A globalized miscreant: Bacteria of the *Salmonella typhi* family cause more than 20 million cases of typhoid and 200,000 deaths every year. As part of an international cooperation, scientists from the Max Planck Institute for Infection Biology in Berlin recently investigated the evolutionary history of this pathogen using comparative genome analyses of 105 strains of these bacteria. The results showed that so-called long-term carriers — people who are infected with *Salmonella typhi* but who do not contract typhoid — play a crucial role in the worldwide spread of this microorganism — a circumstance that Robert Koch recognized more than 100 years ago. According to another finding from the study, neither global vaccination nor antibiotics will result in the successful eradication of typhoid worldwide. On the contrary; treatment of patients with antibiotics in Southeast Asia, carried out since 1991, has led to the appearance of numerous resistant mutants of the typhoid pathogen, which are now multiplying profusely and have also reached Africa.