

NEGLECTED TROPICAL DISEASES (NTD)

What You Should Know

Neglected tropical diseases affect poor and marginalized populations. Neglected tropical diseases (NTDs) are a group of 20 infectious diseases and conditions that disproportionately affect poor and marginalized populations. NTDs coexist with poverty because they thrive in places with limited access to clean water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) and limited protection from carriers and transmitters of disease.

Neglected tropical diseases threaten the health of billions of people worldwide. NTDs afflict more

than 1.6 billion of the world's poorest people and threaten the health of millions more.¹ More than 1 billion children are affected by NTDs, which can lead to blindness, deformities, and malnutrition. NTDs are responsible for over 170,000 deaths each year and cause widespread physical disability, and consequently, billions of dollars in lost productivity.²

Low-income countries suffer an immense burden of neglected tropical diseases. One hundred percent of low-income countries are affected by at least five NTDs simultaneously.

Congressional Calls to Action

Maintain strong, bipartisan support and increased funding for the NTD program at the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID).

With U.S. support, 15 countries will eliminate at least one NTD as a public health problem within five years.

Leverage U.S. funding to multiply NTD efforts.

Every dollar invested by the United States leverages \$26 in donated medicines, totaling more than \$27.6 billion in donated medicines for the delivery of 2.8 billion NTD treatments to more than 1.4 billion people since the program's inception.

Support cross-sector research and development efforts to continue improving NTD outcomes.

Build on the success of the USAID NTD programs by supporting research and development investments and greater integration with water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH); nutrition; education; One Health;³ vector control programs; and health system strengthening efforts to integrate and sustain the tremendous gains to date.

Why is this investment important?

Among children, NTD infections lead to malnutrition, cognitive impairment, stunted growth, and the inability to attend school. Studies show that NTD treatment is the single most cost-effective means of improving children's attendance and increasing capacity to learn and concentrate in school. Many people afflicted with NTDs are unable to provide for themselves or their families and are left in a cycle of poverty because of social isolation and physical ailments which make working difficult. Just 50 cents can fund a rapid impact package of medication to treat an individual for the five most common NTDs, making it a best buy in public health.

Since the USAID NTD program's inception in 2006, it has supported the distribution of 2.8 billion safe and effective treatments to more than 1.4 billion people.

The results are impressive:

- 315 million people no longer require treatment for a parasitic disease called lymphatic filariasis, or elephantiasis.
- 151 million people no longer require treatment for blinding trachoma, a bacterial infection of the eye spread through personal contact and by flies.
- 10 million people no longer require treatment for onchocerciasis, or river blindness.
- 10 countries have eliminated at least one disease.⁴

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Resources

Neglected Tropical Diseases (WHO): <https://www.who.int/news-room/questions-and-answers/item/neglected-tropical-diseases>

Neglected Tropical Diseases (CDC): <https://www.cdc.gov/globalhealth/newsroom/topics/ntds/index.html#:~:text=100%25%20of%20low%2Dincome%20countries,least%20one%20neglected%20tropical%20disease.>

NTDs in Focus (The End Fund): <https://end.org/ntds-in-focus/>

NTD Fact Sheet (USAID): <https://www.usaid.gov/global-health/health-areas/neglected-tropical-diseases>

Contributors

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Citations

1. U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. “Neglected Tropical Diseases (NTDs).” Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2018. <https://www.cdc.gov/globalhealth/newsroom/topics/ntds/index.html#:~:text=100%25%20of%20low%2Dincome%20countries,least%20one%20neglected%20tropical%20disease>
2. The End Fund. “The Impact of Neglected Tropical Diseases.” <https://end.org/ntds-in-focus/>
3. “One Health is a collaborative, multisectoral, and transdisciplinary approach—working at the local, regional, national, and global levels—with the goal of achieving optimal health outcomes recognizing the interconnection between people, animals, plants, and their shared environment.” (CDC, <https://www.cdc.gov/onehealth/index.html>)
4. U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID). “NTD Fact Sheet.” 2022. <https://www.usaid.gov/global-health/health-areas/neglected-tropical-diseases>