

NTD drug supply-chain progress

Getting drugs to the countries: First-mile delivery improvements

Efficient and effective supply-chain management plays a critical role in ensuring that NTD medicines are delivered to the people who need them. Aimed in part at streamlining and coordinating this process, the NTD Supply Chain Forum (the “Forum”) was established in 2012, bringing together the WHO, pharmaceutical donor partners (GSK, Johnson & Johnson, Pfizer, Merck & Co, Inc., Merck, and Eisai), the Gates Foundation, logistics partner DHL, and nongovernmental organizations (Children Without Worms, the Mectizan® Donation Program, the International Trachoma Initiative and RTI International).

As NTD programs scale up around the world, the Forum works to identify gaps and challenges within the “first mile” of the NTD drug supply chain, which encompasses planning and forecasting, manufacture, packaging, shipment, and final delivery of NTD medicines to endemic countries – a carefully coordinated global endeavor. The efforts of the Forum over this past year have resulted in progress in improving drug production timelines, changes in national drug application mechanisms, and better distribution and delivery to the destination countries.

Some highlights of the Forum’s work include:

- **Dedicated DHL “Control Tower” for coordination of NTD shipments**

With its extensive global reach, DHL is a common logistics provider for several donation programs.

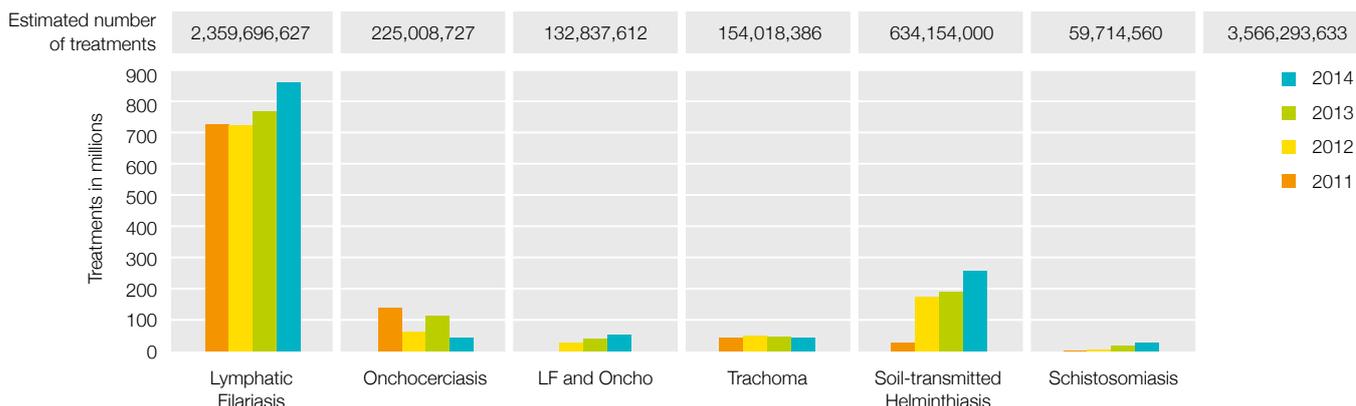
As such, an initial output of the Forum was to bring several donations under the humanitarian side of DHL’s logistics services, thereby enabling NTD drug donations to benefit from DHL’s special distribution channels and expertise in efficiently clearing medicines for country entry.

- The creation of a dedicated NTD DHL Control Tower enables the DHL to oversee the clearance of several NTD medicines through customs and ensures delivery to national warehouses. GSK, Johnson & Johnson, and Merck have also extended their delivery past the port of entry through to medical stores, warehouses and beyond. This means that these pharmaceutical donors are now fully responsible for all steps involved in shipping customs clearance and delivery of NTD medicines to the central medical stores or national warehouse in each country. This includes covering all associated costs. In the past, the delivery was made to the port of entry, leaving the local WHO/WR offices to clear the goods and deliver these medicines to their final destination. DHL now provides door to door service to the government warehouse for these pharmaceutical donors in over 98% of cases, resulting in a more controlled and efficient approach to delivering NTD medicines.

- **NTD forecasting and planning tool development**

With a view to creating one centralized data source for integrated PCT supply-chain decision making, the WHO and the Forum are collaborating to further develop the PCT-NTD Supply Chain Management tool, enabling the sharing of planning and forecasting information with all relevant stakeholders (such as program managers, the WHO, and donors) involved in MDA.

Drug Donation for 5 PCTs (2011-2014): Treatments



Supply-Chain Modeling

The Forum is using statistical modeling systems and expertise to map supply chains of several NTD medicines so as to streamline delivery of co-administered supplies. The data from the modeling work will be used to better furnish business cases for potential supply-chain improvements, and provide a platform for future scenario analysis including diagnostic supply.

Getting drugs to people:

Last-mile delivery improvements

Since the London Declaration there have been just over

3.5 billion treatments

Ensuring that NTD medicines effectively travel from manufacturers to reach endemic countries is only part of the supply-chain process. There are a number of potential challenges country programs face in reaching communities and individuals, often

referred to as the “last mile”. With support from the Gates Foundation, John Snow, Inc. recently completed a three-country assessment (of Ghana, Malawi, and Tanzania) to identify challenges and propose solutions

to strengthen the NTD last-mile supply chain. Multiple areas and opportunities for improving programs were identified, including:

- creating concise training and reference materials with key supply-chain messaging for frontline health workers and community drug distributors, for incorporation into national NTD control program training systems;
- developing guidelines and reference materials on NTD drug management, and on planning and budgeting for the delivery of drugs for MDA;
- strengthening NTD program district-to-central-level accountability to improve feedback and performance for MDA success
- improving performance motivation at the community and health-facility levels.

The amount of donated treatments

up 36%

The Gates Foundation is now reaching out to partners and stakeholders to explore ways of collaborating on the opportunities presented.

Total supply chain visibility

