

An end to five diseases

Leading the fight against **neglected tropical diseases (NTDs)**



Source: The END Fund

Highlights from 2022

- Over 69 million people received mass drug administration (MDA) for NTDs
- 21,909 people received surgical treatment

Ending preventable death and disability

NTDs are a group of parasitic and bacterial infectious diseases that affect more than 1.7 billion of the world's most impoverished people, including more than a billion children. NTDs are among the most devastating groups of communicable diseases, causing severe pain and long-term disability that can result in social isolation and a cycle of poverty. Infected children can suffer malnutrition, cognitive impairment, stunted growth and the inability to attend school.

The END Fund is the only private philanthropic initiative solely dedicated to ending the most common NTDs. Incubated by the Legatum Foundation, the END Fund focuses on delivering NTD treatments to those in need while also working to permanently end five NTDs: soil transmitted helminths (STH) or intestinal parasites, schistosomiasis (SCH), lymphatic filariasis, river blindness and trachoma.

Making progress on NTD elimination

Thanks to your support, in 2022, the END Fund continued to build momentum to deliver high-quality treatment programs at scale and test innovations to accelerate an end to these five NTDs. Significant progress toward elimination of trachoma has been made in Burundi and Mauritania. In Eritrea, Guyana, Nigeria and Zimbabwe, surveys and mappings were conducted to determine whether millions of people no longer need treatment for diseases like trachoma and lymphatic filariasis. The END Fund also officially operationalized a two-year emergency program for visceral leishmaniasis – a disease where 95 percent of cases are fatal – in Ethiopia, Kenya, South Sudan, Sudan and Uganda.

The Deworming Innovation Fund (DIF) is an integrated, targeted, six-year investment to accelerate progress toward the elimination of two of the most pervasive and debilitating NTDs – STH and SCH – in Ethiopia, Zimbabwe, Kenya and Rwanda. Millions of treatments have been delivered to date through the DIF, often co-administered within nutrition and maternal/child health platforms to increase coverage. Digital microplanning approaches within electronic community health information systems are helping to improve integrated campaigns. The END Fund's advocacy efforts have supported USD 1.7 million in commitments from governments in NTD funding, paving the way toward the long-term sustainability of NTD programming in these countries.

What was achieved in 2022?

- Over 84 million NTD treatments provided by MDA to 69,014,265 people
- 21,909 surgeries performed for advanced-stage trachoma and lymphatic filariasis
- 425,554 healthcare workers trained on NTD treatment and prevention

What's planned for the coming months?

- Extend initiative to work on a sixth NTD – visceral leishmaniasis – in east Africa, seeking sustainable sources of support
- Await feedback on trachoma elimination dossier from Burundi to the WHO
- Reach five million people in Central African Republic with treatments for NTDs
- Assess the status of lymphatic filariasis and onchocerciasis in Nigeria
- Sensitize populations in Sierra Leone about lymphatic filariasis and NTDs in general
- Expand lymphatic filariasis morbidity management in Tanzania, performing another 1,000 surgeries



Marissa Leffler,
Health Program Director

UBS Optimus Foundation outlook

Overall, the END Fund continues to make impressive progress toward its ambitious elimination goals. In Eritrea, after a third and final round of treatment, transmission of trachoma has stopped. The country is now poised to move into the next phase of surveillance, which includes preparing and submitting an elimination dossier to the World Health Organization (WHO) to officially be declared free of trachoma.

In Ethiopia, the Federal Ministry of Health is now looking beyond control toward eliminating both STH and SCH as public health problems and accelerating toward interruption of transmission. This is a significant step closer to elimination of these NTDs.

In Kenya, tremendous progress has been made toward elimination of lymphatic filariasis as a public health problem and mass drug administration (MDA) has been scaled down from 23 sub-counties to only five. The program has begun collating documentation necessary for the elimination verification dossier, which is planned to be submitted to the WHO in late 2024 or early 2025. Partners successfully conducted community-based MDA in Western Kenya, treating over 4.8 million for STH and over 1.2 million for SCH, with surveillance showing a steady decline in disease prevalence.

Earlier this year, Senegal announced they have interrupted the transmission of river blindness within their borders. Meaning, treatment for this disease will no longer need to be distributed throughout the country on an annual basis. Less than two years ago, Niger became the first country in Africa to reach this milestone – one that, up until 2015, was considered scientifically impossible. It's milestones like this that reaffirm that the END Fund's goals are, indeed, achievable – perhaps even in our lifetime.

All programmatic data provided by The END Fund, Inc. The UBS Optimus Foundation is a grant-making foundation that offers UBS clients a platform to use their wealth to drive positive social and environmental change. The Foundation selects programs that improve children's health, education and protection, ones that have the potential to be transformative, scalable and sustainable as well as programs tackling environmental and climate issues.

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