

10 Years of Progress Fighting Neglected Tropical Diseases

The year 2016 marks the 10th year anniversary of the USAID Neglected Tropical Disease (NTD) Program. Over the past decade, the NTD Program has supported the delivery of more than 1.6 billion treatments leveraging \$11.1 billion in donated drugs in 31 countries. This program represents an outstanding example of what can be achieved through public-private partnerships. Ten years ago, the USAID NTD Program delivered 36 million treatments to people in need. Now, in 2016, the program has expanded, delivering 299 million treatments each year.

Over the next five years, USAID and its partners have committed to eliminating Trachoma, the world's leading cause of preventable blindness, by treating at-risk communities and supporting surgeries for affected individuals. USAID will also combat and seek to eliminate Lymphatic Filariasis, a painful and disfiguring parasitic infection transmitted by mosquitos. In addition, USAID will promote improved sanitation to break the transmission of diseases like Schistosomiasis, caused by a painful abdominal parasite.

One in seven people worldwide, a billion people, suffer from a group of parasitic and bacterial infections that can cause profound pain, suffering, stunting, malnutrition, and disability, perpetuating the cycle of poverty. These neglected tropical diseases have endured because of indifference. But many of these diseases can be eliminated with sanitation, preventive treatments, and mass drug distribution campaigns.

"Here's the good news: we can make NTDs a thing of the past," said Gayle Smith, USAID Administrator. "Working together with our partners over the past ten years, we have figured out an approach that works and freed over a hundred million people from these parasitic worms and bacterial infections that have held communities back for too long. Now is the time to double down and reach scale."

Partnership was essential to this success, including investments from the United Kingdom's Department for International Development, the Conrad Hilton Foundation, and the Queen Elizabeth Diamond Jubilee Trust. With these and other partners we will work toward a goal of treating all communities at risk for Trachoma.

Over the past 10 years, pharmaceutical companies have given more than \$11 billion worth of drugs free of charge to the countries where USAID supports mass treatment campaigns. These companies include Eisai, GlaxoSmithKline, Johnson & Johnson, Merck & Co., Merck Serono and Pfizer. Every \$1 invested by USAID in NTDs leverages \$26 in pharmaceutical donations for mass treatment campaigns reducing USAID's treatment cost to 63 cents per person, a best buy in public health.