

BRAZIL

Initiative for the Elimination of Trachoma in the Americas

*A platform to bring
comprehensive health care
to the most vulnerable
communities*

Brazil contributes to the elimination of trachoma in the Americas

Brazil is moving toward the elimination of trachoma as a public health problem. Epidemiological surveys conducted in recent years show that transmission of the disease has been interrupted in the areas evaluated. These results reflect decades of interventions aimed at the prevention, control, and elimination of this disease in the country.

However, significant challenges remain in the management of trachomatous trichiasis (TT), the advanced form of the disease. Maintaining and strengthening surveillance efforts is essential, particularly among Indigenous populations, which have historically been the most affected. In these contexts, geographic dispersion and gaps in access to health services, water, sanitation, and hygiene continue to influence risk, making it necessary to sustain comprehensive efforts to consolidate the progress achieved.

Ocular trachoma is the leading infectious cause of blindness worldwide. In the Americas, Mexico eliminated the disease as a public health problem in 2017, followed by El Salvador

in July 2026. Guatemala and Paraguay are the countries closest to validating the elimination of the disease, which remains a public health problem in Brazil, Colombia, and Peru. Other countries, such as Bolivia and Venezuela, have communities that may require interventions. Meanwhile, the disease is suspected to be present in Ecuador, Guyana, and Panama. It is important to implement surveillance measures in these countries to confirm whether or not the condition is a public health problem.

A partnership between the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) and the Government of Canada aims not only to eliminate trachoma but also, through the integration of activities, to strengthen primary healthcare services in the most vulnerable communities, build the capacity of Ministry of Health workers in the 12 participating countries, and demonstrate the value of international cooperation in achieving more resilient health systems and a better future for all.

The initiative is aligned with PAHO's efforts to eliminate more than 30 diseases and related conditions by 2030, through an integrated and sustainable approach that promotes collaboration across sectors and within health systems.

What are Brazil's main advances toward the elimination of trachoma?

Brazil has consistently implemented the SAFE strategy (surgery, antibiotic treatment, promotion of facial hygiene, and improved access to water and sanitation) recommended by the WHO to eliminate trachoma as a public health problem. Between 2018 and 2026, the country conducted prevalence studies in areas with the highest epidemiological and social risk; the preliminary results are encouraging and support progress toward elimination.

The findings will serve as the basis for preparing the dossier that Brazil will submit as part of the process for validation of trachoma elimination. Furthermore, the country will continue to generate evidence through epidemiological studies in priority areas in order to complete the documentation required for validation.

Brazil has achieved the following:

- **Surveillance activities:** Expansion of active case finding for TT in people aged 15 and older.
- **Treatment of communities with trachoma:** Implementation of the surgical component of the SAFE strategy for the management of TT cases.
- **Gender and intercultural approach:** Recognition of women as primary caregivers and adaptation of the worldview and practices of Indigenous Peoples for the implementation of components F (facial cleansing) and E (environmental improvements) of the SAFE strategy, through the use of the Knowledge Dialogues Methodology.
- **Coordinated actions:** Interagency coordination between the Ministry of Health of Brazil and stakeholders such as the Oswaldo Cruz Foundation (FIOCRUZ), the Evandro Chagas Institute, the Dr. Heitor Vieira Dourado Foundation for Tropical Medicine, the Secretariat of Indigenous Health, and the Special Indigenous Health Districts, among other partners.
- **Visibility and communication for health:** Production of audiovisual educational materials in collaboration with the affected communities, including illustrated booklets adapted to the reality and cultural aesthetics of the Krahó people. Workshops for young local communicators and the use of social media to publicize health interventions.



For more information, scan the QR code to watch the video about the actions implemented.

[Brazil: Actions to eliminate trachoma](#)

For more information, see:

<https://www.paho.org/en/topics/trachoma>

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What key actions will Brazil take to accelerate efforts toward trachoma elimination?

The Ministry of Health of Brazil, with support from the Government of Canada and PAHO, will carry out the following actions:

- **Surveillance activities:** Strengthening trachoma surveillance in border areas with Colombia and Venezuela, building on previous efforts in coordination with national and international partners.
- **Care for advanced trachoma cases:** Implementing the surgery component of the SAFE strategy.
- **Promotion of the WASH strategy:** Strengthening environmental sanitation practices and technologies in Indigenous communities.
- **Strengthening gender and intercultural approaches:** Continue building local capacity in educational and community-based strategies related to the implementation of the F and E components of the SAFE strategy, with a gender and intercultural approach.
- **Prevention of trachoma and other diseases:** Development of printed and audiovisual educational materials, with an intercultural approach, aimed at preventing trachoma and other neglected diseases.
- **Compilation of the dossier with evidence of trachoma elimination:** Complete the compilation of historical, epidemiological, and intervention data collected by the country to achieve validation of elimination.
- **Progress toward the regional and global goal:** Strengthen the actions needed develop a post-elimination surveillance strategy and to move toward the validation of the elimination of trachoma as a public health problem in Brazil.