

Southeast Asia Work Plan Bangladesh

FY 2022

Program Year 4

October 2021–September 2022



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ACT | EAST PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) Act to End Neglected Tropical Diseases (NTDs) | East Program (Act | East) supports national NTD programs in reaching World Health Organization (WHO) goals for NTD control and elimination through proven, cost-effective public health interventions. The 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 (R4D); Save the Children; Sightsavers; and Women Influencing Health, Education, and Rule of Law (WI-HER).

In Bangladesh, Act | East program activities are implemented by RTI International.

COVID-19 PANDEMIC IMPACT ON ACT | EAST ACTIVITIES AND WORK PLANS

The coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic continues to impact neglected tropical disease (NTD) programs. On April 1, 2020, the World Health Organization (WHO) issued guidance to 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.

On July 27, 2020, WHO issued further guidance on assessing whether NTD activities could restart safely. Act | East, in collaboration with Act | West and the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), developed activity restart guidance and resource documents to support each country to adapt activities appropriately.

Decisions on all supported activities continue to be made in close coordination with ministries of health and are context-specific, varying by country, region, and activity type, and are subject to changes in COVID-19 dynamics. Act | East continues to provide regular updates to USAID on the plans for specific activities through the submission of monthly updates.

Unless noted, work plans for fiscal year 2022 assume a full year of activities and are written with the best information available at the time of submission. Nevertheless, the situation may change in some countries and will result in adjustments to work plans. Act | East will continue to communicate with USAID to discuss these changes as the situation evolves.

ACRONYMS LIST

Act East	Act to End Neglected Tropical Diseases East
COVID-19	Coronavirus Disease 2019
DGHS	Directorate General of Health Services
DIP	Direct Inspection Protocol
FY	Fiscal Year
LF	Lymphatic Filariasis
MDA	Mass Drug Administration
MOHFW	Ministry of Health and Family Welfare
NTD	Neglected Tropical Disease
STH	Soil-Transmitted Helminths
TAS	Transmission Assessment Survey

BANGLADESH

1. NATIONAL NTD PROGRAM OVERVIEW AND SUPPORT

Bangladesh is divided into 8 divisions and 64 districts, with an estimated population of 173 million people. The districts are further divided into subdistricts (upazilas), clusters of villages (unions), and villages (mouzas). The National Filariasis Elimination Programme, Soil-Transmitted Helminthiasis (STH) Control Programme, and Little Doctor Programme are based in the Disease Control Unit of the Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS), Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MOHFW), and are responsible for the overall design and management of national efforts to respond to lymphatic filariasis (LF) and STH. The national program works with the MOHFW's research unit, drug control and logistics departments, and the national health database to coordinate neglected tropical disease (NTD) programming in Bangladesh.

Bangladesh is currently under post-MDA LF surveillance for its 19 endemic districts and will implement a final Transmission Assessment Survey (TAS)³ in one district, Rangpur, targeted in late calendar year 2021. It aims to be validated for the elimination of LF as public health problem in 2022.

Approximately 33.3 million people in Bangladesh were considered at risk of LF caused by *Wuchereria bancrofti* and transmitted by *Culex quinquefasciatus* from baseline mapping. Nineteen districts were determined to be endemic based on historical and/or empirical evidence, including the presence of people affected with clinical disease and/or high prevalence of microfilaremia observed in epidemiological surveys. By 2016, all 19 districts had completed at least five rounds of mass drug administration (MDA) with albendazole and diethylcarbamazine and had passed TAS1 and met the criteria for stopping MDA. By the end of 2018, 18 of these 19 districts had passed TAS3.

Rangpur District did not pass TAS1 in 2014, implemented two additional rounds of MDA, and passed TAS1 in November 2016 and TAS2 in October 2018. The final survey, TAS3, will be funded and implemented by MOHFW once schools have reopened in the country. Rangpur, which is divided into two evaluation units, was eligible to conduct TAS3 in November 2020, but the survey has been delayed due to the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic.

2. ACT | EAST FY22 ACTIVITIES

LF DIP Survey Final Report

In fiscal year (FY)21, the LF Elimination Programme with implemented a Direct Inspection Protocol (DIP) survey of health facilities providing lymphedema management and hydrocele surgeries with Act | East support. The Programme began implementing the DIP survey of health facilities with local research organization Centre for Injury Prevention and Research Bangladesh in FY21. Because of numerous COVID-19 delays, data collection and analysis has extended into FY22.

LF Dossier Development Support

Act | East will support regional consultant Dr. Ramaiah Kapa to (1) review all national data, (2) incorporate new morbidity management and disability prevention and DIP survey data, and (3) draft a narrative section on the DIP activity.

National Program Technical Support

Act | East will continue supporting a consultancy for technical and project management assistance to the national program in FY22, including coordination of LF dossier development and coordination of Act | East contributions to celebrate the expected 2022 validation of LF elimination, by Mr. ASM Sultan Mahmood.

Celebration of LF Elimination Validation

The National Filariasis Elimination Programme will coordinate a one-day event that acknowledges the validation milestone and serves as an advocacy opportunity for the program to highlight the continued commitment to further integration of LF services that will be necessary to sustain a status of validation. Attendees will include high-level officials and local press.