

HOW DATA WILL HELP WIN THE FIGHT AGAINST NEGLECTED TROPICAL DISEASES



More than 1 billion people around the world are affected by Neglected Tropical Diseases (NTDs), with about 40% of global NTD cases occurring in Africa plunging communities into endless cycles of poverty. NTDs are curable and preventable when detected early. Some of them can be controlled and eliminated by applying preventive chemotherapy through Mass Drug Administration (MDA). MDA involves giving medicines to the entire population of a defined geographical area regardless of presence of symptoms or infection; however, exclusion criteria may apply.

ESPEN, THE EXPANDED SPECIAL PROJECT FOR ELIMINATION OF NEGLECTED TROPICAL DISEASES

ESPEN was established in May 2016 in the spirit of public-private partnership between WHO Regional Office for Africa, African Member States and NTD partners in an effort to mobilize political, technical and financial resources to accelerate the control and elimination of the five most prevalent NTDs (lymphatic filariasis, onchocerciasis, schistosomiasis, soil-transmitted helminthiasis, and trachoma) amenable to preventive chemotherapy (PC) through MDA to protect 600 million people in Africa.

With access to 17.8 billion USD in drugs donated by pharmaceutical partners, ESPEN reduces the cost of treating all high-burden NTDs to just 0.50 USD per person treated annually (treatment delivered), making it one of the best buys in global health. In addition, every 1 million USD invested, leverages 28 million USD in donated drugs.

ESPEN'S FIVE STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES



SCALING UP MDA TO ACHIEVE 100% GEOGRAPHIC AND EFFECTIVE COVERAGE

Leaving no one behind and securing access to treatment.



SCALING DOWN MDA TOWARD PC-NTD ELIMINATION AND REDUCTION OF MORBIDITY DUE TO NTDs

Supporting countries to stop treatment and obtain WHO validation as soon as elimination is reached.



STRENGTHENING INFORMATION SYSTEMS FOR EVIDENCE-BASED, IMPLEMENTATION LEVEL DECISION-MAKING

High-quality data sharing tools, the ESPEN Portal and the ESPEN Collect, have been created to help African governments in their decision-making.



PROMOTE EFFECTIVE USE OF DONATED MEDICINES

Ensuring that all donated tablets are procured and distributed in a timely manner and without wastage and any unutilized drugs are appropriately stored and repurposed.



ENHANCING COUNTRY OWNERSHIP AND HEALTH-SYSTEM STRENGTHENING (HSS) FOR SUSTAINABILITY

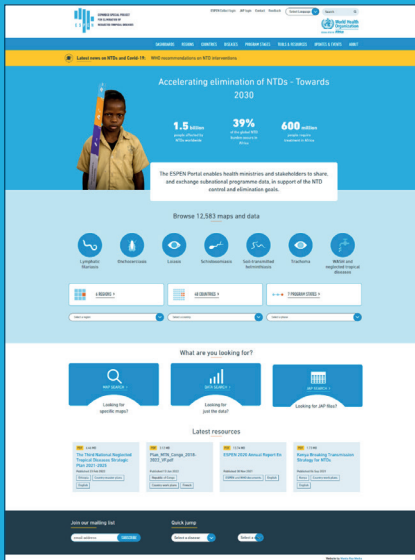
The partnership helps governments to develop and implement national strategic plans against NTDs, and empowers countries to take greater leadership in financing their own development.

DIGITAL TOOLS

Strengthening information systems for evidence-based, implementation level decision making is one of the key pillars of ESPEN. To support countries, ESPEN developed two platforms, ESPEN Portal and ESPEN Collect.

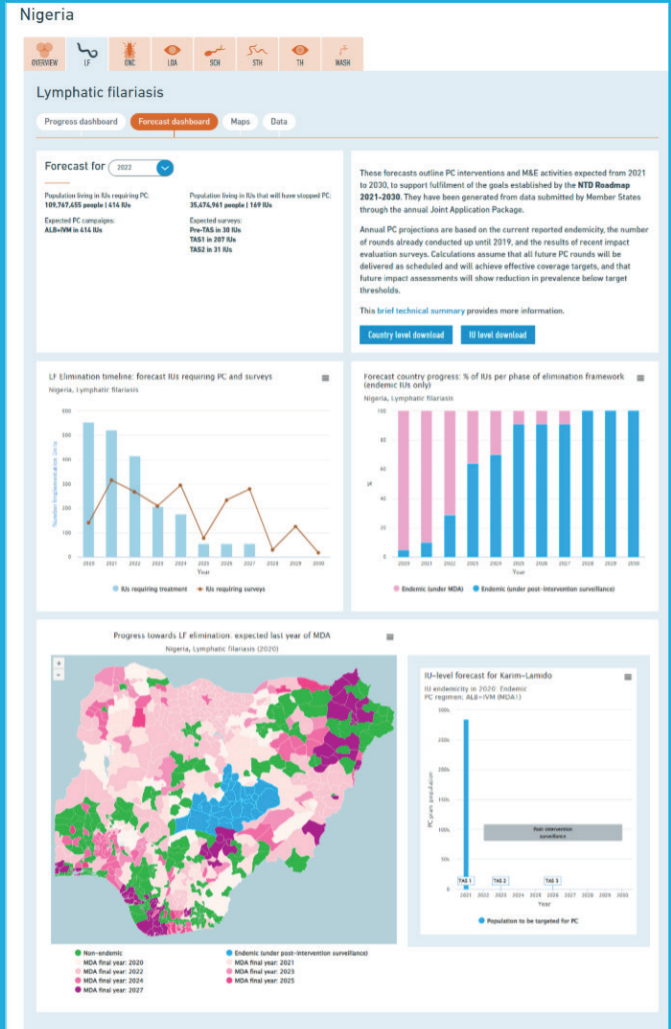
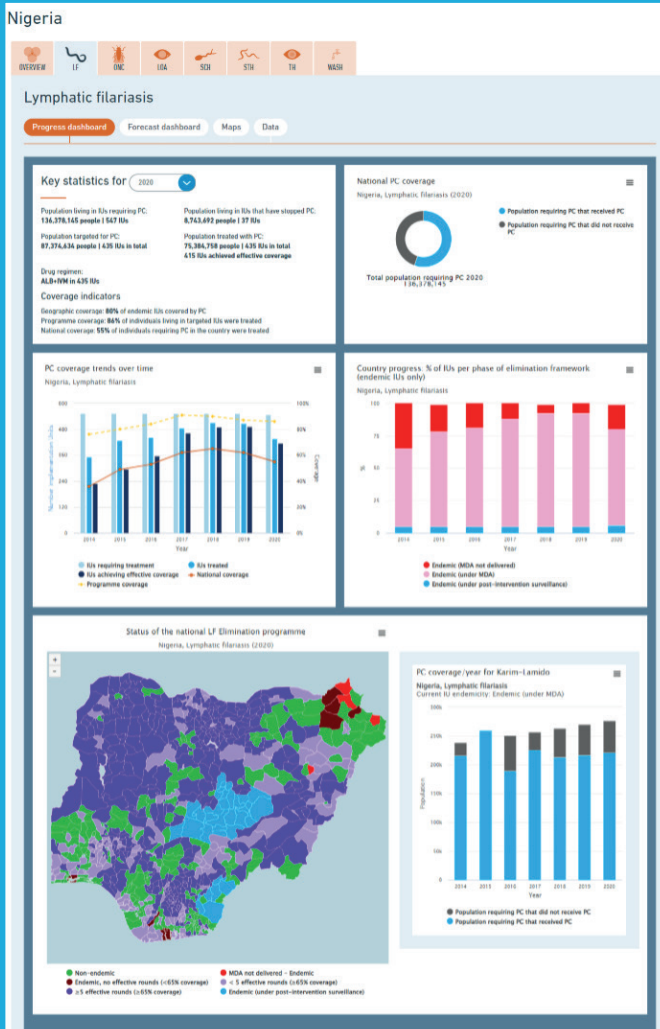
ESPEN PORTAL

<https://espen.afro.who.int/>



The ESPEN Portal is unique in its conception for it is the first ever continental online atlas on the most prevalent NTDs (lymphatic filariasis, onchocerciasis, schistosomiasis, soil-transmitted helminthiasis, trachoma) as well as loiasis and WASH, and provides treatment and endemicity indicators at sub-national level, unlike any other global database. This vital tool enables data analysis to support smart, targeted investments and efficient use of donated drugs supplied by pharmaceutical companies.

ESPEN has trained several hundreds of data managers to use the portal efficiently. More than 12,000 maps and data sets of 45 countries are available to date which are planned to be extended to HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis, malaria and COVID-19. Via this openly accessible online platform countries share data on historical and contemporary distributions of NTDs, including disease specific epidemiological surveys, treatment coverage and other programmatic data. Since the portal launch, more than 30,000 users have visited the **ESPEN Portal** from 175 countries.



The ESPEN Portal expanded to include a **comprehensive suite of data dashboards** designed to help Neglected Tropical Diseases programmes better track rollout and impact of interventions and make data-driven decisions on future strategies. The new ESPEN Progress and Forecast dashboards allow users to explore key statistics and analytics, graphics and maps, at both sub-national and national level. They outline current endemicity and progress on MDA interventions to date for each of the PC-NTDs, together with future treatment and impact assessment needs over the next ten years. These dashboards help to achieve the goals established by the new WHO road map for neglected tropical diseases 2021-2030. These resources can greatly support completion of both National Neglected Tropical Diseases Masterplans, and Annual Work Plans.

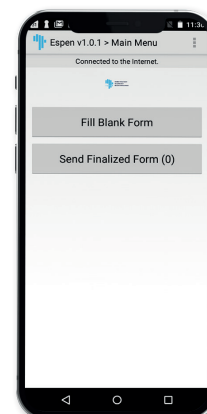
The ESPEN Collect is a free mobile data collection tool for the national programs of African Ministries of Health, civil society organizations, community health workers and partners to enable easy, accurate and real time data collection. ESPEN Collect currently supports disease-specific surveys on schistosomiasis, onchocerciasis, lymphatic filariasis, soil-transmitted helminthiasis. The data entered is automatically sent to ESPEN, analyzed and openly shared in the ESPEN Portal. The mobile app can be used off-line and data can be stored and sent when connectivity is available.

More than 600 people were trained to use ESPEN Collect, which synchronizes data with the ESPEN portal in about 20 countries and more than 13,300 sites.

The assembled data can be used to determine the graphical distribution of transmission, to estimate the burden of disease, and to identify implementation units where preventive chemotherapy is required, needs to be scaled up or stopped.

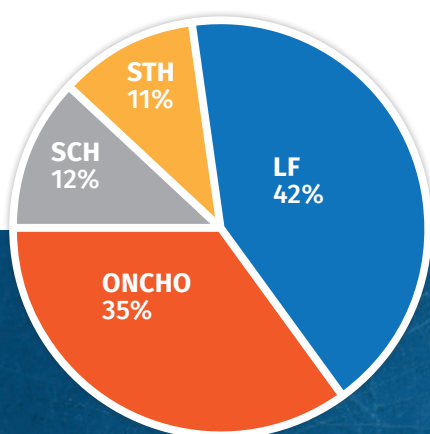
To put the impact of this collaboration into perspective, 450 million of the 600 million people affected by NTDs in Africa have been protected every year up to 2020 with the help of the ESPEN partnership.

These digital tools are critical in order to enable evidence-based decision making and use scarce resources in the most efficient way. Access to updated and more accurate data is vital for countries to implement strategic plans that can truly help to save more lives and eliminate NTDs.

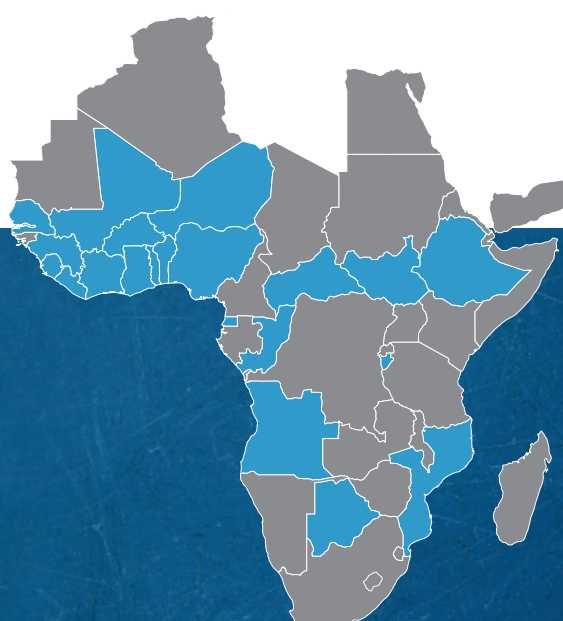


ESPEN Collect Dashboard with major milestones (2018 – 2021)

ESPEN COLLECT : PROGRESS MADE (2018 - 2021)



**TARGETED
DISEASE**



628 PEOPLE TRAINED

61 SURVEYS

138 TABLETS PURCHASED

20 COUNTRIES

13,360+ SITES VISITED