



**Unlimit
Health.**
ENDING PARASITIC DISEASE

Ending parasitic disease, together

Strategy 2023-2028



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Front cover

Image by: Unlimit Health/William Mgobela

**We are Unlimit Health.
We work to end parasitic
disease in affected
communities globally.
Having been established
two decades ago as
the Schistosomiasis
Control Initiative within
Imperial College London,
before setting out as an
independent organisation,
SCI Foundation, we have
been on a journey to
align our vision and our
strategy with the needs
and requirements of our
partners – ministries of
health, and communities
affected by parasitic
infections.**

This document sets out our new vision, mission, goals and objectives, and the values and approaches that will allow us to deliver this ambition. It was developed collaboratively, taking on board the input of our partners and allies, and analysing the rapidly changing context in which we operate.

Over the next five years, we will continue to work closely with affected countries, sharing evidence and expertise to eliminate preventable infections and to achieve our purpose: to support people to live healthy lives, free from limiting disease.

**New vision
New name
New strategy**



Strategy at a glance

Image by: Unlimit Health/William Mgobela

Targets, progress & challenges

The ambition of ending Neglected Tropical Diseases (NTDs) and achieving Universal Health Coverage by 2030.

Vision

Resilient systems that sustain good health, so everyone everywhere can reach their full potential.

Mission

We share evidence and expertise to end preventable parasitic infections in affected communities.

Values

Equitable

Transparent

Inclusive



Strategic goals

Accelerate programmatic actions



Cross-Cutting approaches and system strengthening



Country ownership and leadership



Transitional objectives

Develop a 'precision public health for parasitic infections' technical approach

Develop a health system strengthening technical approach

Enablers to reaching our goals

Evidence-based disease elimination support

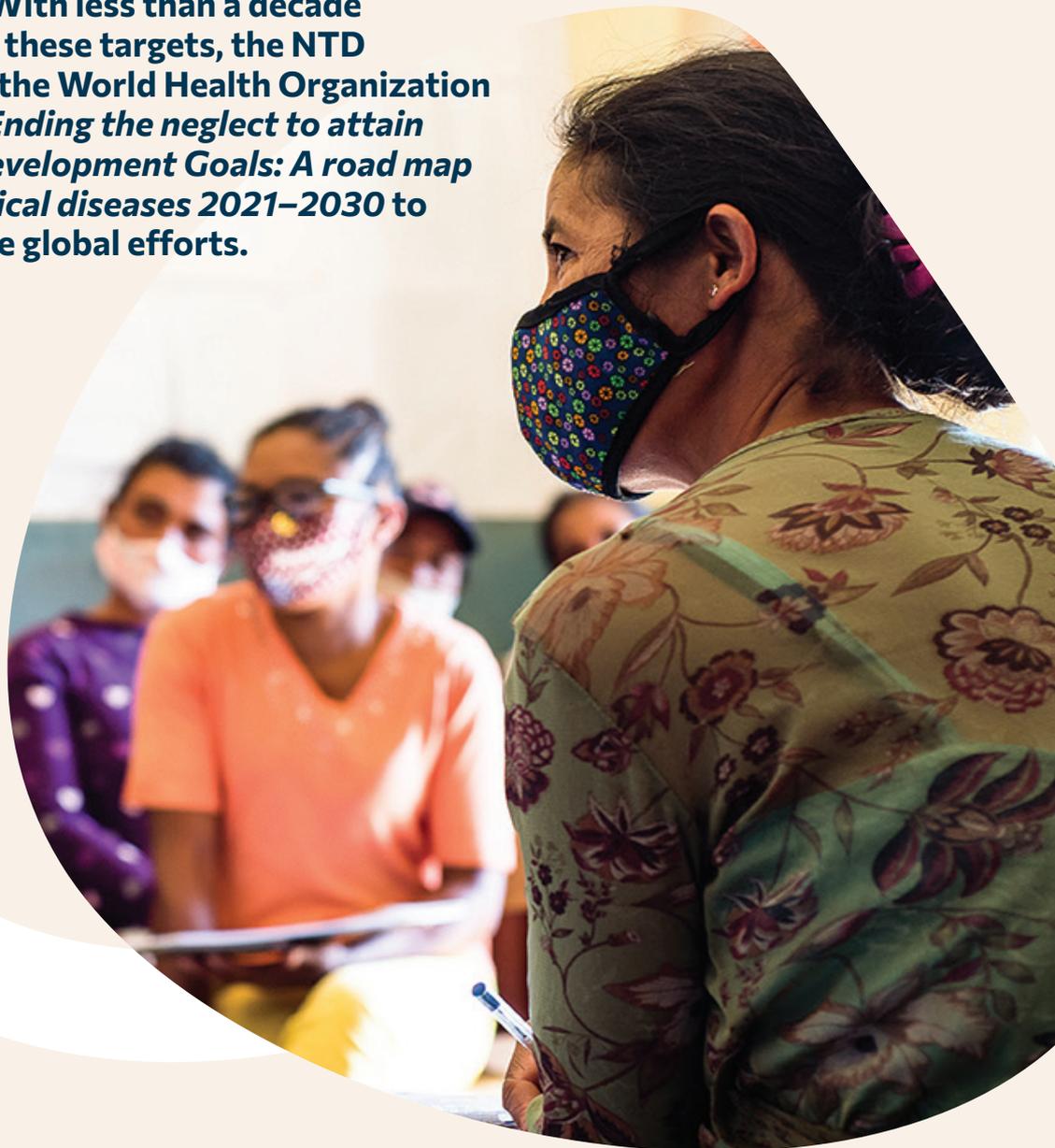
Cross-sectoral health systems strengthening

Building collaborative partnerships

Context

Global targets, progress and challenges

Our vision is “**resilient systems that sustain good health so everyone everywhere can reach their full potential**”. To achieve this, our efforts over the coming five years will continue to be guided by the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals, particularly the ambition of ending Neglected Tropical Diseases (NTDs) and achieving Universal Health Coverage. With less than a decade remaining to meet these targets, the NTD community led by the World Health Organization (WHO) launched *Ending the neglect to attain the Sustainable Development Goals: A road map for neglected tropical diseases 2021–2030* to galvanise and guide global efforts.



The broader health and development landscape in which this strategy will be delivered is rapidly evolving. Progress made in critical areas over the past decade – including on elimination of parasitic infections – has been compromised by the COVID-19 pandemic and a changing donor landscape including significant reductions in available funding. There is an imperative to accelerate the scale and pace of efforts to reduce the numbers of new infections and ensure those living with disease have access to quality services.

Fragmentation of health systems, growing inequalities and erosion of human rights, gender-related and other structural barriers continue to exacerbate vulnerability to NTD infection and limit access to services. Demographic shifts and increased displacement of vulnerable populations increase the demand and pressure on strained health systems. Climate change also has the potential to increase the vulnerability of at-risk populations to diseases such as parasitic infections and reduce the resilience of communities to other emerging threats to their health and livelihoods. Political instability and a looming global recession are shrinking the fiscal space in which global health efforts are being implemented, necessitating a rethinking of the global health funding architecture and the way in which international organisations such as ours operate.

Some opportunities are also emerging. The increased awareness of the need for system resilience and equity at the heart of development efforts is beginning to translate into shifts in emphasis away from a funder-led agenda to one driven by local ownership and sustainability considerations; and there is indication that direct programme support is increasingly being replaced by interest in funding systems. There is also greater recognition of the need to put communities at the centre of the design, implementation, and oversight of programmes, and subsequently investment in participatory and community-based approaches.

In this health and development context, there will be a need to remain adaptive and ambitious. We see our organisation as able to embrace the wealth of innovations and pivot our approach to successfully support the achievement of global and national health goals.

“As a government ministry, this partnership has helped us in building our capacity through various training programs offered. It has also helped to support the mass drug administration financially. We have to use money for training, awareness building and proper drug administration. The government has been empowered to the extent of attracting more cooperation at grassroots level.”

Khamis Bilali Ali, Health Coordinator at the Ministry of Health in Zanzibar



Image opposite by: END Fund/
Viviane Rakotoarivony
This page, image by: Unlimit Health/
William Mgbela

A woman wearing a purple headwrap with green and white patterns is seen from the side, carrying several large yellow plastic jerrycans on a bicycle. The background shows a dirt road and green trees under a clear sky. A large blue circular graphic element is overlaid on the right side of the image, containing text. Another blue graphic element is at the bottom right.

The Schistosomiasis Control Initiative (latterly the SCI Foundation) was established in 2002 to prove that the concept of national scale control of schistosomiasis in sub-Saharan Africa was feasible.

What is different about this new strategy

Image by: Unlimit Health/Malaika Media

In 2012, the adoption by the World Health Assembly of Resolution WHA65.21 on the elimination of schistosomiasis created our first significant shift in focus from control of morbidity to an increased ambition of disease elimination, and embedded further our approach to partnership with ministries of health. Recognising the need to go beyond mass-drug administration, our 2017-23 strategy was influenced by the NTD NGO Network (NNN) BEST Framework (Behaviour, Environment, Social inclusion, Treatment and care) that articulated the need for a comprehensive approach to NTD programming.

Our new strategy 2023-2028 signifies a further evolution of these shifts. It incorporates the comprehensive considerations of BEST but is structurally aligned with the pillars of the NTD road map to enable a stronger focus on impact, systems, and equity. This strategy is published under our new name – Unlimit Health – signifying our own paradigm shift from intervention delivery to health equity and health system strengthening.



Accelerate programme action

Focus on Preventive Chemotherapy
Preventive chemotherapy, primarily to SAC, at a district level

Comprehensive set of targeted interventions to reach elimination
Effective targeting of all at risk populations at sub-district (or lower) level



Cross cutting interventions

Cross sectorial collaboration in specific contexts where funding allowed
Technical assistance provided through NTD specific programme platform

Comprehensive multisectoral technical assistance package
Technical assistance provided through health system



Country ownership

Interventions determined by funder
External funder support, mobilised by SCIF transferred to MoH
Expectation by MoH of continued external funding

Alignment with endemic country priorities
Partnership to mobilise resources direct to MoH
Develop clear transition plan to allow full ownership and resourcing over designated period

Vision, Mission and Values

Vision

Resilient systems that sustain good health, so everyone everywhere can reach their full potential.

Mission

We share evidence and expertise to end preventable parasitic infections in affected communities.

Values



Equitable

We challenge inequity and strive towards a fair distribution of power and resources globally. We understand that ill health is rooted in social and economic inequity and injustice.



Transparent

We are transparent in our decision making and our actions and ensure that decisions are informed by credible evidence. We acknowledge the fundamental role or transparency in engendering trust, collaboration, and accountability.



Inclusive

We respect people's differences, recognising the importance of different perspectives and experiences, applying the principles of compassion and dignity. We understand that having varied perspectives and experiences is essential to achieving our mission.



Image by: Unlimit Health/Aka
Aboubakhr Thierry Kouamé

Strategic goals

Organisational mission

We share evidence and expertise to end preventable parasitic infections in affected communities

Strategic goals

Accelerate programmatic action towards elimination of parasitic infections and health equity

Intensify cross cutting approaches to elimination and health systems strengthening

Promote and enable country ownership and leadership of programmes for elimination of parasitic infections

Transitional objectives

Precision Public Health technical approach

Health Systems Strengthening technical approach

Aligning our strategy

This strategy is aligned with the WHO NTD road map 2021-2030 pillars of:



Accelerate programmatic action



Intensify cross-cutting approaches



Change operating models and culture to facilitate country ownership

Each pillar has been tailored into a goal specific to our own vision and mission. As such, the strategy is also linked with several of the UN Sustainable Development Goals.

UN Sustainable Development Goals



Each strategic goal relates to one or more of the WHO health system building blocks, to ensure that our actions contribute to the achievement of our vision of resilient health systems.



Our 2023-2028 goals



Accelerate programmatic action towards elimination of parasitic infections and health equity.

Under this goal, we will build on our existing work and expertise in supporting large-scale treatment programmes by shifting the focus from disease control to elimination, and through expanding access to, and reach of, existing and new interventions. We will:

Health system building blocks

1. Be an effective technical partner in the innovation, design and delivery of interventions for all in-need groups.



2. Enhance technical support to innovate and embed monitoring, evaluation and surveillance tools and strategies for elimination.



Intensify cross cutting approaches to elimination and health systems strengthening.

Work under this goal will require expanding our skills and partnerships to ensure that our efforts are delivered as part of a comprehensive approach and result in stronger and more resilient health systems, with sustained impact on people's health and wellbeing. We will:

Health system building blocks

1. Enhance integration and mainstreaming of elimination interventions and care into appropriate delivery platforms and routine health service delivery and information systems.



2. Support cross sectoral coordination and action at sub national, national, and international levels





Promote and enable country ownership and leadership of programmes for elimination of parasitic infections.

This goal will involve an intentional change in the balance of power between our organisation and the government ministries and agencies with whom we collaborate, to facilitate the change in operating models set out by the NTD road map and contribute to long-term sustainability of impact. We will:

Health system building blocks

1. Support country system governance, readiness, and expertise.



2. Catalyse resource mobilisation aligned with country plans and mechanisms.



Image by: END Fund/
Viviane Rakotoarivony

Transitional objectives

To achieve the goals outlined in this new strategy we are undergoing several significant strategic and operational shifts. This requires us to generate evidence and develop technical approaches, as well as enhance our skills set and resources. We have therefore identified two transitional objectives that will support the longer-term achievement of our strategic goals:

Image by:
Unlimit Health/
Caroline Pensotti

1.

Develop a 'precision public health for parasitic infections' technical approach

As schistosomiasis, which has been the focus of our work on parasitic infections, is focal in nature, there is considerable interest in refining mapping techniques (precision mapping) to improve the targeting of interventions in a cost-effective way to communities at risk. This approach can be used more systematically and broadly across parasitic infections, to

- a. identify who to target (geospatial approaches and diagnostics)**
- b. how to target (microplanning)**
- c. what to target populations with (multi-sectoral interventions)**
- d. how and when to monitor achieving and maintaining elimination**

We will develop an evidence based technical approach to guide the implementation of this 'precision public health' approach and pilot the approach in specific contexts with the aim of expansion to other geographical locations.

2.

Develop a health systems strengthening technical approach

Disease specific interventions can strengthen the building blocks of health systems. They also provide an entry point for the expansion of quality universal health coverage across the full spectrum of health services. The link between parasitic infections and other key health outcomes such as reproductive, maternal and child health and nutrition, offers a strong opportunity for delivering integrated, community-based health programmes. Additionally, the complexity of the causes of parasitic infections offers an opportunity for collaboration across multiple sectors including water, environment, agriculture, education and more, to achieve broader sustainable development objectives.

Under this objective, we will:

- a. build the appropriate evidence base and technical approach to work in partnership with ministries of health to strengthen health systems towards the elimination of parasitic infections.**
- b. build our own capacity in health systems strengthening and associated monitoring and evaluation frameworks to deliver high quality services.**

Enablers to reaching our goals

How we will work

To fulfill our mission, we work in partnership to develop country-owned solutions that eliminate parasitic infections, for good. Over the strategic period, this will involve delivering services under three key areas:

a. Evidence-based disease elimination support

- Continue to generate high quality evidence in partnership with ministries of health and provide technical support to guide programmatic adaptation and learning.
- Generate evidence for policy making at national and international levels to accelerate progress towards elimination.
- Generate evidence to support the development of a domestic resource mobilisation strategy that can be contextualised for different settings.

b. Cross-sectoral health systems strengthening

- Develop internal technical support capacity on key cross-cutting themes such as water, sanitation, and hygiene behaviour change, One Health, treatment and care for morbidities related to parasitic infections (such as genital schistosomiasis), and access to medicines.
- Continue to partner with ministries of health to mobilise resources and provide technical support for cross sectoral collaboration across all relevant settings, utilising resources in these sectors to strengthen systems and reach disease elimination targets.
- Support ministries of health to utilise optimal sustainable platforms to deliver interventions against parasitic infections within existing systems.

c. Building collaborative partnerships

- Use evidence to provide high quality technical assistance that is responsive to endemic country needs to achieve elimination.
- Collaboration for impact will continue to be at the centre of our operational approach, partnering with ministries of health and aligning with national priorities.
- We will engage with partners who share our commitment to a comprehensive approach to elimination of parasitic infections.



Image by: Unlimit Health/
Indrias G. Kassaye



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