



TECHNICAL OVERVIEW

Neglected Tropical Diseases

Neglected tropical diseases (NTDs) affect more than 1 billion people around the world, with nearly 1.5 billion in need of prevention or treatment, according to the World Health Organization. These diseases largely affect people living in poverty—especially those without access to clean water, sanitation or basic health services. Women and children are often the hardest hit, facing the greatest barriers to care and the most severe consequences.

Preventing, controlling and ultimately eliminating neglected tropical diseases (NTDs) is essential to achieving broader health and development goals. These diseases limit educational opportunities by keeping children out of school and hindering their physical and cognitive development. For adults, NTDs can mean the inability to work and provide for their families, deepening cycles of poverty. They also place a heavy economic strain on entire communities, reducing productivity and overwhelming already fragile health systems. In many cases, NTDs lead to long-term physical disabilities which can cause stigma, social exclusion and a deep sense of shame, further marginalizing those affected.

IMA World Health has been working to address NTDs for more than 20 years in Asia, Africa and the Caribbean. IMA World Health projects have targeted the five preventative chemotherapy NTDs: lymphatic filariasis (LF), onchocerciasis (known as River Blindness), trachoma, schistosomiasis (SCH) and 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 World Health Organization's 2030 control and elimination goals.

In Practice

Urgent Continuation of Visceral Leishmaniasis Services (2021 - present)

In partnership with the END Fund, IMA World Health's Urgent Continuation of Visceral Leishmaniasis Services project has provided lifesaving VL treatment by supporting 25 health facilities in the four VL-endemic states of South Sudan—Upper Nile, Jonglei, Unity and Eastern Equatoria—since 2021. The project supplies World Health Organization-donated diagnostics and medication to supported facilities, trains health care workers in VL identification and treatment, and deploys community health volunteers. Since 2021, 18,124 people have been screened for VL, with 2,802 patients enrolled in treatment. More than 250 medical personnel have been trained in diagnosis and treatment, 75 community health volunteers have been engaged to support active case detection and promote community awareness, and over 9,000 people have been reached through advocacy and sensitization activities. Since 2023, IMA World Health has partnered with the Drugs for Neglected Diseases initiative to directly support South Sudan's Ministry of Health Case Management NTD office

by conducting joint field supervision visits, facilitating VL technical working group and stakeholder meetings, and strengthening infrastructure through improved equipment and connectivity.

Elimination of Lymphatic Filariasis in Haiti (2021 - 2025)

Through the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention-funded Elimination of Lymphatic Filariasis in Haiti project, IMA World Health partnered closely with the Haiti Neglected Tropical Disease Control Program to develop evidence-based technical guidance on lymphatic filariasis and carry out awareness activities to help communities prevent, treat and control the disease. Despite extremely challenging conditions in Haiti—including political instability, violence, natural disasters and disease outbreaks—the project team made significant progress in improving drug accessibility for hard-to-reach communities. To better understand the number of people needing treatment, the team conducted a school census and worked alongside key community figures, such as religious leaders and teachers, to build local trust and support. In September 2023, IMA World Health supported the country's first-ever rollout of the highly effective triple-drug therapy—ivermectin, DEC and albendazole, known as IDA. In just ten days, 45,255 people were treated, including 17,920 children, reaching 74.4% of the population in the targeted commune of Limonade. During the second World Health Organization-recommended round of IDA mass drug administration in July 2024, the project achieved 68% coverage. This pilot activity demonstrated that the new and effective approach can be scaled up in Haiti and has the potential to benefit more than 2.4 million people.

SAFE (2014 - 2023)

IMA World Health implemented the Sightsavers-funded SAFE project across six regions of Tanzania, targeting 19 trachoma-endemic districts home to nearly four million people. The project focused on strengthening district-level eye care departments by building the technical and managerial capacity needed to independently treat trachoma-related blindness. This included supporting case finding and organizing outreach surgeries in alignment with the World Health Organization's SAFE strategy for trachoma control. By partnering with government-run clinics and leveraging faith-based networks, IMA World Health prioritized local capacity strengthening and expanded trachoma interventions in some of Tanzania's most remote and hard-to-reach areas. Over the nine years of implementation, the project treated more than 12,000 cases of blinding trachoma—trachomatous trichiasis, or TT—and trained 7,022 community case finders, 87 screeners, 79 assistant surgeons and 26 surgeons.

Act to End NTDs | East (2018 - 2021)

The Act to End NTDs | East project built on more than a decade of USAID investment to combat five neglected tropical diseases (NTDs) across Haiti and Tanzania. In Haiti, IMA World Health supported efforts to eliminate lymphatic filariasis (LF) and control soil-transmitted helminths (STH), overseeing mass drug administration (MDA) in 22 communes. By the program's end, 87% of Haiti's communes had met the criteria to stop MDA for LF, reducing risk for more than 7.3 million people, while STH prevalence among school-age children dropped from 37% to 14.5%. In Tanzania, IMA partnered with the Ministry of Health to eliminate LF, trachoma and onchocerciasis, and control schistosomiasis and STH. IMA supported MDA across 19 regions, trained nearly 50,000 health workers, teachers and community drug distributors, and administered more than 9 million treatments annually.



The Corus Effect

Founded in 1960, IMA World Health is a leading public health organization that delivers solutions to health-related problems across the developing world. We work with local partners and governments to strengthen existing health systems, prevent and treat diseases, improve maternal and child health, promote nutrition and WASH, respond to sexual and gender-based violence, and contribute to global health security.

IMA World Health leads global health programming at Corus International, an organization that unites an array of world-class nonprofits and businesses, each with specialized expertise. Our reach and capabilities are amplified by the other global leaders in our Corus International family, including Lutheran World Relief, CGA Technologies and Ground Up Investing. Together, we bring the multi-dimensional, holistic needed to truly achieve lasting change.



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