



Elimination of Onchocerciasis in Yemen

Project Information

- ◆ Program: Public Health Programs
- ◆ Department: Public Health Programs

OBJECTIVES

The project contributed to the elimination of onchocerciasis in Taiz Governorate, Yemen, by successfully conducting a targeted Mass Drug Administration (MDA) campaign in six districts. This was supported through the training of community health workers and the assessment of campaign impact via a Coverage Evaluation Survey (CES).

REGIONS OF WORK

The project was implemented in six districts across Taiz Governorate in Yemen, focusing on areas near seasonal watercourses where onchocerciasis was endemic.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

GHD|EMPHNET supported and collaborated with the Yemen Ministry of Public Health and Population (MoPHP) and the END Fund to conduct a series of activities aimed at eliminating onchocerciasis in Yemen. The activities covered the following areas:

- Onchocerciasis Elimination Planning and Training: Planned for the MDA, including securing security approvals and logistical arrangements. This phase also included comprehensive training for drug distributors on the administration of ivermectin.
- Onchocerciasis MDA Campaign: Conducted in the six targeted districts of Taiz Governorate to distribute ivermectin to all eligible individuals.
- Coverage Evaluation Survey: Carried out within one month of completing the MDA to evaluate its coverage and identify areas for improvement.
- Breeding Site Mapping: Trained entomologists to determine first-line villages and identify locations for vector control activities.
- Yemen Onchocerciasis Program Expert Committee Meeting: Held to discuss the status of program activities and mapping issues, and to review program methodology and timelines.

BENEFICIARIES

The project benefited all eligible individuals above the age of five in the six targeted districts, achieving coverage of at least 80%, while pregnant women were excluded in accordance with treatment guidelines.

PROJECT PHASES

The project involves three phases:

Phase I – Preparation & Planning: The team planned the MDA campaign, trained drug distributors on administering ivermectin (IVM), and coordinated logistics and delivery of drugs to treatment points.

Phase II – Implementation: The MDA campaign was conducted, and entomologists were trained to carry out breeding site mapping.

Phase III – Monitoring and Evaluation: Teams were supervised to follow up daily on campaign activities, frequent reports on campaign progress were produced, and a coverage survey for the campaign was conducted.

Project Start and End Date	October 01, 2024 – March 31, 2026
Partner Organizations	END Fund and the Ministry of Public Health and Population (MoPHP)

Currently . . .

Yemen was the only country in Asia endemic for onchocerciasis, where the disease prevailed in rural communities near main seasonal watercourses. In addition, transmission had been recently reported from districts with previously unknown disease endemicity, indicating that the disease was likely more widespread than historically documented. In response, GHD|EMPHNET supported the Ministry of Public Health and Population (MoPHP) in conducting a training of trainers (TOT) for breeding site mapping, followed by on-the-ground training for breeding site mappers. Furthermore, GHD|EMPHNET supported and facilitated the implementation of one round of mass drug administration (MDA) campaigns across six districts in Taiz Governorate, Yemen.

What's next . . .

The project was implemented in six endemic districts of Taiz Governorate in Yemen, contributing to national efforts toward the elimination of onchocerciasis. This effort was aligned with the World Health Organization's international roadmap for neglected tropical diseases (2021–2030), which identifies the elimination of onchocerciasis as a priority.

GHD|EMPHNET Information: Global Health Development (GHD) Eastern Mediterranean Public Health Network (EMPHNET) works at achieving its mission by responding to public health needs with deliberate efforts that allow for health promotion and disease prevention.

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