

WHAT ARE NEGLECTED INFECTIOUS DISEASES?

Neglected infectious diseases (NIDs) are disabling, disfiguring, and deadly diseases impacting **more than 100 million people in the Americas**. These bacterial and parasitic infections are widespread among people in poor, rural communities, and urban slums—the majority of whom live on less than \$1.25 per day.

NIDs impair physical and cognitive development, cause adverse pregnancy outcomes **as well as stigma and social exclusion**, and limit adult productivity in the workforce. As a result, they cause billions of dollars in lost wages, all but ensuring that those at risk of infection remain trapped in a cycle of poverty and disease.

MAIN NIDS THAT AFFECT MILLIONS IN LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN

ONCHOCERCIASIS (RIVER BLINDNESS) 

LYMPHATIC FILARIASIS 

TRACHOMA 

LEPROSY 

CHAGAS DISEASE 

SCHISTOSOMIASIS 

LEISHMANIASIS 

SOIL-TRANSMITTED HELMINTHIASIS (INTESTINAL PARASITES) 

ABOUT THE INITIATIVE

WE BELIEVE IT IS POSSIBLE TO END DISEASES OF POVERTY IN LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN.

NIDs remain one of the most underfunded disease categories in global health despite their far-reaching impact and the availability of affordable treatments. We are engaging new and existing stakeholders—public and private, local and international, donors and implementers to raise the awareness and commitment necessary to finish the job of eliminating these diseases in Latin America and the Caribbean by 2015.

Armed with cost-effective solutions, the Inter-American Development Bank, the Global Network for Neglected Tropical Diseases/Sabin Vaccine Institute, and the Pan American Health Organization/WHO, together with the endemic countries are leading the LAC NID Initiative, a comprehensive regional agenda to address the treatment gap and implement other health measures for the benefit of all children and adults affected by these terrible diseases.

www.neglecteddiseases.net
neglecteddiseases@iadb.org

Partners:

GLOBAL NETWORK
NEGLECTED TROPICAL DISEASES 

The Global Network for Neglected Tropical Diseases
www.globalnetwork.org

 IDB

Inter-American Development Bank
www.iadb.org/health

 Pan American Health Organization
Regional Office of the World Health Organization

Pan American Health Organization
www.paho.org

 SABIN
VACCINE INSTITUTE

Sabin Vaccine Institute
www.sabin.org

FIGHTING NEGLECTED INFECTIOUS DISEASES BREAKING THE CYCLE OF POVERTY

GLOBAL NETWORK
NEGLECTED TROPICAL DISEASES 

 IDB

 Pan American Health Organization
Regional Office of the World Health Organization

 SABIN
VACCINE INSTITUTE

A PERSISTENT PROBLEM, SOLUTIONS WITHIN REACH

Latin America and the Caribbean is the region closest to achieving the elimination of many NIDs. The region has seen unprecedented success in reducing transmission of NIDs including onchocerciasis and trachoma. The work, however, is not over; **at least 100 million people are infected with NIDs in Latin America and the Caribbean.** A unique opportunity exists to help a generation break the cycle of poverty and win the fight against NIDs.

NIDs may be safely, simply and inexpensively treated; most of the medicines needed to treat them are donated by pharmaceutical companies. With coordinated efforts, the control and elimination of the most common NIDs will have an enormous impact on the health and potential of families and communities.

HELPING CHILDREN STAY IN SCHOOL

Treatment for intestinal worm infections in children promotes nutrition, improves mental and physical development, therefore reducing absenteeism in primary school and leading to higher wages later in life.

IMPROVING MATERNAL AND INFANT HEALTH

Mothers infected with NIDs often suffer from anemia and malnutrition. Treating women for these diseases contributes to safer pregnancies, improved birth outcomes, and healthier babies.

SUPPORTING ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

NIDs contribute globally to as many as 4.9 million years of healthy life lost, leading to billions of dollars in lost wages. Interventions to combat NIDs can break this cycle of poverty and disease, contribute to higher wages, and support economic growth and development in Latin America and the Caribbean.

OUR WORK IN THE REGION

The NID Initiative for Latin America and the Caribbean aims at combating these diseases in the region by developing a comprehensive approach. Leveraging IDB's financial facilities and experience in project implementation, PAHO's technical assistance and leadership in health, and the Global Network's advocacy, policy and fundraising capabilities, we are supporting expanded efforts within the region to address the current gap for children and adults affected by NIDs.

We are developing cost-effective interventions and projects that combine prevention, treatment, community mobilization and education, and improvements in housing, sanitation and water supply.

BRAZIL. FIGHTING NIDs IN URBAN SETTINGS

Recife and 2 neighboring cities, the 4th largest metropolitan zone in Brazil, is one area that suffers from considerable inequality with pockets of extreme deprivation where transmission of lymphatic filariasis (LF) and other NIDs continue. The project aims to build on the political will towards national LF elimination to integrate activities for the control of NIDs, such as mass drug administration for both Soil-Transmitted Helminthiasis (STH) and filariasis and selective treatment of people with schistosomiasis and leprosy. These interventions will be strengthened through the involvement of the community and integration with the education sector. 154,000 inhabitants will benefit directly from this project.

COLOMBIA. COMBATING BLINDING TRACHOMA

After the discovery of a previously unknown focus of blinding trachoma in an indigenous community in an isolated area of southern Colombia, the Ministry of Health of Colombia worked with PAHO to plan and design a trachoma survey together with a survey for STH in children in 4 departments to understand the scope of the problem and prepare interventions to prevent blindness and improve the health of the areas' indigenous peoples. This is part of a new national initiative of Colombia to combat the NIDs, supported by the Initiative.

GUATEMALA. PROTECTING HEALTH THROUGH EDUCATION

Guatemala's priorities with regard to NIDs include controlling STH, trachoma, leishmaniasis, and eliminating Chagas disease and Onchocerciasis. The project focuses on synergies between health, housing improvements and water and sanitation. In addition, the strategy includes innovative community health education, offering peer education to target audiences and an incentive-driven approach. This approach is one called "Community Driven Projects" where after an education

campaign, community members decide on an incentive financed by the project which includes housing improvements like cement floors or latrines. Over one million people will benefit from this activities.

GUYANA. IMPROVING SANITARY CONDITIONS TO TACKLE NID

LF and STH are known to be public health problems in Guyana and are amenable to control both by mass drug administration and improvements in water and sanitation. Guyana's capital city, Georgetown, has an inadequate surface-water drainage system that makes it prone to severe and prolonged flooding during the rainy season, which causes populations of the Culex mosquito – a transmitter for LF – to increase. The IDB has launched a program to improve the sanitary conditions in Georgetown through the rehabilitation of the city's sewerage and surface drainage system, adding a health component to this in order to eliminate LF and prevent transmission of STH. Over 310,000 people will benefit from this activities.

HAITI. WORKING FOR BETTER WATER AND SANITATION SERVICES

LF and STH are both present in Haiti and, due to the devastating impact of the 2010 earthquake on the water and sanitation infrastructure, achievements made in controlling some NIDs in recent years have been set back considerably. In response, the IDB is implementing three projects that integrate prevention campaigns and preventive treatments with water and sanitation improvements: one in the capital, one in the neighboring department of Artibonite and a third in five intermediate-sized cities. Over 900,000 people will benefit from these activities, including 272,000 children and pregnant women.

HONDURAS AND SURINAME. DEVELOPMENT OF INTEGRATED PLANS OF ACTION

With support from the Initiative, these countries recently developed their first national integrated Plans of Action for NIDs, the first in the Region. Both countries conducted workshops and put together national committees with representatives from different programs within their respective Ministries of Health and key stakeholders. Suriname's plan covers 7 NIDs (such as schistosomiasis and STH) and tuberculosis, while Honduras's plan covers 9 NIDs including Chagas disease, leprosy, rabies transmitted by dogs, leptospirosis and taeniasis/cysticercosis among others.

MEXICO. INTEGRATION TO ACHIEVE EFFECTIVENESS

In Chiapas, Mexico, a project implemented by the State of Chiapas and supported by the FEMSA foundation focuses on integrated activities to fight NIDs and capacity building within the health system. The project will treat more than 132,000 people at risk for NIDs in target areas, and the entire population of Chiapas — more than 4 million people — will benefit indirectly from reduced risk of infections due to improved water and sanitation services and other control activities.