



NEGLECTED TROPICAL DISEASE CONTROL PROGRAM

Photo credit: Henrietta Allen, WHO

ABOUT THE PROGRAM

An estimated one billion people worldwide are affected by one or more neglected tropical diseases (NTDs). These diseases disproportionately impact poor and rural populations, who lack access to safe water, sanitation, and essential medicines. They cause sickness and disability, compromise children's mental and physical development, and result in blindness and severe disfigurement.

In September 2006, the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) launched the Neglected Tropical Disease Control Program, the first global effort to support country programs to integrate and scale up delivery of preventive chemotherapy for five targeted NTDs: lymphatic filariasis, schistosomiasis, trachoma, onchocerciasis, and soil-transmitted helminthiasis.

Research has shown that when these drugs are provided to at-risk populations annually over successive years, NTDs may be eliminated or reduced to a prevalence rate at which they no longer pose a threat to public health. For example

- Lymphatic filariasis has been all but eliminated in Egypt after five annual cycles of mass drug administration of albendazole and diethylcarbamazine (DEC).
- Trachoma is the leading cause of preventable blindness worldwide. In Morocco, mass distribution of Zithromax® as part of a complete SAFE strategy (surgery, antibiotics, facial cleanliness, and environmental improvements) has virtually eliminated the disease.
- With assistance from the Schistosomiasis Control Initiative, schistosomiasis prevalence in Egypt has been reduced from around 20% to 1–2% using praziquantel over the last 2 decades.



NEGLECTED TROPICAL DISEASES

Lymphatic filariasis
(elephantiasis)

Onchocerciasis
(river blindness)

Schistosomiasis
(bilharzia; snail fever)

Soil-transmitted helminthiasis
(intestinal worm infection)

Trachoma
(blinding eye infection)



Photo credit: Andrea Peterson

Leveraging generous donations by Merck, Pfizer, GSK, and Johnson & Johnson of the proven effective treatments for NTDs (Mectizan®, Zithromax®, albendazole and mebendazole), the Program provides critical funding to allow countries receiving these donated drugs to scale up treatment.

Our Program supports national disease control programs to expand their existing disease-specific control programs by integrating mass drug campaigns for coendemic NTDs. Especially where NTDs are coendemic, excellent opportunities exist for cost-efficiencies resulting from streamlined service delivery.

KEY PROGRAM ELEMENTS

Implementation of integrated NTD control programs through grantees who support ministries of health to integrate and scale up coverage of drug treatment. Initially operating in five countries poised to expand and integrate existing vertical disease-specific programs, the Program is developing models for integrating control of NTDs. The Program will measure effectiveness of various approaches, with the goal of scaling up the most successful models, and focusing on the following priorities:

Integration of planning, implementation, supervision and monitoring.

Capacity development of country implementers resulting from working through existing government health systems.

Developing **tools for integration**, such as guidelines for implementation and tools for planning, budgeting, and monitoring.

Grants for country programs are provided to NGOs in support of ministries of health national integrated NTD control programs. In the first year of the Program, grants supported the national NTD control programs of Burkina Faso, Ghana, Mali,

Niger; and Uganda. Three additional grants for Haiti, Sierra Leone, and South Sudan were awarded for year two, and in year three, Bangladesh and Nepal were also added.

A Technical Advisory Group assures the program is guided by state-of-the-art scientific findings, best practices and lessons learned.

Documenting and disseminating best practices through program reports highlighting best practices, peer-reviewed journal articles, a program Web site, and representation at major international conferences.

Mobilizing resources for NTD control. The Program advocates at local and international levels to mobilize the resources required to achieve goals of disease elimination and control.

Additionality. The Program works with governments committed to integrated NTD control by supplementing existing government resources and donor support. This additional funding allows the countries' integrated NTD control programs to achieve expanded coverage of at-risk populations.

The Program is part of a larger global initiative and works closely with key global NTD partners and donors to advocate for global policies and initiatives to prioritize treatment and control of NTDs.

IMPLEMENTING PARTNERS

- Liverpool Associates in Tropical Health
- LEPR: Health in Action
- Malaria Consortium
- IMA World Health
- Helen Keller International
- Schistosomiasis Control Initiative, Imperial College, London
- World Vision

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