

**Long-term impact of meningitis– what is known now and the research challenge for the Defeating Meningitis by 2030 Roadmap**

**Dr Nicoline Schiess**, World Health Organization (WHO)

The social and economic costs of neurological sequelae following meningitis can be devastating to patients, families and communities. Up to 30% of survivors are left with neurological or neuro-behavioural sequelae many of which go unrecognized or undiagnosed. These include seizures, hearing and vision loss, cognitive impairment, neuromotor disability and memory or behaviour changes. The long-term consequences have not been extensively studied and data is lacking. Knowledge of the socioeconomic impact and demand for medical follow-up services among these patients and their caregivers is also lacking, especially in low- and middle-income countries.

The WHO Defeating Meningitis by 2030 Roadmap sets out a plan to tackle the main causes of acute bacterial meningitis: *Neisseria meningitidis* ((Nm), meningococcus), *Streptococcus pneumoniae* ((Spn), pneumococcus), *Haemophilus influenzae* (Hi) and *Streptococcus agalactiae* (group B *Streptococcus* (GBS)). Neurological sequelae and disability associated with meningitis infections is an important component of the roadmap.

This talk summarises our understanding of the impact and burden of neurological sequelae, the disabling consequences and existing research challenges for the Defeating Meningitis by 2030 Roadmap with a particular focus on identifying existing gaps in LMICs.