

Mozambique Work Plan

FY 2021

Program Year 3

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ACT | EAST PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The U.S. Agency for International Development Act to End Neglected Tropical Diseases (NTDs) | East Program supports national NTD programs in reaching World Health Organization goals for NTD control and elimination through proven, cost-effective public health interventions. The Act to End NTDs | East (Act | East) Program also provides critical support to countries on their journey to self-reliance, helping them create sustainable programming for NTD control within robust and resilient health systems. The Act | East Program is being implemented by a consortium of partners, led by RTI International and including The Carter Center; Fred Hollows Foundation; IMA World Health; Light for the World; Results for Development; Save the Children; Sightsavers; and Women Influencing Health, Education, and Rule of Law (WI-HER).

In Mozambique, Act | East Program activities are implemented by RTI International.

COVID-19 PANDEMIC IMPACT ON ACT TO END NTDs | EAST (ACT | EAST) ACTIVITIES AND WORK PLANS

Act | East recognizes the impact that the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic has had on all programs. On April 1, 2020, the World Health Organization (WHO) issued interim guidance to neglected tropical disease (NTD) programs recommending that almost all in-person activities be postponed until further notice. With the support of USAID, Act | East stopped all activities that matched the criteria outlined in WHO's interim guidance.

On July 27, 2020, WHO issued further interim guidance on assessing whether NTD activities could restart safely. Alongside this, Act | East, in collaboration with Act | West and USAID, developed activity restart guidance and resource documents to support each country in safely implementing activities while adapting to the COVID-19 challenge and adhering to global guidance.

The timeline to restart activities will be context-specific, varying by country, region, and activity, and is subject to changes in COVID-19 dynamics. For the sake of brevity, all amendments to activity design to account for COVID-19 have not been listed in each country's work plans.

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FY21 Learning Activities are marked with this icon throughout the narrative.

ACRONYMS LIST

ASCEND	Accelerating Sustainable Control and Elimination of NTDs
CNTD	Centre for Neglected Tropical Diseases (at Liverpool School of Tropical Medicine)
COP	Chief of Party
COVID	coronavirus disease 2019
DFID	UK Department for International Development
DSA	Disease-specific assessment
FY	Fiscal Year
HMIS	Health Management Information System
HSS	Health Systems Strengthening
INGO	International NGO
INS	<i>Instituto Nacional de Saúde</i> (National Institute of Health)
IR	Intermediate Result
IU	Implementing Unit
LF	Lymphatic filariasis
MDA	Mass drug administration
MISAU	<i>Ministério de Saúde</i> (Ministry of Health)
NGO	Nongovernmental Organization
NTD	Neglected Tropical Disease
OV	Onchocerciasis
PC	Preventive Chemotherapy
Q	Quarter
REMO	Rapid epidemiological mapping of OV
SAFE	Surgery–Antibiotics–Facial cleanliness–Environmental improvements
SCH	Schistosomiasis
STH	Soil-transmitted Helminths
TAS	Transmission Assessment Survey
TF	Trachomatous Inflammation–Follicular
TIS	Trachoma Impact Survey
TSS	Trachoma Surveillance Survey
TT	Trachomatous trichiasis
USAID	U.S. Agency for International Development
WASH	Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene
WHO	World Health Organization

NARRATIVE

1. NATIONAL NTD PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Mozambique is divided into 161 districts¹ across 11 provinces, with an estimated 2021 population of 30 million (projected from 2017 census). Currently, 32 districts are endemic for trachoma, 96 for lymphatic filariasis (LF), 159 for schistosomiasis (SCH), and 153 for soil-transmitted helminths (STHs). Mapping has been completed for all five NTDs that are treatable through preventive chemotherapy (PC), although some uncertainty remains about the hypoendemic status of onchocerciasis (OV) in some districts.

Under the coordination of the National Directorate of Public Health, each province is responsible for planning and coordinating NTD activities in each implementing unit (IU). The provincial representatives coordinate activities at the provincial level, act as an intermediary body between the district and national levels, and report to both provincial and national bodies.

At the central level, the *Ministério de Saúde* (Ministry of Health [MISAU]) is organized into two arms: (1) the National Directorate of Public Health, under which the National NTD Program operates; and (2) the National Directorate of Medical Assistance, within which is the Ophthalmology Department. Under both of these arms, the provincial and district directorates of health operate throughout the country. The National NTD Program and the Ophthalmology Department collaborate closely. The National NTD Program maintains responsibility for managing mass drug administration (MDA) campaigns for trachoma, LF, SCH, and STH, and the Ophthalmology Department manages trichiasis surgeries. Disease-specific assessments (DSAs) for all NTDs are led by the National NTD Program, except for trachoma impact surveys (TISs), trachoma surveillance surveys (TSSs), and trichomatous trichiasis (TT)-only surveys, which are jointly managed between the two arms. In 2019, MISAU restructured, combining the National NTD Program with the National Non-Communicable Disease Program, under the leadership of the current NTD Coordinator. The individual previously in charge of monitoring and evaluation (M&E) of the NTD program is now in charge of vector-borne diseases, and a secondment for Accelerating Sustainable Control and Elimination of NTDs (ASCEND) was recruited in 2020 to serve as Program Manager for PC NTDs. Any operational research is typically handled by the *Instituto Nacional de Saúde* (National Institute of Health [INS]), which also sits in MISAU at the national level.

Other NTD Partners

The National NTD Program in Mozambique is fortunate to have highly committed partners collaborating with each other and with MISAU to provide the best possible support. The consortium of partners draws on organizations funded by the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) and the UK Department for International Development (DFID), which include government units, national nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), international NGOs (INGOs), and private donors.

Starting in late 2019, the three-year, DFID-funded ASCEND program, awarded to Crown Agents, began supporting activities previously covered by other DFID-funded initiatives. The program focuses on PC diseases (OV, trachoma, SCH, and LF); and an additional disease, visceral leishmaniasis, that requires innovative and intensified disease management. In Mozambique, the ASCEND program plans to support LF and SCH MDA and LF DSAs. In addition, the ASCEND program also plans to address the remaining TT

¹ At the start of ENVISION support in fiscal year 2013 (FY13), Mozambique was composed of 142 districts. Redistricting in the provinces of Maputo, Manica, Nampula, Tete, and Zambézia in 2015 and further redistricting in Gaza province in 2019 resulted in the current demarcation of 161 districts.

surgery gap, building on the support provided by the Queen Elizabeth Diamond Jubilee Trust (The Trust) Trachoma Initiative, of which RTI International was the coordinating partner from 2014 to 2019. The Trust was a five-year project managed by Sightsavers UK through the International Coalition for Trachoma Control. The implementing partners (Light for the World and Sightsavers) worked closely with MISAU at the provincial and district levels and with RTI at the country level. The project focused on building capacity for conducting trichiasis surgical outreach and supported provinces in transitioning their services back to the general health system as TT elimination targets were achieved.


The World Health Organization's (WHO's) Mozambique country office appointed a new NTD Focal Point in late 2019. This individual is also responsible for WHO's malaria activities. She actively participates in NTD technical and coordination meetings organized by MISAU and partners. Act | East continues to encourage regular formal and informal meetings to help strengthen relationships between the National NTD Program, implementing partners, and WHO.

The relationships between the National NTD Program and the water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) sector are expected to continue to grow as partners—including WaterAid, World Vision, the United Nations Children's Fund, and Save the Children—become increasingly interested in maximizing the impact of WASH activities on NTD control and prevention. The National NTD Program invites the Ministry of Public Works, Housing, and Water Resources to all coordination meetings and the National Trachoma Elimination Dossier Task Force includes focal points responsible for hygiene and sanitation. The National NTD Program is also in the process of mapping NGOs implementing water and sanitation activities throughout the country to better coordinate efforts. Act | East will continue working on community strategies to address NTDs and WASH and advocating for the importance of water and sanitation to help reduce the prevalence of NTDs in Mozambique. Through these partnerships, Act | East will be able to encourage support for the "F" and "E" components of the trachoma elimination SAFE strategy (Surgery–Antibiotics–Facial cleanliness–Environmental improvements).

2. IR1 PLANNED ACTIVITIES: LF, TRACHOMA, OV

Trachoma

In FY21, Act | East will continue to support the national trachoma program through MDA, surveys, and dossier development. Act | East will also continue to support the central MISAU in national-level coordination of activities. Specific activities in support of trachoma elimination in Mozambique are listed below.

-  **Trachoma re-MDA:** Five districts (Ilha de Mozambique; Mossuril, Nacala-a-velha, Pebane, and Inhassunge) will require re-MDA in FY21. The re-MDA will address issues uncovered during the DSA outcome investigation, by enhancing supportive supervision, ensuring directly observed treatment, comparing sub-district level treatment data to targets during the MDA and then adjusting distribution posts in real-time. After the re-MDA, Act | East will use the post-MDA provincial review meetings as a learning activity to answer the learning question of whether the re-MDA was successful. This after-action review will include a discussion about whether targets were met, what went well in the re-MDA, and what could be improved. Act | East will document the primary lessons learned in an after-action review report and the semiannual report. Lessons learned will be applied to adjusting the next year's re-MDA strategy, should additional MDA be needed. Act | East will support all components of MDA including district-level training; social mobilization; drug transportation and management, including

reverse supply chain activities after MDA; and drug distribution to approximately 733,138 beneficiaries. Although Act | East anticipates success in the other 17 districts that are planning impact surveys, an empirical review of TIS pass rates from Mozambique and other countries showed that even after completion of the recommended number of rounds with sufficient coverage, some districts' prevalence rates may remain above 5%. Therefore, Act | East has set aside a contingency budget in the program-level work plan to cover MDA in an estimated five additional districts. Funds for investigation into possible TIS and TSS failures have also been allocated. For this investigation, Act | East will analyze subdistrict-level MDA data and visit the districts in question, if needed.

- **Trachoma impact and surveillance surveys:** Act | East will support TIS in 17 districts (21 evaluation units) in Q1 or Q3 of FY21 and TSS in 6 districts (7 evaluation units) in Q1 or Q3 of FY21. Timing of the surveys will depend on the evolving COVID-19 pandemic and the rainy season. For both the impact and surveillance surveys, field teams will assess children between aged 1 and 9 years for prevalence of TF and trachomatous inflammation–intense, and people aged 15 years and older for prevalence of TT, scarring trachoma, corneal opacity, and visual impairment. They will use WHO's simplified trachoma grading system to identify and register trachoma cases, and WHO's Tropical Data system for data collection. It is important to note that TIS in 10 districts (6 EUs) and TSS in 2 districts (1 EU) of Cabo Delgado Province were targeted in FY20, but because of COVID-19, ongoing insecurity in the province, and budget constraints, these surveys are not included in the FY21 work plan. The Government of Mozambique is optimistic that the security situation will improve by Q3 of FY21, in which case, an addendum to this work plan may be submitted to conduct TIS and TSS in the province, should funding be available.
- **Training for TIS/TSS:** To prepare for the surveys targeted in FY21, Act | East will train approximately 18 graders and 18 recorders on the Tropical Data protocol, clinical grading, and electronic data capture. This will be a refresher training for the returning graders and many of the recorders.
- **Supervision of TIS/TSS:** MISAU has one certified master grader (Head of the National Department), four certified grader trainers (NTD Coordinator, two ophthalmologists, and one ophthalmic technician), and three certified recorder trainers (two Act | East Mozambique staff and one MISAU staff). They will lead and supervise TIS trainings and field implementation, noting that some may only be able to serve as trainers and not supervisors, due to the extensive time commitment involved with data collection. A MISAU grader supervisor and an Act | East recorder/logistics supervisor will oversee each field team. In total, there will be 2 RTI supervisors and 3 MISAU supervisors needed to complete the TIS and 1 RTI supervisor and 2 MISAU supervisors for the TSS. They will be selected from the cohort of certified trainers.
- **Quarterly trachoma elimination dossier:** In FY16, RTI began supporting MISAU to complete the data collection portion of the trachoma dossier. RTI maintains the "A" and "S" SAFE components of the dossier and works closely with MISAU and the provinces to collate as much information as possible on "F" and "E" activities. In the final quarter of FY19 (July–September 2019), Act | East led an elimination dossier workshop to review progress with MISAU and other trachoma stakeholders. The trachoma elimination dossier working group reviewed all trachoma data and completed a first draft of the dossier narrative. In FY20, Act | East supported quarterly dossier review sessions, bringing together WHO, the MISAU NTD team, and partners involved in trachoma elimination efforts to jointly review the dossier drafts, harmonize information, and address any challenges. WHO Mozambique is also engaged and keen to see this process move

forward. These quarterly review meetings will continue in FY21, including financial and technical support for one in-person workshop to review the complete draft. The remaining three meetings will be shorter and held at no-cost, either virtually or combined with another planned meeting, such as the NTD Steering Committee Meeting.

Lymphatic Filariasis

As aforementioned, the ASCEND program is now supporting LF MDA and DSAs, and at MISAU's request, Act | East will continue to provide technical support as needed.

LF elimination dossier introductory meeting: Act | East will also fund and provide technical assistance for a one-day LF Elimination Dossier meeting with the goal of establishing a task force, similar to that established for trachoma, sensitizing the stakeholders about the dossier template, and reviewing data currently compiled in the Integrated NTD Database. Participants will include representatives from MISAU, Act | East, WHO, ASCEND, and other LF stakeholders. The Act | East chief of party (COP) will co-facilitate the meeting with the National NTD Coordinator after adapting the standardized Act | East LF elimination dossier introductory meeting agenda and PowerPoint to reflect Mozambique's context.

Onchocerciasis

Act | East will continue to assist in coordinating stakeholders who are interested in assessing OV endemicity in Mozambique. USAID does not currently fund OV activities in Mozambique.

3. SUSTAINABILITY STRATEGY ACTIVITIES (IR2 AND IR3)

Data Security and Management

Mozambique's health management information system (HMIS) includes data on the number of cases of TF found, cases of TT found, cases of TT operated on, and indicators on LF morbidity and leprosy. Act | East will fund a two-day HMIS workshop in Maputo. During the workshop, participants, including central level NTD staff, will receive an orientation on the HMIS platform and have an opportunity to identify and decide on additional NTD indicators to include in the system. Experienced technicians from the *Departamento de Informação para a Saúde* (Department of Health Information [DIS]) will facilitate the workshop. The National NTD Program will aim to ensure that NTD data are integrated and regularly monitored in the HMIS platform. During all technical meetings, the NTD M&E focal point of the DIS will present on the level of completion, as well as the constraints encountered.

Drug Management

In FY21, Act | East will continue to support routine supply chain management activities for the trachoma MDA planned in five districts. The assistance will include providing transportation, supervision, and reverse supply chain oversight. In addition, in FY21 only, Act | East plans to cover the importation fees for the donated Zithromax.

Although Act | East does not anticipate additional MDA in FY22, the program will continue supporting MISAU to complete the Trachoma Elimination Monitoring Form.

Mainstreaming and Health Systems Strengthening (HSS) Activities (IR2)

In FY21, Act | East will support a steering committee meeting, the LF elimination dossier introductory meeting and HMIS activities described above.

APPENDIX 1. MAPS

