

Infectious Diseases

USAID Global Health

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Infectious diseases disproportionately impact developing nations. USAID works with countries to halt these treatable, sometimes preventable, diseases through assistance that supports improved delivery of a full range of medical services.

Tuberculosis (TB). One-third of the world's population is infected with TB, with about 80 percent of all cases concentrated in 22 countries. TB kills about 5,000 people daily and between 2 million and 3 million people annually, 98 percent of whom live in the developing world. One out of every three HIV/AIDS patients has TB. Since

2002, the United States has treated 10 million people with this disease through programs that expand and ensure basic treatment, make lower-cost drugs available, address multidrug resistance, and support research for new TB drugs. Research shows that our efforts are causing TB rates to fall.

Malaria causes 1 million to 3 million deaths annually, or one death every 30 seconds. More than half of the cases and 80 percent of the deaths occur in sub-Saharan Africa. USAID, the lead agency in the President's Malaria Initiative, is targeting treatment for the most vulnerable populations – pregnant women and children under age 5. The five-year, \$1.2 billion effort is working to reduce malaria-related deaths by 50 percent in 15 African countries through interventions that include spraying insecticides on home walls; distributing insecticide-treated nets to protect against malaria-carrying mosquitoes; and providing lifesaving drugs and preventive care for pregnant women. More than 25 million people have benefited.

On Zanzibar, the percentage of children who tested positive for malaria has dropped from 22 percent in 2005 to less than 1 percent, following the distribution of long-lasting nets and indoor spraying. In Malawi, where coverage with insecticide-treated nets has increased rapidly over the past several years, a 2007 survey in six districts showed a 43 percent decline in just two years in severe anemia among children aged 30 months to 6 years.

Neglected Tropical Diseases (NTDs) have disabled more than 1 billion people, mostly in the developing world, contributing to childhood malnutrition and reduced mobility, and often

leading to blindness and disfigurement. Five of the most virulent NTDs – lymphatic filariasis, schistosomiasis, trachoma, onchocerciasis, and soil-transmitted helminthes – can be controlled and even eliminated through targeted mass drug administration. The United States launched one of the first global efforts to integrate existing disease-specific treatment programs to expand care for millions of the world's poorest. In its first full year, USAID distributed more than 36 million treatments to more than 14 million people in four countries in Africa.

The Presidential Initiative for NTD Control, established in February 2008, increases the U.S. financial commitment to fighting these diseases from \$15 million in 2008 to \$350 million over five years. This will treat 300 million people in Latin America and the Caribbean, Asia, and Africa, and the number of countries receiving aid will rise from 10 in 2008 to about 30 in 2013.

The speed with which **emerging pandemic threats** can spread presents enormous public health, economic, and development concerns. Launched in 2005, USAID's **avian and pandemic influenza preparedness and response program** has increased the capacity of countries to limit the spread of H5N1 and its ability to develop into a human influenza pandemic. This program served as a platform for USAID's response to **2009 H1N1 influenza** outbreaks, when pandemic response plans were activated, existing public outreach messages were rapidly adapted and disseminated, and commodities were quickly deployed to affected areas from existing stockpiles via pre-established distribution channels. USAID is working with partners to implement longer-term interventions to mitigate the impact of the H1N1 influenza pandemic.

Both the H5N1 and H1N1 viruses highlight the risks certain newly emergent diseases of animal origin can pose to human health. USAID's **Emerging Pandemic Threats (EPT) program** represents a comprehensive approach to provide early warning about such diseases and respond before they have spread globally. The program involves early detection of dangerous pathogens, support for appropriate laboratory capacity to facilitate better surveillance, launch of timely and effective outbreak response, strengthening of national and local response capacities, and promotion of public awareness to reduce disease transmission.

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Web site

http://www.usaid.gov/our_work/global_health/id/index.html

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