What are neglected tropical diseases (NTDs)?

Neglected tropical diseases (NTDs) are a group of disease conditions that are widespread in the world’s poorest regions, where **water safety, sanitation** and **access to health care** are substandard.

NTDs cost developing communities billions of dollars each year in **direct health costs, loss of productivity** and **reduced socioeconomic** and **educational attainment**.

NTDs are also responsible for **stigmatization, social exclusion, disability, discrimination**, and place considerable strain on both patients and their families.
NTDs in the WHO South-East Asia Region

12 NTDs are endemic in the WHO South-East Asia Region
At least 1 NTD is endemic in all 11 Member States in the Region

The South-East Asia Region accounts for more than half of the global NTD burden, with over 938 million people in the Region requiring interventions against NTDs.

- 59% of the population requiring interventions against lymphatic filariasis (LF) are in the South-East Asia Region.
- 66.5% of the new cases of leprosy are in the Region.
- 56% of children in the Region require deworming against soil-transmitted helminthiases.

Estimated number of people requiring interventions against NTDs by WHO Region (2021):

- SEAR 54%
- AFR 33%
- AMR 4%
- EPR 1%
- EUR 1%
- EMR 4%
Since the elimination of NTDs was identified as a **Regional Flagship Priority** in 2014, 6 countries have eliminated at least one NTD.

- **India** achieved yaws-free status; **Maldives** and **Sri Lanka** verified for elimination of **LF** as a public health problem.
- **Thailand** verified for elimination of **LF** as a public health problem.
- **Nepal** verified for elimination of **trachoma** as a public health problem.
- **Myanmar** verified for elimination of **trachoma** as a public health problem.

Between 2010 and 2020, the number of people requiring interventions against NTDs in the South-East Asia Region reduced by **20%**

- **Number of people requiring intervention against NTDs (million)**
- **Percentage of reduction in the population requiring interventions against NTDs**

68% of LF-endemic districts across nine endemic countries met the criteria and stopped MDA.

In the last seven years, new cases of kala-azar have been reduced by **95%** across the Region.

Bhutan, DPR Korea and Maldives continue to report **less than 25** new leprosy cases per 1 million population annually since 2013.

The WHO South-East Asia Region has a unique opportunity to demonstrate continued success in NTDs that would fundamentally change the global NTD landscape.
NTDs can be controlled, eliminated and eradicated by effective delivery of the following interventions:

- WASH
- Vector control
- Surveillance and M&E
- Veterinary public health
- Intensified disease management
- Preventive chemotherapy

Act now, Act together to end NTDs

Our priority in the WHO South-East Asia Region is to

- Invest
- Innovate
- Integrate

- To optimize existing interventions and leverage new innovations to overcome last-mile gaps and challenges
- To sustain the elimination status in the post-elimination phase, with a focus on surveillance platform integration, while accelerating R&D of new tools and strategies to make further progress
- To expand the range of priority NTDs to the next unfinished agenda in control and elimination of other NTDs