

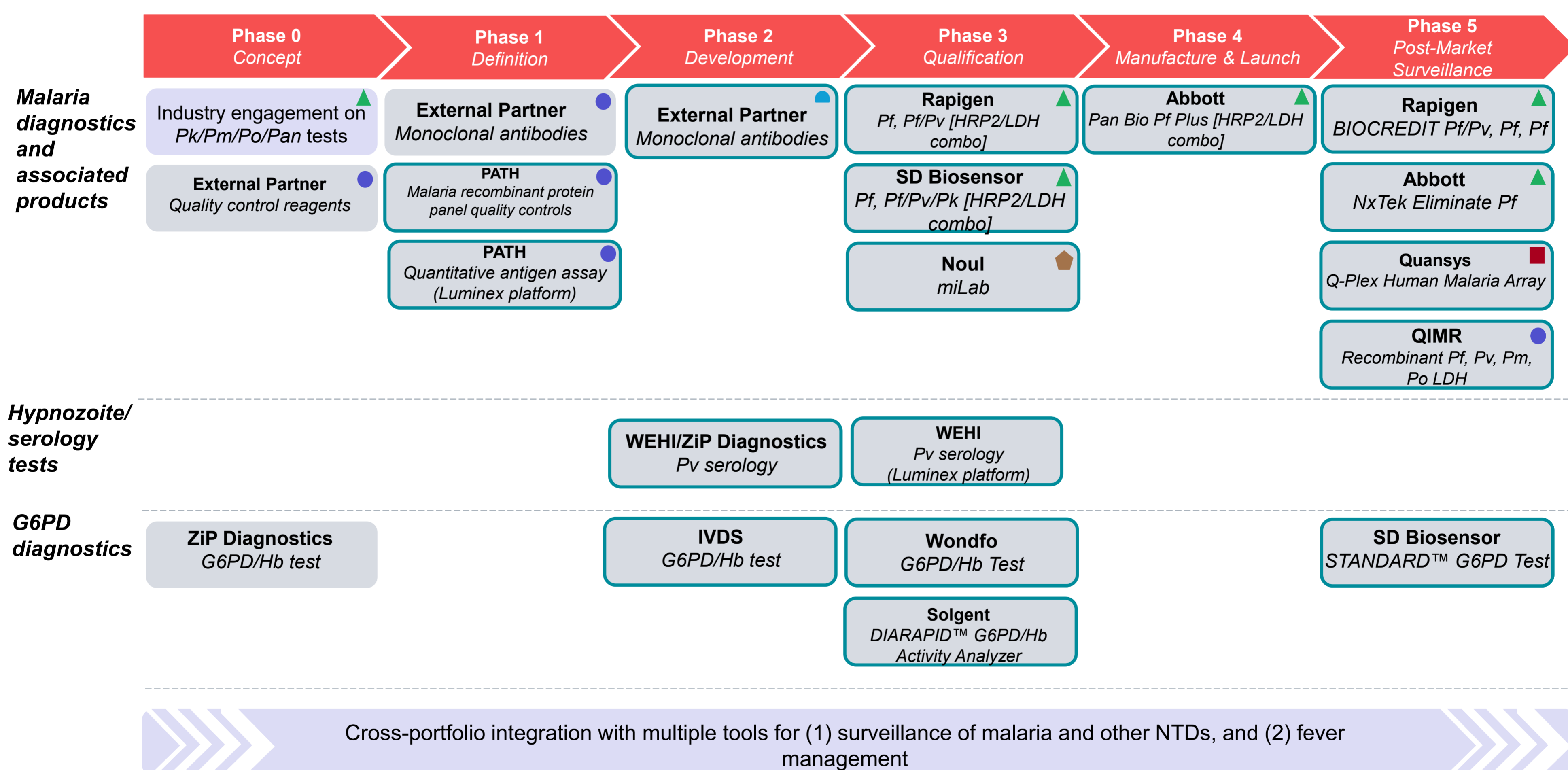
Diagnosics for Malaria and Neglected Tropical Diseases in the Asia-Pacific: a research agenda to accelerate elimination

Maria E. Arias Coscaron¹, Freya Fowkes³, Emily Gerth-Guyette¹, Julie Healer⁵, Moses Laman⁴, Rhea Longley⁵, Huyen Nguyen², Nhu Nguyen², Win Han Oo³, Ivo Mueller⁵, Leanne Robinson³, Gonzalo J Domingo¹

¹PATH, Diagnostics, USA; ²PATH, Vietnam; ³Burnet Institute, Australia; ⁴Papua New Guinea Institute of Medical Research, Papua New Guinea; ⁵Walter and Eliza Hall Institute of Medical Research, Australia

Background: Malaria and NTDs disproportionately affect the health and livelihood of marginalized populations in the Indo-Pacific region. There is a political commitment towards malaria elimination in the region, but progress towards elimination has been very heterogenous with countries typically with the highest disease burden showing the least progress. Indonesia, Myanmar, and Papua New Guinea (PNG) carry the highest disease burden in terms of number of cases in the region according to the WHO 2022 World Malaria Report. The fragility of the progress made to reduce the malaria burden is highlighted by the recent increases in malaria observed across the region.

Project aim: The project, supported by the Australian Government, will advance a portfolio of high-quality diagnostics to ensure equitable access to optimal malaria treatment options across genders and populations at risk of exclusion, as well as accelerate malaria elimination in accordance with national and regional aspirations in the Indo-Pacific region. This will be achieved through three workstreams: (1) research and development, (2) availability, and (3) equitable access.



Abbreviations: G6PD, glucose-6-phosphate dehydrogenase; Hb, hemoglobin; HRP2, histidine rich protein 2; IVDS, In Vitro Diagnostic Solutions; LDH, lactate dehydrogenase; NTD, neglected tropical disease; Pf, *Plasmodium falciparum*; Pk, *Plasmodium knowlesi*; Pm, *Plasmodium malariae*; Po, *Plasmodium ovale*; Pv, *Plasmodium vivax*; QIMR, Queensland Institute of Medical Research; RDT, rapid diagnostic test; TBD, to be determined

Key

- Indicates concept or category
- Indicates a specific product
- Indicates current recipient of support from PDP; may include financial, in-kind, and/or advisory activities
- ▲ Next-generation malaria RDTs
- Malaria antigen assays
- Malaria RDT reagents
- Automated microscopy

What's next: the project kicked-off in April 2024 and the team is initiating clinical evaluations and research and development activities across the portfolio which will run through 2025.