

# Elimination of Socially Determined Diseases and Infections

## ISSUES NOTE

### BRICS 2025



#### 1. Background Information

Socially Determined Diseases and Infections (SDD) are closely linked to poverty, inequality, and inadequate living conditions, presenting a major obstacle to sustainable development, economic stability, and global well-being. Eliminating these diseases and infections is viewed as an ambitious humanitarian goal and could stand as one of the most significant legacies of 21st-century multilateral cooperation.

The WHO has categorized a set of diseases as Neglected Tropical Diseases (NTD). Despite existing preventive and control measures, these diseases continue to pose public health challenges among vulnerable populations in areas with low socioeconomic indicators, limited access to clean water, and inadequate sanitation, reflecting the social determinants of health. While these NTDs primarily affect impoverished tropical regions, some have a broader geographic distribution.

NTDs include Buruli ulcer, Chagas disease, rabies, cysticercosis, schistosomiasis, fascioliasis, lymphatic filariasis, onchocerciasis, dengue, chikungunya, dracunculiasis, echinococcosis, foodborne trematodiasis, human African trypanosomiasis, leishmaniasis, leprosy, trachoma, various parasites, and snakebites.

Diseases do not respect borders, potentially impacting international mobility, global trade, and international health security. Therefore, initiatives to eliminate SDDs and NTDs require integrated, collaborative strategies among countries. Successfully eradicating these diseases will enhance productivity, reduce the burden on healthcare systems, and support the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). This global call to action aims to end poverty (SDG 1), eradicate hunger (SDG 2), promote health and well-being (SDG 3), ensure access to clean water and sanitation (SDG 6), reduce inequalities (SDG 10), and protect the environment and climate (SDG 13), among other goals, ultimately fostering peace and prosperity.

Public health is a shared good that has the potential to strengthen diplomatic ties, being a platform for dialogue and cooperation among nations. It fosters technology and knowledge transfer, aids in conflict resolution, and promotes peace and stability among countries. Aligned with the global sustainable development agenda, public health is a central theme in international fora such as BRICS.

Cooperation among BRICS nations will advance global health equity, particularly in resource-scarce regions. It will expedite the elimination of these diseases as public health issues and improve the effectiveness of interventions. This collaboration will enhance health services

and education, sanitation, and surveillance systems, enabling them to respond effectively to health emergencies and crises.

Regarding health systems, multilateral collaboration among BRICS countries enables an integrated formulation of public health policies, facilitates experience-sharing among experts on priority topics, aims to enhance country responses and promote practical solutions for public health challenges, such as advancing and specializing health professionals' skills. This will lead to higher-quality care and talent retention within local systems.

Cooperation also strengthens Healthcare Networks, mainly primary care, which improves case finding and timely diagnosis, promotes access to adequate treatment, and supports health education actions. Consequently, it reduces costs associated with disease aggravation and hospitalizations, allocating resources to preventive health and technological development.

One of the positive impacts of BRICS cooperation is the establishment and strengthening of Research and Development Networks, advancing and transferring new technologies (such as diagnostics, treatments, and vaccines) and social technologies involving innovations in health (like gene therapy, Artificial Intelligence applied to health, and biotechnologies, among others), and focusing on eliminating NTDs and SDDs as public health issues.

Expanding cooperation will implement health models and best practices, with mutual learning across various levels (primary care, public health management), adapting innovative practices to diverse and challenging contexts.

In short, the primary mid-term measure is the formalization of a BRICS Alliance for the Elimination of Socially-Determined Diseases and Neglected Tropical Diseases.

## **2. Priorities**

### **2.1. Public Health:**

- 2.1.1. Strengthening of Health Networks;
- 2.1.2. Talent retention;
- 2.1.3. Creation of Research and Development Networks;
- 2.1.4. Support creating, enhancing, and implementing surveillance and rapid-response systems for public health emergencies;
- 2.1.5. Strengthening of local (subnational) surveillance systems and outbreak prevention.

### **2.2. Social Development:** Developing actions to:

- 2.2.1. Reduce Financial Pressure on Health Systems;
- 2.2.2. Increase Productivity and Economic Growth;
- 2.2.3. Improve Quality of Life and Well-Being.

### **2.3. Intersectoral Mobilization:**

- 2.3.1. Sharing of Best Practices and Health Models;
- 2.3.2. Operationalizing activities using the One Health approach;

2.3.3. Enhancement of social policies to reduce vulnerabilities and risks of SDDs and NTDs.



**BRICS**  
Brasil 2025

COOPERATING FOR AN INCLUSIVE AND SUSTAINABLE WORLD