

Actionable Surveillance and Neglected Disease Control and Elimination (ADVANCE) Program Overview



Overview

Malaria disproportionately affects the health and livelihoods of marginalized populations in the Indo-Pacific. Despite political commitment to eliminate malaria, progress has been uneven across the region, particularly in countries facing the highest disease burden. Slow progress toward malaria elimination jeopardizes not only the well-being of the populations in these countries, it hinders the elimination efforts of neighboring countries, leading to broader health insecurity in the region. Sustainable access to high-quality diagnostic tools is needed to improve malaria case management as well as sustain the fight against malaria in the Indo-Pacific.

Program information

With support from the Australian Government through the Partnerships for a Healthy Region initiative, the Product Development and Access Partnership brings together the expertise of PATH, the Burnet Institute, and the Walter and Eliza Hall Institute of Medical Research (WEHI). Together, we are accelerating malaria elimination progress under the Actionable Surveillance and Neglected Disease Control and Elimination (ADVANCE) program.

Our approach

The ADVANCE program works to advance a portfolio of high-quality diagnostics to ensure equitable access to effective malaria treatment across gender, disability, and populations at risk of exclusion, as well as accelerate elimination in accordance with national and regional aspirations in the Indo-Pacific region.

This work is being achieved through three key workstreams:

- Research and development
- Clinical evaluation
- Availability and access

Research and development

ADVANCE is supporting the development of a suite of high-quality products and reagents to aid in diagnosis and treatment of malaria. This work relies on



An ADVANCE-trained expert shows a health care provider how to use the G6PD test. Photo: PATH.

collaborative partnerships with manufacturers and institutions to understand gaps in both availability of and investments in diagnostic tests and commodities.

The program expands access to (1) rapid diagnostic test products with improved performance characteristics for malaria infection detection; (2) serological assays and point-of-care products to detect individuals at risk of *Plasmodium vivax* malaria; and (3) point-of-care tests for glucose-6-phosphate dehydrogenase (G6PD) deficiency to support safe radical cure of *P. vivax* infection. By strengthening malaria detection and case management, ADVANCE supports the elimination goals in the region.

Clinical evaluation

Evaluations will be conducted in the region to support development of regulatory data packages as well as generate in-country evidence to support policy guidance and inform elimination strategies. This work will include evaluating emerging rapid diagnostic tests, with facility- and community-based studies planned in Papua New Guinea and Laos. Additionally, studies will be conducted to support regulatory indications for new point-of-care G6PD tests as well as their application in newborn screening in Vietnam. Evidence generated through these studies will help ADVANCE advocate for the usefulness of these products.

Availability and access

While research and development and clinical evaluation of these products lay the groundwork for our goals, ensuring sustainable availability and access is essential for malaria elimination. This strategic objective is being achieved by working directly with community, national, and regional stakeholders to ensure (1) strong capacity to assess diagnostic tools within the context of their areas of need; (2) readiness for effective and equitable adoption of products; and (3) sustainable integration and scale-up of the products into health systems.

Through strong country partnerships and local community engagement, ADVANCE is seeking sustainable and localized integration of these diagnostic tools into routine financing and procurement systems, as well as broader diagnostic ecosystems. This includes consideration of complementary fever management tools, surveillance for other neglected tropical diseases, and other diagnostics applications prioritized by governments.

Gender equity, disability, and social inclusion

Central to each of these work areas is the partnership's commitment to an intersectional gender approach,

ensuring that gender equity is integrated into all program activities. A gender equity, disability, and social inclusion analysis is being conducted to explore how differences in social and cultural practices, norms, relations, power dynamics, barriers, and stigmas affect outcomes on inclusion, participation, and health. Given the critical need to include marginalized populations in malaria control efforts, a dedicated research agenda is being established to ensure gender equality, disability, and social inclusion underpin the work plans of the program. The research agenda will seek to challenge assumptions and knowledge gaps on critical risks that undermine achieving equitable access to the products.

Program oversight

The independent interdisciplinary External Project Advisory Committee was established to review and provide guidance on execution and alignment of the ADVANCE program with the intended goals of the Partnerships for a Healthy Region initiative.

Each of the workstreams and their crosscutting activities play a pivotal part in our shared goal of eliminating malaria in the Indo-Pacific region. Learn more about our work by scanning the QR codes below.



The Burnet Institute



**Walter and Eliza Hall
Institute of Medical
Research (WEHI)**



Malaria work at PATH



**Australia's Department
of Foreign Affairs and
Trade ADVANCE
program page**

About Burnet

Burnet is an independent, not-for-profit, medical research institute and an accredited international NGO working toward a more equitable world through better health. Burnet undertakes a range of programs across the Indo-Pacific region and in Africa that focus on global health issues. Through partnerships and engagement with a broad range of stakeholders and communities, Burnet develops laboratory-based, implementation, and social research programs, policies, and products that deliver better health outcomes, so no one is left behind. www.burnet.edu.au

About PATH

PATH is a global nonprofit dedicated to health equity. With more than 40 years of experience forging multisector partnerships and expertise in science, economics, technology, advocacy, and dozens of other specialties, PATH develops and scales up innovative solutions to the world's most pressing health challenges. www.path.org

About the Walter and Eliza Hall Institute of Medical Research (WEHI)

WEHI is where the world's brightest minds collaborate and innovate to make life-changing scientific discoveries that help people live healthier for longer. Our medical research has been serving the community for more than 100 years, making transformative discoveries in cancer, infectious and immune diseases, developmental disorders, and healthy aging. WEHI brings together diverse and creative people with different experiences and expertise to solve some of the world's most complex health problems. With partners across science, health, government, industry, and philanthropy, we are committed to long-term discovery, collaboration, and translation. At WEHI, we are brighter together. www.wehi.edu.au