



## TECHNICAL OVERVIEW

# Neglected Tropical Diseases

The World Health Organization (WHO) estimates that neglected tropical diseases (NTDs) affect over 1.7 billion people worldwide. This group of diseases primarily impacts those living in poverty, who lack access to basic hygiene and sanitation, with women and children disproportionately affected.

Preventing, controlling and eliminating NTDs is critical, as they impact the achievement of most health and development indicators. NTDs reduce socioeconomic and educational attainment by inhibiting children from learning and developing to their full potential and preventing adults from working and supporting their families. NTDs also place a vast economic burden on communities due to productivity losses and strains on the health system. Furthermore, NTDs often lead to physical deformities along with disability, stigma, social isolation and shame.

IMA World Health has been working to address NTDs for more than 20 years in Asia, Africa and the Caribbean. IMA World Health projects primarily target the five preventative chemotherapy NTDs:

- lymphatic filariasis (LF)
- onchocerciasis (known as River Blindness)

- trachoma
- schistosomiasis (SCH)
- soil-transmitted helminths (STH)

IMA World Health has also addressed visceral leishmaniasis (VL), commonly known as kala-azar, in endemic areas within South Sudan and, previously, in India.

As a recognized leader in the prevention, control and elimination of NTDs, IMA World Health uses a combination of evidence-based strategies to design and scale-up NTD projects, in partnership with local governments and civil society partners. Following the NTD Road Map, IMA World Health's NTD programming is moving the needle towards meeting the WHO's 2030 control and elimination goals.



**IMA WORLD HEALTH**

In concert with Corus International

IMAWORLDHEALTH.ORG

## In Practice

### Urgent Continuation of Visceral Leishmaniasis Services

In partnership with the END Fund, IMA World Health's Urgent Continuation of Visceral Leishmaniasis Services project has been providing lifesaving VL treatment by supporting 25 health facilities in the four VL-endemic states (Upper Nile, Jonglei, Unity, and Eastern Equatoria) of South Sudan since 2021. The project provides WHO-donated medication to the supported health facilities, trains health care workers on VL identification and treatment, and deploys community health volunteers (CHVs). In the first 18 months of programming, 1,187 patients were enrolled in treatment, 262 medical personnel were trained in diagnosis and treatment, 75 CHVs were engaged to support active case detection and promote community awareness, and 4,309 people were reached by advocacy and sensitization activities.

### SAFE

Since 2014, IMA World Health has led implementation of the SAFE project across five regions of Tanzania, targeting 19 trachoma-endemic districts inhabited by nearly 4 million people. The Sightsavers-funded SAFE project focuses on strengthening district-level eye care departments, providing the technical and managerial skills and capacity to independently treat trachoma-related blindness by facilitating case finding and organizing field outreach surgeries in accordance with WHO's SAFE strategy for trachoma control. By partnering with government-sponsored clinics and tapping into faith-based networks, IMA World Health focuses on strengthening local capacity and has been able to implement in some of the most remote, hard-to-reach settings in Tanzania. As of December 2022, IMA has managed more than 12,000 trachomatous trichiasis (TT) cases and trained 3,658 community case finders along with 57 screeners, 76 assistant surgeons and 23 surgeons.

### Elimination of Lymphatic Filariasis in Haiti

Through the CDC-funded Elimination of Lymphatic Filariasis in Haiti project, IMA World Health works closely with the Haiti Neglected Tropical Disease Control Program (HNTDCP) to create evidence-based LF technical guidance documents and implement awareness activities to enable communities to prevent, treat and control LF. Through the project, IMA World Health is supporting the rollout of triple-drug (IDA) therapy for LF for the first time ever in Haiti. Despite the extremely

challenging security context in Haiti, the country team has worked to improve drug access among hard-to-reach populations, conducted a school census to better understand the population requiring treatment and collaborated closely with key local stakeholders, such as religious leaders and teachers, to gain community acceptance.



### The Corus Effect

Founded in 1960, IMA World Health is a leading public health organization operating in some of the world's most fragile settings. In partnership with local partners and governments, IMA strengthens health systems, improves maternal and child health, prevents and treats diseases, promotes nutrition and water, sanitation and hygiene, addresses sexual and gender-based violence and responds to global health crises.

IMA World Health is part of Corus International, an ensemble of global leaders in international development and humanitarian assistance. In addition to IMA World Health, the Corus family of organizations includes global non-governmental organization Lutheran World Relief, U.K.-based technology for development company CGA Technologies, impact investing group Ground Up Investing, and direct trade company Farmers Market Brands.

We operate as permanent partners, integrating expertise, disciplines, approaches and resources to overcome global health challenges, develop productive and stable economies, improve resilience in the face of climate change, and respond to natural disasters and humanitarian crises.



**IMA WORLD HEALTH**

In concert with Corus International

IMAWORLDHEALTH.ORG