



GLOBAL TASK FORCE ON  
**CHOLERA CONTROL**

8th Annual Meeting of the Global Task Force on Cholera  
Control (GTFCC)

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Biographies: Speakers and Moderators



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## Ms. Kate Alberti

**Position:** Focal point Community Engagement and  
Outbreaks

**Institution:** GTFCC/WHO

**Country:** Switzerland



Kate Alberti is an epidemiologist and member of cholera team of the World Health Organization/GTFCC Secretariat in Geneva, Switzerland. She joined the team 5 years ago and is currently the focal point for community engagement, outbreaks and training.

Prior to joining WHO she was the cholera focal point for UNICEF in New York. Kate started working in the humanitarian field as a coordinator of a cholera treatment centre for Medecins Sans Frontieres (MSF) in northern Nigeria. She worked for MSF and Epicentre for more than a decade supporting and evaluating emergency field programmes including major cholera outbreaks in Angola, Zimbabwe and Haiti.

## Dr. Nurullah Awal

**Position:** Health Adviser

**Institution:** WaterAid

**Country:** Bangladesh



Dr. Nurullah Awal is the health adviser at WaterAid Bangladesh and has been coordinating WASH and health interventions and discussions, mainly with Ministry of Health, other key partners and NGOs.

He is a member at the national technical committee on WASH at the Directorate of Health and contributed in the development of several key national documents; i.e., the strategy for WASH in HCFs, WASH guideline for Community Clinics, National Menstrual Hygiene strategy, National Cholera Control plan etc.

Dr. Awal is also the chair of WASH working group at Global Task Force for Cholera Control, GTFCC and member of the representing team on Cholera related discussions from WaterAid. He is also an executive committee member of the national CSA-SUN in Bangladesh.

## Dr. Philippe Barboza

**Position:** Head

**Institution:** GTFCC / WHO Cholera Team

**Country:** Switzerland



Philippe Barboza is a senior epidemiologist. He is the Team Lead Cholera and Epidemic Diarrheal Diseases at WHO and the head of the Secretariat of the Global Task Force on Cholera Control (GTFCC).

Before joining the cholera team Philippe was the head of the unit charge of the global detection, verification and risk assessment of acute public health events team in Health Emergencies Programme (WHE) of the World Health Organization (WHO) headquarter in Geneva. Prior joining WHO was the Director of the International department of the French Public health institute.

Philippe has also over 15 years of experience in infectious diseases surveillance and control in resources limited countries in Africa, Indian sub-continent and South East Asia, with Médecins Sans Frontières, Epicentre and WHO. Philippe holds a PhD. in Epidemiology and Sciences of the Biomedical information from Pierre et Marie Curie - Sorbonne University, Paris, France and a Mph from The University of Liverpool, UK.

## Dr. Frew Benson

**Position:** Chairperson

**Institution:** GTFCC Steering Committee

**Country:** South Africa



Dr. Frew Benson is the former Chief Director of Communicable Diseases for the National Department of Health in South Africa and is currently a Senior Clinical Executive in Gauteng Province. He obtained his qualifications in South Africa: MBBCh (Stel), DTM&H(Wits), PDHSM(UCT), MSc(Med) in Child Health (Wits), and PhD in Public Health (Wits).

As Chief Director, he led the country's efforts to prevent and control several epidemic-prone diseases, including the fight against the country's cholera epidemic in 2008-2009.

He has represented South Africa at several international fora, including the WHA and AU.

He is chair of the GTFCC since 2017, and Chair of the Steering Committee since its inception.

## Ms. Malika Bouhenia

**Position:** OCV focal point/WHO/GTFCC

**Institution:** WHO

**Country:** France



Malika is an Epidemiologist with fourteen years' experience in international health. Over the past seven years she has worked in a diverse range of epidemiologist positions with Epicentre and conducted several surveys in refugee camps, South Sudan, Chad, France and Greece.

Since 2014, Malika is working on cholera, especially on studies related to Cholera vaccine. In 2017, she worked as a Cholera Epidemiologist with WHO in Yemen for almost two years. Since May 2019, Malika is in charge of Oral Cholera Vaccination (OCV) for the Cholera Program, based in WHO headquarters in Geneva, Switzerland.

## Dr. Iza Ciglonecki

**Position:** Operational research coordinator

**Institution:** Médecins sans Frontières

**Country:** Switzerland



Dr. Iza Ciglonecki is a coordinator of operational research activities at Médecins Sans Frontières, Operational center Geneva.

She studied medicine in Ljubljana, Slovenia, and did additional training in tropical medicine and epidemiology at the London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine. She has been working with MSF for past 20 years, in different roles in the field and headquarters, as clinician, program manager and technical advisor. Her interest is in control of epidemics, with particular interest in improving patient care and control strategies, including vaccination.



## Marc Gastellu Etchegorry, MD, MPH

**Position:** Deputy Director

**Institution:** Epicentre

**Country:** France



Marc Gastellu Etchegorry, an epidemiologist and public health specialist, joined Médecins sans Frontières (MSF) in 1986. His work on epidemics has oriented his professional career towards the poorest people and the victims of epidemics: measles, meningitis, cholera, etc.

The positions of deputy director of operations in Paris, medical director and then international secretary at MSF, as well as his position as director of the international and tropical department at the Institut de veille Sanitaire (now Santé Publique France), reinforced his conviction of the need to master simple and functional surveillance systems. At the same time, the importance of coupling programs with research to make care more accessible to people living in extreme poverty was forged. This conviction led him to Epicentre, the entity created by MSF in charge of epidemiological and research studies, where he is currently deputy director.

## Dr. Elizabeth Klemm

**Position:** Senior Research Advisor

**Institution:** Wellcome

**Country:** United Kingdom



Elizabeth Klemm is a Senior Research Advisor in the Vaccines team at the Wellcome Trust. She leads programmes to increase evidence-informed decision-making in cholera control through funding research and other activities.

Previously she was a Senior Staff Scientist at the Wellcome Sanger Institute where she studied bacterial pathogens and genomics. She completed her doctorate in Biology at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

## Dr. José Paulo M. Langa

**Position:** Head of Surveillance and surveys Department

**Institution:** National Institute of Health

**Country:** Mozambique



Graduated in Biomedicine with an emphasis on medical genetics in

Brazil, he is a specialist in the control of infectious diseases with an emphasis on gastrointestinal and respiratory diseases.

He is currently in charge of the Department of Health Surveillance and Surveys with a particular interest in surveillance of infectious diseases with endemic and epidemic potential. For five years he was Director of the National Endemic and Epidemic Diseases program at the National Institutes of Health.

## Dr. Daniele Lantagne

**Position:** Associate Professor

**Institution:** Tufts University

**Country:** United States



Daniele is an Associate Professor in Civil and Environmental Engineering at Tufts University. She is a public health engineer (MIT BS 1996, MIT M.Eng. 2001, PE 2003) who received her Ph.D in 2011 from the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine.

She began working in water, sanitation, and hygiene to reduce the burden of infectious disease in 2000, working at MIT and CDC. She completed her post-doctoral work at Harvard's Center for International Development from 2010-2012, and joined Tufts University as a Professor in 2012. Over the past 21 years, she provided technical assistance or conducted research in more than 50 countries in Africa, Asia, and Central/South America in both development and emergency contexts. She has published over 80 papers on water supply, water treatment, hygiene and sanitation in low-income and humanitarian contexts.

Her main research interest is how to reduce the burden of infectious diseases by investigating and evaluating the effectiveness of water and sanitation interventions. She runs an active group completing laboratory, field, and policy research with funding from agency, government, NGO, foundation, and private sources.

## Dr. Elizabeth Lee

**Position:** Research Associate

**Institution:** Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health

**Country:** United States



Dr. Elizabeth Lee is a researcher and faculty member in the Department of Epidemiology at the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health.

She is interested in characterizing the spatiotemporal dynamics of infectious diseases and improving surveillance system design through the use of novel data sources and statistical modeling. Her research focuses on characterizing cholera epidemiology, mapping the burden of cholera, and assessing the health impact of oral cholera vaccine introduction.

## Ms. Marion Martinez Valiente

**Position:** Focal point GTFCC Secretariat  
**Institution:** GTFCC / WHO Cholera Team  
**Country:** South Africa



Marion Martinez Valiente is a Public Health Specialist. She has joined WHO Cholera Team as a Technical Officer in February 2021 and is the Focal point of the Global Task Force on Cholera Control (GTFCC) Secretariat.

Before joining WHO, Marion was working as an independent public health consultant for the French Development Agency (AFD) and the Bill & Melinda Gates foundation. Over the past 10 years, she has been involved in different health programs mainly in Sub-Saharan Africa where she has been living and working since 2012.

She gradually focused her work on a health-system oriented approach and developed an expertise in health systems strengthening.

Marion holds a Master's in Public Health from the French School of Public Health (EHESP), a Master's in Project Management & International relations from Sciences Po Lyon and a Philosophy Degree from Jean Moulin University.

## Dr. Okunga Emmanuel Wandera

**Position:** Deputy Director of Medical Services, Acting Head of the Division of Disease Surveillance and Response

**Institution:** Ministry of Health

**Country:** Kenya



Dr. Okunga Emmanuel Wandera is a Medical Doctor specialised on applied epidemiology for 22 years with special interest in Public Health in low resource settings.

He has been National Cholera Focal Point since 2015. He worked as a National Epidemic Preparedness and Response Officer and as a National Emergency Operation Centre Manager from 2017-2019.

He was Representative to the National Multi-Sectoral Command Centre on COVID-19 in Ministry of Health and he is also acting Head, Division of Disease Surveillance and Response.

## Dr. Marie-Laure QUILICI

**Position:** Researcher, Head of the French National Reference Center for Vibrios and Cholera

**Institution:** Institut Pasteur

**Country:** France



Scientist in the Enteric Bacterial Pathogens Research and Expertise Unit and deputy director then director of the French National Reference Center for Vibrios and Cholera since 2000. Surveillance of cholera and non-cholera vibrios of medical interest isolated from clinical, food and environmental samples. Research interests in identification, biodiversity and dynamics of bacterial populations, development of new bacterial typing and diagnostic tools, surveillance of antimicrobial-resistant bacterial populations.

Marie-Laure QUILICI has a long-standing collaboration with MSF in the confirmation of cholera epidemics and monitoring of cholerae Vibrio populations in Africa, evaluation of rapid diagnostic tests and participation in vaccine efficacy studies. Teaching and training activities on cholera and other vibrios infections in masters and postgraduate courses in France and within the Institut Pasteur International Network.



## Dr. Duncan Steele

**Position:** Deputy Director and Strategic Lead:

Enteric and Diarrheal Diseases

**Institution:** Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation

**Country:** United States



Dr Duncan Steele (PhD) is the Deputy Director and Strategic Lead for enteric vaccines at the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. He leads a team managing a portfolio of vaccine development for cholera, rotavirus, *Shigella* and typhoid fever. The team also supports efforts on the epidemiology and burden of the enteric and diarrhoeal diseases program and includes assessment of disease burden for future vaccine impact evaluation.

## Ms. Annika Wendland

**Position:** Senior Officer, National Cholera Control Plans

**Institution:** International Federation of Red Cross and  
Red Crescent Societies (IFRC),  
Country Support Platform

**Country:** Switzerland



Annika Wendland is an epidemiologist with a foundation in biomedical sciences and has joined the newly established cholera Country Support Platform (CSP) hosted by IFRC on 1 May. Her role in the CSP is to support cholera affected countries in developing their national cholera control plans (NCPs) for submission to the independent review panel, and to support the implementation of NCPs.

Before joining the CSP, she worked with the WHO cholera team and GTFCC to review and update current guidance on cholera surveillance.

## Mr. Mesfin Wossen Getaneh

**Position:** Director for Disease and Health Events Surveillance and Response

**Institution:** Ethiopian Public Health Institute

**Country:** Ethiopia



Mr. Mesfin Wossen Getaneh is a Master of Public Health, and BSc with Environmental Health and his research was focused on Hygiene and Sanitation in Urban setting, National. He has a broad background in Environmental health, Public Health Specifically managing public health Emergency with working at all level of the Ethiopia health system (Woreda, Zonal, Regional and National level). He laid the groundwork for the proposed programs and projects by developing effective Public Health measures ties within community.

Mr. Mesfin Wossen Getaneh is now working on leadership, specifically as a director for Disease and Health Events Surveillance and Response Directorate in Ethiopian Public Health Institute since May/2018. In this position, he is coordinating nine case teams more than 75 technical staffs. Among nine teams, bacterial disease surveillance and response is now responsible to act proposed national cholera program in his leadership. Before this position he was successfully coordinated the National Guinea-Worm Eradication Program from May/2017 to May/2018 in Ethiopian Public Health Institute. In addition to this responsibility, he was working as a section chief for surveillance for COVID-19 national emergency Operation centre

He successfully administered the programs and projects (e.g., staffing, research protections, budget), collaborated with other stakeholders. During his stay there he has published several papers which is directly related to his work experience and disciplined (3 papers as PI and 6 papers as COPI). As a result of these previous experiences, he is aware of the importance of frequent communication among grant funders, program/project members and of constructing a realistic plan, timeline, and budget. The current national program builds logically on his prior work.

In summary, he has a leadership, training expertise, and motivation necessary to successfully carryout the proposed national programs.