGO Foundation Fellowship funds ambitious, practically relevant research aimed at understanding and improving how children thrive across diverse global contexts.

The program welcomes multidisciplinary projects focused on one of three themes: young children in crisis/conflict settings; the inclusion of neurodivergent children; or child development in an AI-enabled world.

Key Facts:

- **Target Audience:** Early- to mid-career researchers globally (PhD received between Jan 1, 2016, and July 31, 2026) employed at a university or research institute.
- **Funding:** USD 300,000 over three years (administered by the fellow's host institution).
- **Volume:** Up to 10 fellowships available worldwide.
- **Fellowship Period:** February 1, 2027 - December 31, 2029.
- **Deadline:** July 31, 2026 (11:59 PM EST). Applications must be submitted via the SSRC online portal.



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EVENTS

XIV SEMTSI Congress 2026: “Tropical Spain—Challenges and Opportunities”

Key Information

Dates: 30 September–2 October 2026

Venue: University of Salamanca, Spain

Organiser: Spanish Society of Tropical Medicine and International Health (SEMTSI)

Registration: Open

Reduced fees: Available until 6 September 2026, or 11 September for residents, Master’s and PhD students, and technical professionals.

[More Information](#)



The XIV SEMTSI Congress will bring together national and international experts in tropical medicine, infectious diseases, microbiology, epidemiology, public health and global health.

Under the theme “Tropical Spain: Challenges and Opportunities,” the congress will explore how climate change, expanding vector distributions, migration, international travel and the close links between human, animal and environmental health are reshaping the epidemiological landscape of Spain and Europe.

The scientific programme will address imported and emerging infections, arboviruses, zoonoses, migrant and travel health, neglected tropical diseases, access to medicines and preparedness for new infectious threats. Workshops and specialist sessions will also cover diagnostics, vector identification, vaccination, laboratory preparedness and One Health approaches.

Hosted in Salamanca, one of Europe’s most historic university cities, the congress offers an opportunity to exchange expertise, establish collaborations and strengthen professional networks across tropical medicine and international health.

Registration includes access to the scientific programme and exhibition area, congress materials, coffee breaks and working lunches.

Full-Congress Registration Fees

Participant category	Reduced fee	Regular fee
SEMTSI member	€375	€425
Non-member	€425	€475
Residents, Master’s and PhD students, technical professionals	€100	€150

Proof of eligibility is required for reduced trainee and technical-professional rates.

One-Day Registration Fees

Participant category	Reduced fee	Regular fee
SEMTSI member	€175	€225
Non-member	€200	€250



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Spain to Host Three Major Global Health Forums in 2027

Key Information

- 13th EDCTP Forum: 5-9 April 2027, Madrid
- 8th Global Forum on TB Vaccines: 12-14 April 2027, Zaragoza
- 15th ECTMIH: 25-28 October 2027, Barcelona
- Focus: Infectious-disease research, vaccine development, international cooperation, One Health and stronger health systems

[More Information](#)

Spain is preparing to host three major international global health meetings in 2027. Together, the events will bring researchers, policymakers, healthcare professionals, industry representatives and affected communities to Madrid, Zaragoza and Barcelona at a time when infectious-disease threats are increasing while international health funding faces considerable pressure. The 13th EDCTP Forum, taking place in Madrid from 5 to 9 April, is expected to welcome approximately 1,500 participants from more than 60 countries. Hosted by the Instituto de Salud Carlos III and Fundación CSAI, the forum will focus on clinical research, health-technology development and scientific cooperation between Africa and Europe. Discussions will address diseases including malaria, HIV, tuberculosis and emerging infections, alongside epidemic preparedness and research-capacity strengthening. Only one week later, Zaragoza will host the 8th Global Forum on TB Vaccines from 12 to 14 April. More than 400 experts from around 35 countries are expected to discuss the research, development and implementation of new tuberculosis vaccines. With several vaccine candidates now in advanced development, the meeting will provide an important platform for strengthening political and financial commitments and promoting equitable future access. The year will conclude with the 15th European Congress on Tropical Medicine and International Health, held in Barcelona from 25 to 28 October under the theme "Refocusing on Global Health." Organised by ISGlobal in collaboration with FESTMIH and SEMTSI, ECTMIH 2027 will examine Europe's role in the evolving global health architecture. The programme will address international collaboration on infectious diseases, One Health, non-communicable diseases and the strengthening of health systems. Together, these meetings position Spain as an important centre for global health dialogue in 2027 and offer valuable opportunities to exchange knowledge, build international partnerships and define priorities for the decade ahead.



2027: A decisive year to consolidate Spain's commitment to global health

Madrid, Zaragoza and Barcelona will bring together international experts to discuss strategies for addressing health challenges in a globalised world.

Global Health EDCTP3 / Jul 9



Women in Global Health

[Website](#)



We are proud to announce the launch of our redesigned website — a complete reimagining of how Women in Global Health shows up online. The new site is faster, more accessible, and more intuitive, built to reflect the full scale of who we are: a 100,000–strong global movement operating across 65 chapters in 60 countries. The refreshed digital home brings together our advocacy, our chapters, our knowledge, and our community in one clear, navigable space. Whether you are a first-time visitor or a longtime WGH member, the site is designed to help you find what you need, understand who we are, and join us in moving this work forward.

What's new:

- Clearer storytelling around who we are, what we do, and how we create impact
- A refreshed Knowledge Hub featuring research, reports, and resources all in one place
- Updated chapter pages that showcase the breadth of the movement
- A new visual identity — brand colors, typography, and imagery that reflect our values
- A mobile-first, accessible design built for our global community

Statistics and R: A Free Harvard Course for Life Scientists

Key Information

- Format: Online and self-paced
- Duration: 4 weeks
- Workload: 2-4 hours per week
- Level: Intermediate
- Availability: Enrolment available anytime
- Cost: Free to audit; optional verified certificate for US\$219
- Platform: edX



Harvard University offers a self-paced online course introducing the statistical concepts and R programming skills required for data analysis in the life sciences. Developed through the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health, Statistics and R combines statistical theory with practical implementation using real datasets and programming exercises. Participants learn about random variables, probability distributions, statistical inference, p-values, confidence intervals, exploratory data analysis and non-parametric methods. R programming examples and problem sets are used throughout the course to demonstrate how statistical concepts can be translated into reproducible analyses.

The course also introduces data visualisation and robust statistical approaches for situations in which standard model assumptions are not met. By working directly with R scripts, learners gain practical experience in selecting appropriate analytical methods, interpreting results and documenting reproducible research workflows. The programme is particularly relevant for researchers, students and health professionals working with biological, clinical or public-health data. Some previous experience with statistics or programming is beneficial, as the course is classified as intermediate and progresses relatively quickly.

Statistics and R forms part of Harvard's broader Data Analysis for Life Sciences series, but it may also be completed as an individual course. The course can be audited free of charge, while participants seeking formal proof of completion may purchase a verified certificate.

[Free Training](#)





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CLOSING NOTE

News of the Month – July 2026

Thank you for reading, sharing, and contributing to this edition of the NOTM. This month has brought together a particularly broad range of topics—from the recognition of neglected tropical diseases as a human rights issue and encouraging new evidence on the life-saving impact of HPV vaccination, to international funding opportunities, an upcoming congress in Salamanca, and new digital resources for the global health community. We hope these updates provide useful inspiration, practical opportunities, and new perspectives for the months ahead. Whether you are preparing an application, planning to attend a conference, strengthening your analytical skills, or taking some well-earned time off, we wish you a restful summer, safe travels, and many rewarding encounters.

Until next month,
The FESTMIH NOTM Team

SHARE YOUR EVENTS & FEEDBACK

Do you have an upcoming event from within your institution, society, or network that you would like to see featured in the News of the Month?

We invite our cooperation partners to share relevant announcements with the FESTMIH Secretariat. Submissions received before the 10th of each month will be considered for inclusion in the following edition.

We also value your thoughts on the NOTM. You can provide feedback anytime by simply scanning the QR code included in this newsletter.

Your contributions and ideas help us keep the NOTM a vibrant and useful resource for the FESTMIH community.



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