



PATH in Zambia

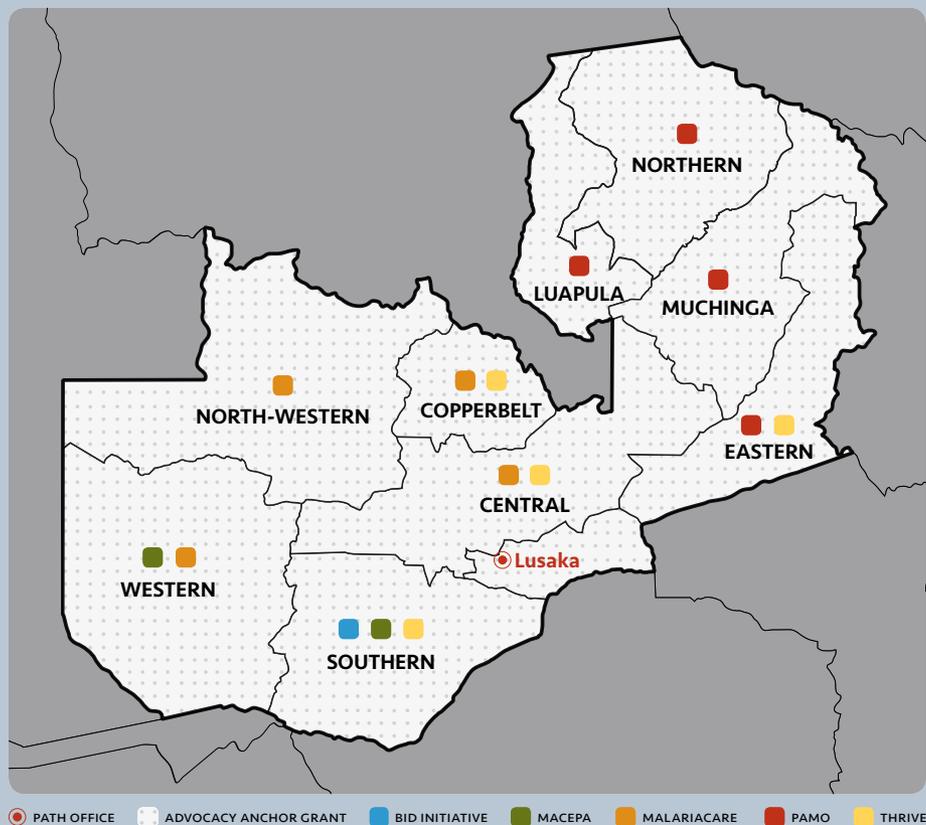
Improving health through
innovation, data-driven
decision-making,
and collaboration



In the past decade, Zambia has experienced tremendous economic growth and unprecedented improvements in public health. Still, three of four Zambians live in poverty, and many face persistent health challenges, ranging from malaria to malnutrition.

Since 2005, PATH has partnered with the government of Zambia, health workers, communities, and others to tackle these challenges, with emphasis on helping Zambia implement a comprehensive malaria control program. Based on the remarkable success, Zambia has made a bold commitment to eliminate malaria. In addition, PATH and our partners have mobilized communities to improve nutrition, strengthened health systems to boost immunization rates and improve access to essential health commodities, and advocated for policies and resources to make maternal and newborn health a top priority in Zambia.

PROJECT AND OFFICE LOCATIONS IN ZAMBIA



PATH'S STRATEGIC PRIORITIES AND CAPABILITIES IN ZAMBIA

PATH is a critical partner for the government of Zambia and donors in efforts to reduce maternal and child mortality and improve health for all by 2030. PATH hopes to make a strong contribution toward meeting Sustainable Development Goals in Zambia, building on the significant progress made on a number of the Millennium Development Goal targets.

Areas of focus for our program in Zambia include:

- Advancing progress in malaria control and striving toward elimination.
- Improving nutrition.
- Building and expanding our digital health platform.
- Promoting family planning and reproductive health.
- Expanding our work in advocacy and public policy.

PATH will remain open to exploring other emerging opportunities to improve health and health care, especially in response to priorities identified by the Ministry of Health.

STOPPING MALARIA IN ITS TRACKS

PATH leads a number of large malaria projects in Zambia, working side by side with the National Malaria Control Center, clinics, and community health workers to fight the disease from every angle. We are strengthening laboratory and clinical capacity, improving malaria prevention and case management, and developing new tools and strategies for malaria elimination.

Through the Malaria Control and Elimination Partnership in Africa (MACEPA), PATH supported the government to develop a comprehensive set of strategies to reduce cases and deaths from the disease in target areas by scaling up use of existing tools, such as bed nets and indoor spraying of insecticides. We helped Zambia set up a rapid reporting system in one-third of the country's health facilities to provide near real-time data on malaria cases and available supplies. With data submitted by mobile phones, health officials no longer have to wait months for the information to wind its way, on paper, through the health system.

To help take transmission to zero, we're supporting Zambia with new efforts, including:

- Advancing more sensitive diagnostic tools that can detect low-density infections that may spread disease even though carriers do not report symptoms.
- Testing new treatment approaches, such as treating everyone in a targeted community with drugs to eliminate malaria parasites.
- Combining new diagnostic and treatment methods to permanently stop transmission, creating "malaria-free zones" that bring the country closer to malaria elimination.

We also lead the MalariaCare partnership, a five-year, multicountry effort to expand and improve the quality of diagnostic and treatment services for malaria and other fever-causing illnesses. In Zambia, PATH trains and supports laboratory technicians and clinicians to accurately diagnose malaria and work with patients to manage the disease. Our goal is to ensure that every patient with malaria symptoms is tested, that testing is consistently of high quality, and that every patient receives the right treatment—whether for malaria or another illness.

In parts of Zambia where malaria rates are still high, we are leading a newer flagship project for the US Agency for International Development (USAID) called the Program for the Advancement of Malaria Outcomes (PAMO). PAMO is applying lessons learned during the past decade to accelerate malaria reduction in four provinces with high rates of transmission.

STRENGTHENING HEALTH SYSTEMS

The BID Initiative is a key component of PATH's work to strengthen health systems in Zambia. This innovative effort is enhancing immunization programs and health service delivery by improving data quality, collection, and use. Beginning in Southern Province, PATH is partnering with the government to design and test interventions that address critical data-related challenges. These interventions include:

- An electronic immunization registry system.
- Automated, simplified reports.
- Stock management tools.
- Change management.

We are also cultivating a culture of data use. One example is setting up a peer-support group where health workers can help one another as they adopt new tools and practices. As the BID Initiative progresses, a true tipping point will occur when all levels of the health system have the ability to access, analyze, and act upon accurate immunization data—resulting in improved health outcomes.

PATH has also been working with the Ministry of Health and other partners to create and deploy a powerful system to help health facilities monitor their supply and use of crucial health commodities (medicines, injection devices, and vaccines) to ensure they are available when and where needed. Through the USAID | DELIVER Project, PATH has provided technical assistance through all stages of design, development, and deployment.

COMBATING MALNUTRITION

PATH is working to improve nutrition in Zambia, especially for people living with HIV, pregnant women, and orphans and vulnerable children. The Thrive Project has worked in four provinces to combat malnutrition by training health workers in nutrition assessment, counseling, and support; strengthening workers' ability to provide care; and increasing access to supplements. We are expanding the availability of high-energy protein supplements by helping health workers add them to care, increasing production, and making sure they are available to those who need them.

Using data to drive decision-making



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A key to Zambia's success in malaria control has been investment in data collection—including malaria indicator surveys, Demographic and Health Surveys, and routine updates of health management information systems—to inform the government's response to the disease. PATH has been a critical partner in this effort. For example, PATH has evaluated the impact, operational requirements, and costs of population-wide, drug-based strategies. Studies evaluating three strategies—mass drug administration (MDA), focal MDA, and mass test and treat campaigns—found that MDA, in particular, holds promise for accelerating elimination in certain transmission settings. This work includes a unique partnership with the Tableau Foundation to use real-time data to track disease transmission patterns to help leaders decide how to best deploy resources.

In addition, a PATH-led project called Maximizing the Quality of Scaling Up Nutrition (MQSUN) is helping countries research and design evidence-based approaches to malnutrition. In Zambia, we're helping national leaders understand the gaps that prevent children and families from thriving and then create and implement effective and sustainable solutions.



“PATH has worked closely with the Ministry of Health for more than a decade. Through work in malaria, nutrition, immunization, and maternal and child health, PATH supports ministry efforts to fulfill its mission of providing quality health care as close to the family as possible. For instance, in Southern Province, PATH’s support for the malaria program has contributed to the current reduction of malaria cases to nearly zero.”

Dr. Elizabeth Chizema
Director for Disease Control, Surveillance, and Research
Zambia Ministry of Health

ADVOCATING FOR POLICIES AND RESOURCE ALLOCATIONS

PATH works closely with government and advocacy partners in Zambia to ensure that maternal and newborn health are high priorities in national policy and budgeting. We supported the government to enact a national newborn health framework that identifies high-priority interventions and activities for scale-up. We partnered with the Ministry of Health and other stakeholders to develop guidelines to help health workers deliver consistent, high-quality newborn care. Now, we’re building on this collaboration to help increase funding and strengthen policies that advance the health of mothers and children.

PATH has supported policies to expand women’s access to family planning services by allowing community health workers to administer injectable contraceptives. PATH first gathered evidence on the efficacy and safety of task-shifting to support the change—evidence that subsequently contributed to the decision by the Ministry of Health to allow trained community-based health workers to administer injectable contraceptives to women.

MOVING FORWARD

PATH brings a spirit of innovation and a focus on data-driven decision-making to our work to improve health and health systems in Zambia. Our work has already contributed to dramatic improvements in malaria control, immunization, nutrition, and other health measures. Through effective collaboration with the Ministry of Health and other stakeholders,

we hope for even greater future impact on the health and well-being of Zambia’s people.

Funders

PATH’s work in Zambia has been supported by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation (BID Initiative, MACEPA), Tableau Foundation, UK Department for International Development (MQSUN), US Agency for International Development (MalariaCare, PAMO, Thrive, USAID | DELIVER), and other funders.



PATH is a leader in global health innovation. An international nonprofit organization, we save lives and improve health, especially among women and children. We accelerate innovation across five platforms—vaccines, drugs, diagnostics, devices, and system and service innovations—that harness our entrepreneurial insight, scientific and public health expertise, and passion for health equity. By mobilizing partners around the world, we take innovation to scale, working alongside countries primarily in Africa and Asia to tackle their greatest health needs. Together, we deliver measurable results that disrupt the cycle of poor health.

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