

Editorial

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People living in tropical regions account for a large percentage of the world's population, and residents of the tropics face many challenges to their health. Populations living in tropical regions must deal with most of the same diseases that confront people inhabiting temperate regions, but face many other health problems as well. For example, it is estimated that the neglected tropical diseases (NTDs), including the parasitic helminths and apicomplast parasites, afflict roughly 40% of the world's population, almost all of whom reside in tropical climates.

The health problems of the developing world are exacerbated by poverty and poor infrastructure which increase both pathogen transmission and the socioeconomic consequences of the resulting diseases. Infectious disease and poverty are also interlinked, with loss of productivity resulting from the morbidity associated with tropical infectious diseases fuelling conditions of poverty which, in turn, create conditions for an increased transmission of these same diseases.

In the past 5 years, the international community has begun to pay increasing attention to the health problems of the developing world. There has been an increased interest in developing and implementing interventions that may break the interlinked cycle of poverty and infectious disease that retards development in the tropics. Much of the basic scientific research that has been carried out to study these diseases has been done in laboratories in the developing world. In order to effectively combat and potentially eliminate these diseases, however, the major efforts must be undertaken in countries in which these diseases are endemic, and the majority of the burdens associated with these programs will be borne by the residents of the afflicted countries. The major goal of Research Reports in Tropical Medicine will be to publish high quality reports of clinical, epidemiological and translational research that is carried out in countries in the tropics. The journal is also interested in publishing perspective and opinion pieces that address issues arising from the efforts to control and eventually eliminate these scourges of mankind.

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