

Tackling deadly diseases in Africa



CAMEROON

Tackling Deadly Diseases in Africa (TDDA) is FCDO's flagship programme working to strengthen integrated health security systems in five countries that are highly vulnerable to disease outbreaks – Cameroon, Chad, Côte d'Ivoire, Mali, and Uganda.

We provide financial and technical support to improve the systems that detect, monitor and manage health threats before they become public health crises.



As we enter the final months of programme delivery (ending in Nov 2022), TDDA is on track to leave behind strengthened health security systems and improved compliance with International Health Regulations (IHR) obligations.

With our support, focus countries have established procedures to serve sick passengers at geographic Points of Entry, resulting in improved capacity to respond to public health emergencies at border posts, as reflected in Côte d'Ivoire's response to an Ebola outbreak in neighbouring Guinea (Feb 2021). By integrating equity into national border protocols, border authorities are better prepared to respond to the specific needs of vulnerable travellers, including women, refugees, and people with disabilities. In Uganda, modifying border posts' infrastructure by adding ramps and providing support equipment such as wheelchairs, has facilitated access for travellers with limited mobility. Countries have also strengthened multi-sectoral national One Health Platforms (NOHP) within which all relevant health security actors, including Civil Society Organisations, can coordinate efforts, hold each other to account and represent a broader range of groups, including the most marginalised. In Cameroon, we successfully promoted the inclusion of CSOs as NOHP members.

Creating a health security legacy

To ensure the sustainability of our efforts and making a lasting impact, we work with governments, civil society and communities, empowering them to achieve their own ambitions in health security, increasing the prospects of institutionalisation and financing of their activities for the long term.

TDDA key achievements in Cameroon

Widening participation in health security

No government has the capacity to respond to national health crises alone. TDDA works to ensure health security is integrated into all national and sub-national policies, strategies, and plans. We also work with civil society, creating the foundations for its members to play a greater role in health security delivery, monitoring, and reporting.

- 18 CSOs benefitted from TDDA capacity-building workshops designed to increase their readiness to engage in health security interventions, including modules on risk communication and community engagement, misinformation and COVID-19 vaccine roll-out. As a result, we helped formalise a network of CSOs working in health, strengthening collaboration with the government.

Better data for better, faster decision-making

We support the roll-out of Events-Based Surveillance at community, district and national levels, to quickly identify and manage public health events, shortening the time between alerts and responses, saving lives.

- TDDA contributed to improve geographical equity in preparedness and response by conducting a complete sample survey of surveillance procedures in all 190 districts of the country, evaluating gains in knowledge and capacity, and correcting remaining gaps, especially in the less secure northern and southwestern provinces whose districts' staff have not previously been trained.

Accelerating progress towards International Health Regulations

- Systems and procedures at a key border point, Douala International Airport, were assessed through a simulation exercise, supported by TDDA in coordination with WHO, that identified gaps and recommendations which were later implemented by the Ministries of Public Health and Transport. This exercise helped the government to successfully manage the health challenges associated with hosting the Africa Cup of Nations, and for the longer term.

Supporting responses to COVID-19

Our current focus is supporting governments with the complex and urgent challenge of COVID vaccination roll-out. We are providing targeted financial support to selected CSOs to enable them to help ensure that vaccines reach the populations that need them most.

- TDDA supported the scale-up of COVID-19 diagnostics, widening access to free testing services beyond the capital Yaoundé to six high-risk regions. TDDA assistance enabled 20 laboratory personnel to be recruited and trained. Since December 2021, 2 CSOs undertook field missions to support the national COVID vaccination programme, helping to raise awareness, dispel rumours and tackle vaccine hesitancy in selected districts.

The programme is supporting countries toward sustainability of activities, as TDDA winds down at the end of 2022.

Key stakeholders: National Public Health Observatory. NOHP; OH-associated ministries, departments and administrations. Ministry of Environment, Nature Protection and Sustainable Development; Directorate for Control of Diseases, Epidemics and Pandemics. Directorate of Veterinary Services; Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development. WHO, IOM, FAO, CSOs, Family Health and Development Foundation.

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