



ELIMINATION 8

ANGOLA • BOTSWANA • MOZAMBIQUE • NAMIBIA • SOUTH AFRICA • SWAZILAND • ZAMBIA • ZIMBABWE

Reaching beyond borders to achieve a malaria-free southern Africa

Eight countries in southern Africa are pushing the boundaries of what many thought was not possible: achieving and sustaining zero malaria. But the journey toward a malaria-free region by 2030 has challenges.

Malaria does not recognize boundaries or borders. A country will never achieve and sustain malaria elimination as long as transmission continues in neighboring countries. Because malaria—carried by people and mosquitoes—can cross borders, eliminating the disease cannot be achieved and sustained by countries alone. It must be done together, as a region.

Paving the way to elimination

Elimination is an ambitious but attainable goal for southern Africa. Significant progress has already been made in the region, and both Swaziland and Botswana are poised to eliminate malaria by 2018. Since 2000, cases and deaths in the eight countries have declined by 96 and 90 percent respectively. While progress in the last 15 years has been dramatic due to aggressive scale-up of treated bed-nets, indoor residual spraying, and more effective drug treatments, the eight southern-most countries have now reached the end-game. To overcome a more sophisticated challenge of elimination, countries require advanced tools, strategies to limit parasite movement across borders, as well as more refined disease intelligence to reach the finish line of achieving and sustaining zero malaria.



The E8 Ambassador and Ministers of Health review regional progress on the E8 Elimination Scorecard.



- E8 frontline countries
- E8 second line countries
- No malaria transmission
- Current boundary of malaria transmission

The Elimination 8 Regional Initiative

Recognizing that the progress or failure of one country's efforts to eliminate malaria is connected to the success of other countries in the region, the **Elimination 8 (E8) Regional Initiative** was established to coordinate a collaborative effort, led by the Ministers of Health in eight countries, to jointly plan and execute a regional malaria elimination strategy.

The E8 Regional Initiative is an unprecedented approach that aims to end transmission in the four low-transmission "frontline countries"—Botswana, Namibia, South Africa, and Swaziland—by 2020 and to pave the way for elimination in the four middle- to high-transmission "second line countries"—Angola, Mozambique, Zambia, and Zimbabwe—by 2030. The E8 is a pioneering collaboration that provides a blueprint for other countries and regions seeking to eliminate malaria.

Within the E8, member countries collaborate to address challenges that go beyond the scope or mandate of any one country, such as those associated with mobile and migrant populations, and gaps in surveillance data, resources, and infrastructure. The E8 is led by its member countries' Ministers of Health and is supported by a Technical Committee, E8 Ambassador, and a Secretariat in Windhoek, Namibia. The E8 is currently funded by the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis, and Malaria and the Global Health Group at the University of California, San Francisco through a grant from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation.

The value of the E8 regional approach

Knowledge sharing and collaboration: Disease intelligence is central to the region's efforts to track and target hot spots—geographic areas at high risk of malaria transmission. The E8 has provided countries with a regional forum to share knowledge and information across countries. While the scope of national health information systems is limited by political boundaries, malaria transmission extends beyond these boundaries. As the first of its kind, the regional data platform will inform country action and preempt potential outbreaks.

Accountability: Each country's performance is evaluated and recorded on the E8 Elimination Scorecard, which is reviewed on an annual basis by E8 Ministers of Health. E8 countries define the required standards of performance by all countries, and the Scorecard serves as an accountability mechanism that monitors and compares country-level progress against the defined indicators that are critical for regional progress.

Collective strategy and action: The E8 Strategic Plan is a consensus-driven strategy that outlines a series of objectives and activities designed to coordinate member countries and technical partners in the joint pursuit of effective elimination strategies. The focus of the Strategic Plan is to complement national-level efforts and investments, thus accelerating progress towards zero transmission. Because the E8 provides an effective platform, solutions to challenges such as cross-border movement, commodity supply, and security can be solved collectively.



Expanding access to high quality malaria testing and diagnostics is a top priority for the region.

Efficiency: Rather than investing individually, countries are able to pool technical expertise and infrastructure such as laboratories, testing devices, and financial resources. These regional investments, through the E8, can have significant returns and will provide access to essential resources that otherwise may be out of reach to individual countries.

How the E8 accelerates elimination efforts

To eliminate malaria from the region by 2030, the E8 is dedicated to:

- Providing a functional regional coordination platform
- Galvanizing strong political support for malaria elimination
- Improving regional disease intelligence, analysis, dissemination, and mapping
- Supporting the containment of cross-border transmission and importation of parasites
- Enhancing sustainable financing

Actions by the E8 Regional Initiative demonstrate success:

Developing a regional malaria surveillance database to sync malaria data from E8 member countries and provide them, for the first time, regional-level intelligence. The regional database will improve the region's capacity to collectively understand where transmission is occurring and how to effectively to contain it.

Creating a regional diagnosis program to enhance the capacity of existing laboratories. Supported by the E8's US\$17.8 million regional grant from the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis, and Malaria, the program will increase the ability of E8 countries to pool infrastructure and technical expertise to identify infections—a key step to eliminating transmission.

Establishing border clinics to provide early diagnoses and treatment to migrant populations. The precise number of irregular migrants is unknown, but it is estimated that approximately 10.5 million people cross E8 borders every year. The border clinics are providing critical services and are reducing the reservoir of infectious parasites that would otherwise be carried across borders.

Fostering regional collaboration to reach the last mile

Successful malaria elimination by the E8 countries is highly dependent upon strong cross-border collaboration to mount a coordinated response to limit malaria importation, harmonize regional policies, and conduct robust regional surveillance, analysis, and response. The E8's success in creating a functional, cooperative initiative across languages, cultures, and political landscapes is nothing short of remarkable. Individually, countries can significantly reduce malaria. Together, they can eliminate it.