



## The Campaign to “End the Neglect 2020”

*Investing in Neglected Tropical Disease Control: A Best Buy in Global Health*

### GOAL

The new global “End the Neglect 2020” campaign, launched with a \$34 million investment from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, aims to control and even eliminate some of the most debilitating, disfiguring and deadly neglected tropical diseases (NTDs) by 2020, significantly reducing the suffering of more than 1.4 billion people worldwide who live on less than \$1.25 per day. This investment will catalyze the formation of a global alliance, harnessing the collective experience of governments and international organizations with decades of on-the-ground experience.

### BACKGROUND

Neglected tropical diseases (NTDs) are a group of 13 parasitic and bacterial infections that are the most common afflictions of the world’s poorest people. Spread by mechanisms as simple as a bite of an infected fly or contact with contaminated water, they blind, disable, disfigure and stigmatize their victims, trapping them in an unending cycle of poverty.

There are highly cost-effective, proven interventions for the seven most common NTDs that represent 90% of the global NTD burden. **For approximately 50 cents per person per year, we can treat these diseases – eliminating the burden of NTDs, particularly in these challenging economic times, is a “best buy” in public health.** In Africa, a mere \$200 million per year would provide treatment to people suffering from NTDs. In Asia, the costs of deworming are as low as \$0.03-\$0.12 per person per year. Overall, the economic rates of return on investments in NTD control are estimated at 15-30%.

### ELIMINATING THE BURDEN OF NTDs IS THE MOST EFFECTIVE WAY TO REDUCE GLOBAL POVERTY

Research has shown that eliminating the burden of NTDs could lift millions out of poverty by:

**Ensuring children stay in school to learn and prosper.** NTDs infect over 400 million school-aged children throughout the developing world. Treating their infections is the single most cost-effective way to boost school attendance. Controlling intestinal worms alone will help to avoid 16 million cases of mental retardation and 200 million years of lost primary schooling.

**Strengthening worker productivity.** Global NTD control can contribute hundreds of billions of dollars to developing economies by enabling increased worker productivity. Controlling hookworm alone could improve future wage earnings by an extraordinary 43% in the developing world. In Kenya, deworming could raise per capita earning by 30%, and it is estimated that in India lymphatic filariasis causes a \$1.5 billion USD loss in gross national product each year.

**Improving maternal and child health.** Treating NTDs greatly reduces the prevalence of anemia and malnutrition, which cause 35% of the global disease burden in children under five. For less than a 10% add-on cost, combining NTD treatment with current malaria control efforts significantly reduces anemia-caused morbidity and mortality.

### THE BILL AND MELINDA GATES FOUNDATION ANNOUNCES \$34 MILLION CHALLENGE GRANT TO CATALYZE INVESTMENTS IN FIGHTING NTDs

#### Global Network for Neglected Tropical Diseases Launches “End the Neglect 2020” Campaign

- The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation recognizes the remarkable return on investment of NTD control, and invites the private sector, the global health community, and world leaders to join them in recognizing this significant opportunity to improve the lives of the world’s poorest people.





- The Global Network is launching the “End the Neglect 2020” campaign to raise public awareness and support for making smart and cost-effective investments to reduce the burden of the most devastating and deadly NTDs by 2020.
- An investment in NTD control is truly a “best buy” in public health. For approximately 50 cents per person per year, we can effectively and efficiently treat seven of the most common NTDs which represent 90% of the total NTD disease burden.
- For corporations, private donors and donor nations, there is little else during this global economic crisis that provides such a significant opportunity for economic growth, while also reducing suffering and saving lives.
- A generous investment could help control NTDs across an entire country.
  - In Haiti, for less than 0.40 per person per year, mass drug administration combined with the distribution of fortified salt products can dramatically reduce the prevalence of lymphatic filariasis and soil-transmitted helminths, thus improving the overall public health.
  - In Liberia, six NTDs could be controlled for \$720,000 a year and the heavy burden eliminated in five years for \$3.6 million – reaching 2.4 million people.
  - In Rwanda last year, more than 5 million children and women were treated for NTDs, all for less than \$1 million.

**INVESTMENTS IN NTD CONTROL ARE REAPING SIGNIFICANT DIVIDENDS, BUT MUCH WORK REMAINS.**

**Lymphatic Filariasis (elephantiasis)** has been successfully controlled in China, Thailand, Sri Lanka, Suriname, Solomon Islands, Trinidad and Tobago, Egypt, Costa Rica and Korea. In 2007 alone, 546 million people around the world were treated to prevent transmission of LF.

**Onchocerciasis (river blindness)** has been eliminated as a public health problem in 10 West African countries, to the benefit of about 60 million people. The Onchocerciasis Elimination Program in the Americas (OEPA) is on the verge of eliminating onchocerciasis throughout the Americas. Control of the disease in West Africa has opened up 25 million hectares of fertile land for agricultural production, land which was previously deserted out of fear of the disease. This land can feed 17 million people annually by applying traditional cultivation methods.

**Trachoma** prevalence globally has been reduced from 149 million cases in 1997 to 60 million cases in 2008.

**THE SABIN AND GLOBAL NETWORK FOR NTDs ADVANTAGE**

- For more than 15 years, the renowned Sabin Vaccine Institute, a 501c3 non-profit organization, has been a leader in finding solutions to improve the health and save the lives of millions of people across the globe. In 2006, it launched the Global Network for Neglected Tropical Diseases at the Clinton Global Initiative Annual Meeting to begin an aggressive effort to end the neglect of and suffering due to NTDs.
- The Global Network is a first-of-its kind alliance of international organizations committed to ending global suffering and death from NTDs by raising their profile and leveraging international resources for the world’s 1.4 billion people living on less than \$1.25 per day. Since our launch, we have been operating efficiently to ensure that investments go first and foremost to treating the people who suffer. With more than one billion people receiving treatments to date, our costs remain low because we use a unique, community-directed approach which in turn develops a sustainable health system led by trusted members of a community.

