

# The Problem with Innovation: The Case of Neglected Tropical Diseases

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# Introduction

- **Research Question:** how does China compare to the donor-recipient model in approaches to NTDs in China
  - China is a 'recipient' country challenging the status quo
  - Historical development of tropical medicine
  - Today focus is repeated in what developed countries can contribute



# Structure

## □ Introduction

1. Methodology
2. Donor-recipient model
3. China case study
4. A historical involvement in NTDs
5. Innovation actors in national and regional dimension
6. Chinese NTD trends

## □ Conclusion

# 1. Methodology

- Policy historiography
  - scientific journals, organisation material, media/policy reports
- ‘Policy archaeology’ and ‘policy genealogy’
  - 21 semi-structured qualitative interviews with policy actors tackling NTDs

## 2. Donor-Recipient model



Source: Amaral (2008)



Source: TIME (2010)



## 3. China Case Study

- World's **largest economy** by 2020 (Standard Chartered, 2010)
- ‘**Indigenous innovation**’ codified through national strategy: ‘2006-2020 Medium- and Long-term National Science and Development Plan’
- Science and innovation connected to efforts to improve **health outcomes** - consumer health market for rising middle classes but signs health of poorer communities will be catered for

## 4. A historical involvement in NTDs

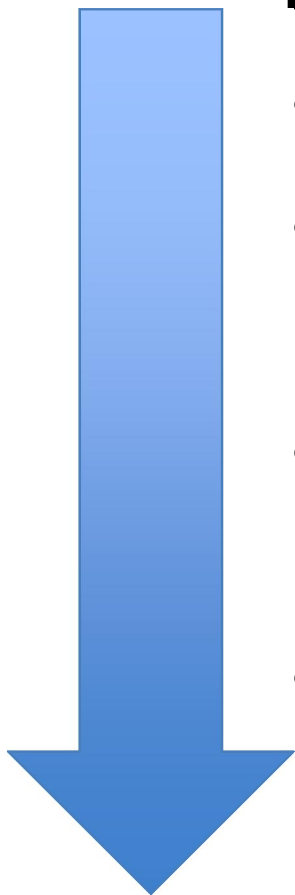
Tropical disease intervention:

**1950s** Nationwide leprosy programme

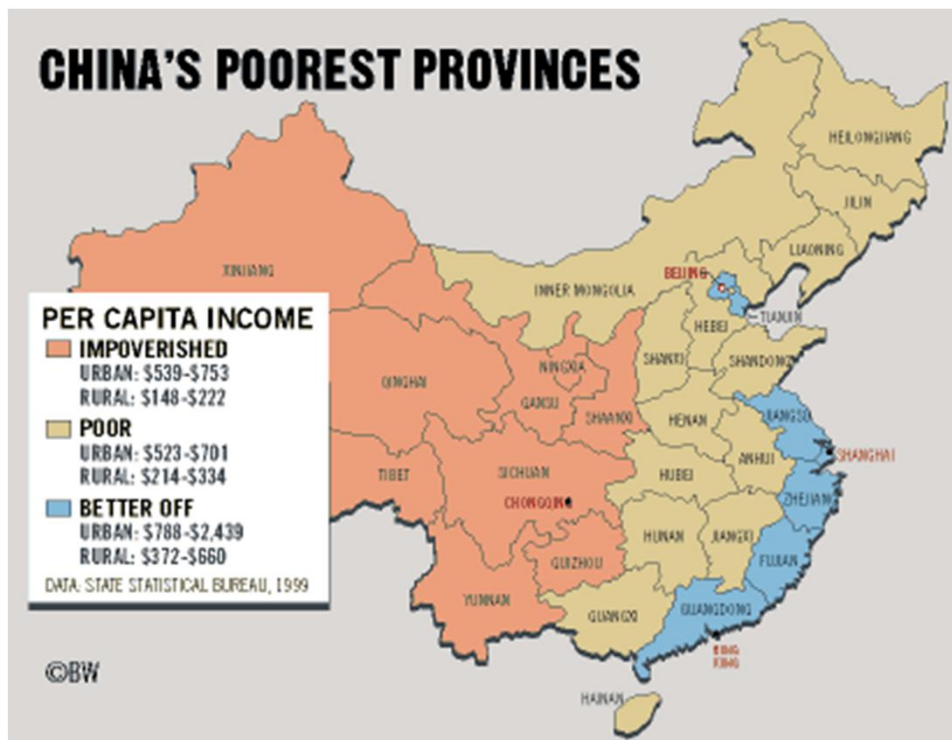
**1957** Research published for isolation of elusive trachoma agent

**1960s** Artemisinin discovered by Chinese scientists

**Present** Control schemes for Hookworm building upon Hookworm Commission



# 5. Innovation actors in the national and regional dimension



*“All health is local really, it's a bit like politics”*  
 (Epidemiologist, Interview 6<sup>th</sup> February 2014)

**Source:** Roberts (May 8, 2000)



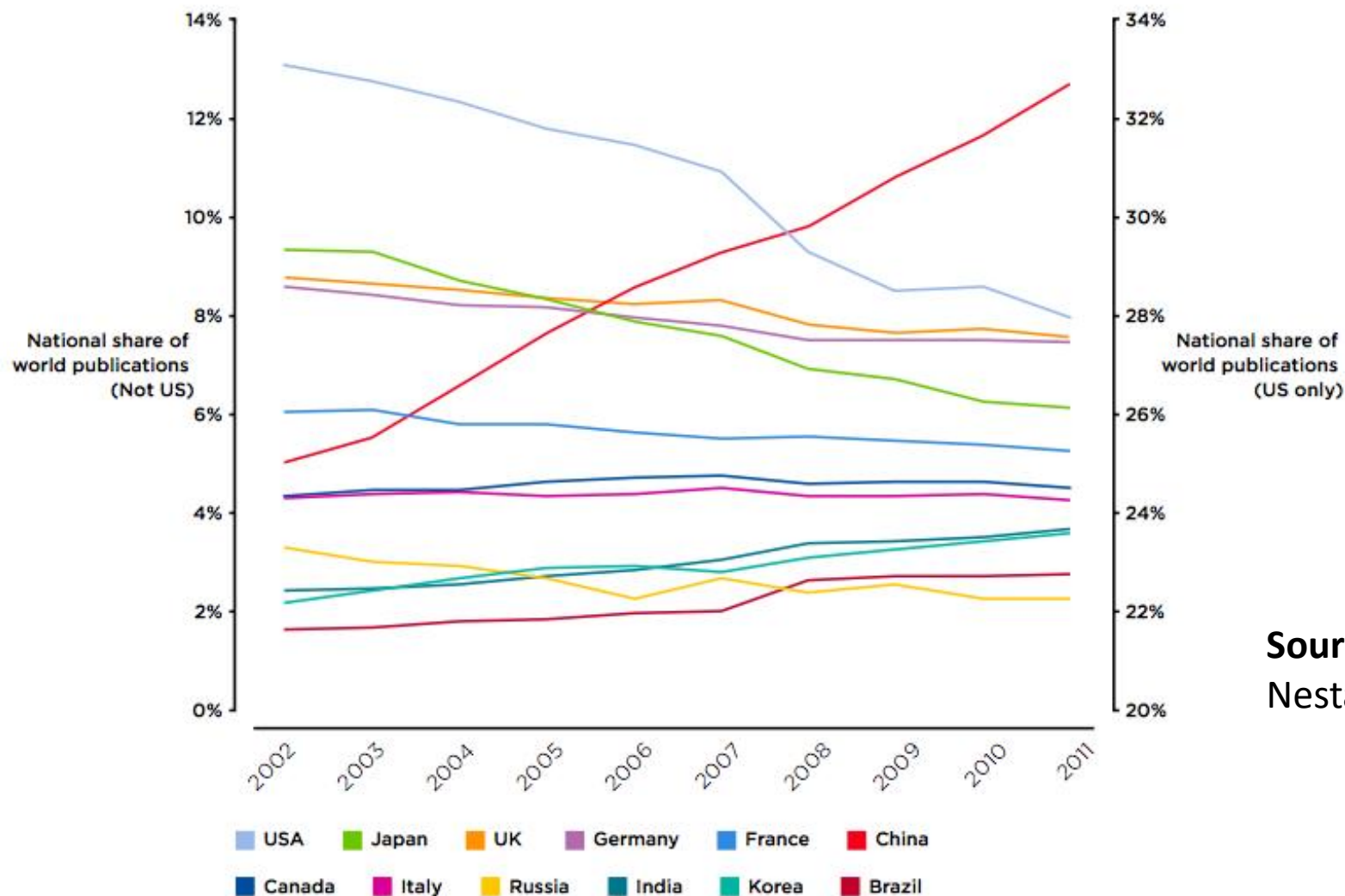
## 6. Chinese NTD trends

### Investment from home-grown companies and MNCs

- Kunming Pharmaceutical Corp (founded in China in 1993, manufactures/sells natural drugs)
- Pharma giants Novartis and Novo Nordisk




# Exponential growth of research publications



Source:  
Nesta (2013)

# Conclusion

- Compared **donor-recipient** model with China's approach to NTDs
- Assessed the legacy of **colonial past** imaginings of tropical disease interventions and present day re-imaginings through the **NTD characterisation**

 A **country context** exemplifies how scientific knowledge is not the only consideration but historical and socioeconomic developments form the basis for routes in addressing NTDs

Questions?...