

## Introducing the Neglected Tropical Diseases Medicines Information Dashboard

*Online Tool Aids Procurement, Supply, and Regulatory Decisions on Quality-Assured Treatments*

Neglected tropical diseases (NTDs) are conditions originating from pathogens, including viruses, bacteria, parasites, fungi, and toxins. The diseases pose a risk to more than 1.7 billion people<sup>1</sup> across the globe, particularly members of marginalized communities and those living in impoverished and isolated areas. The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) helps fight NTDs in more than 30 countries in Africa, Asia, and Latin America. Although the diseases are preventable and treatable, availability of and access to quality-assured NTD medicines remains a public health challenge in low- and middle-income countries around the world, partly due to the lack of objective information and data on their sources and supply.



To improve access to the supply of quality-assured NTD medical goods and data about them, the USAID-funded [PQM+](#) program developed a publicly accessible web-based application called the [Neglected Tropical Diseases Medicines Information Dashboard \(NTD | MID\)](#). The NTD dashboard is a centralized location on the source (country of origin, producer), dosage forms and strengths, legal status, quality, and pricing of NTD medical products for both finished pharmaceutical products (FPPs) and active pharmaceutical ingredients (APIs). It will assist procurement agencies, suppliers, manufacturers, medicines regulatory authorities (MRAs), donors, and other interested parties working to increase the availability of quality-assured preventive chemotherapy and transmission control (PCT) NTD medicines.

This database focuses on seven priority PCT NTD medicines: albendazole, azithromycin, diethylcarbamazine, ivermectin, mebendazole, praziquantel, and tetracycline eye ointment.

### Key Functions and Features of the NTD | MID

**FPP Global Outlook:** This enables users to see, for the seven PCT NTD finished pharmaceutical products (FPPs), how many products have received WHO prequalification (WHO PQ) or approval by MRAs (ML 3, ML4, or SRA), the names of manufacturers, and whether shortages have been reported.

**API Global Outlook:** For the active pharmaceutical ingredient (API) of each product, the tool displays how many manufacturers are available, the number of sources of APIs with WHO PQ approval, the names of the prequalified manufacturers, and whether shortages have been reported.

**Expression of Interest:** This provides links to any calls for expressions of interest issued by WHO or PQM+ for manufacturers to apply for technical assistance in producing any of the seven PCT NTD products of focus.

**Other Resources:** This captures information related to the WHO PQ list, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (USFDA) shortage list, the WHO NTD progress dashboard, and other relevant information.

**Product Updates:** Any critical or new information that may be urgent and beneficial to the user is displayed here.

<sup>1</sup> USAID Neglected Tropical Diseases Program. <https://www.neglecteddiseases.gov/about/results-and-impact/>. Accessed 3/10/2023.

## Two Sample Searches

Under the *FPP Global Outlook* tab, a user looking for **albendazole** can see that one source achieved WHO PQ, 63 were approved by a maturity level (ML) 3 or 4 medicines regulatory authority (MRA) or a stringent regulatory authority (SRA), names of six manufacturers are available, and the USFDA is not currently reporting a shortage of albendazole FPP.



Under the *API Global Outlook* tab, a user looking for **praziquantel** can see names of seven manufacturers are available in the database, eight WHO-prequalified sources of API for this product, and no USFDA-reported shortage.

## Five Diseases of Focus

USAID's [Neglected Tropical Diseases Program](#) focuses on five diseases that are controllable or able to be eradicated through administering quality-assured, safe, and effective medicines to entire communities. The five diseases are:

**lymphatic filariasis:** also known as elephantiasis, spread through mosquitos.

**onchocerciasis:** also known as river blindness, spread through blackfly bites.

**schistosomiasis:** caused by a parasitic worm, spread through exposure to contaminated water.

**soil-transmitted helminthiases:** intestinal parasites (hookworms, roundworms, and whipworms) passed through human feces in areas with poor sanitation.

**trachoma:** a bacterial infection of the eyes spread by flies and personal contact, causing blindness if untreated.

The dashboard organizes, stores, and displays NTD medicines information from various data sources on one easily accessible site. Specifically, the NTD dashboard will help stakeholders working to increase availability of quality-assured NTD medicines:

- Identify APIs and FPPs of PCT NTD medicines that meet established quality criteria.
- Access information, including the country where an API or FPP is produced, the names of companies producing it, the available dosage forms and strengths, and the countries where the product is registered.
- Assess areas of divergence across global data sources that can inform future stakeholder discussions toward improved efficiency and alignment to ensure availability and access to PCT NTD products.

**INCLUSION CRITERIA:** The NTD Medicines Information Dashboard houses information on quality-assured medicines that are WHO-prequalified; those that have cleared the Expert Review Panel (ERP), risk categories 1 and 2; and those that have approval by SRAs and MRAs rated ML3 and higher to inform decisions of stakeholders seeking information on products that meet these high-quality standards.

As the NTD Medicines Information Dashboard evolves, PQM+ is exploring options to include more data on manufacturers, products, and sources with expanded product quality criteria. For more information, contact PQM+ at [Daniel.Flynn@USP.org](mailto:Daniel.Flynn@USP.org) and [pqmplus@usp.org](mailto:pqmplus@usp.org).

## Promoting the Quality of Medicines Plus (PQM+)

The USAID-funded PQM+ program is implemented by the United States Pharmacopeial Convention (USP). The program improves access to quality-assured priority medicines and addresses the proliferation of poor-quality medical products in low- and middle-income countries.