

GUYANA

Initiative for the Elimination of Trachoma in the Americas

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

Guyana participates in the Initiative for the Elimination of Trachoma in the Americas

Guyana participates in regional efforts to eliminate trachoma as a public health problem. It has been classified by the World Health Organization (WHO) as a country for which additional information is needed, based on a recommendation derived from serological data collected in the course of lymphatic filariasis surveillance. This is compounded by the conditions of vulnerability in which some of the inhabitants of regions 7, 8, and 9 live, and by the country's shared border with the state of Roraima in Brazil – an area with a history of trachoma – and with Venezuela, where trachoma is suspected to be present.

The Ministry of Health of Guyana, with support from the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO), will implement population-based prevalence surveys in the priority regions, including the integrated collection of data on indicators related to eye health, hepatitis B, and Chagas disease. The initiative aims to identify the presence or absence of these diseases and guide the necessary programmatic actions.

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.



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

Serological studies conducted between 2018 and 2019 suggest that trachoma may be a public health problem in hinterland regions 7, 8, and 9. In light of these findings, and following expert recommendations, the Ministry of Health of Guyana, with technical support from PAHO/WHO and funding from the Government of Canada, will conduct baseline prevalence surveys in those regions, including the collection of eye health indicators and testing for other diseases.

This initiative aims to confirm the presence or absence of the disease and guide efforts to eliminate trachoma in the country.



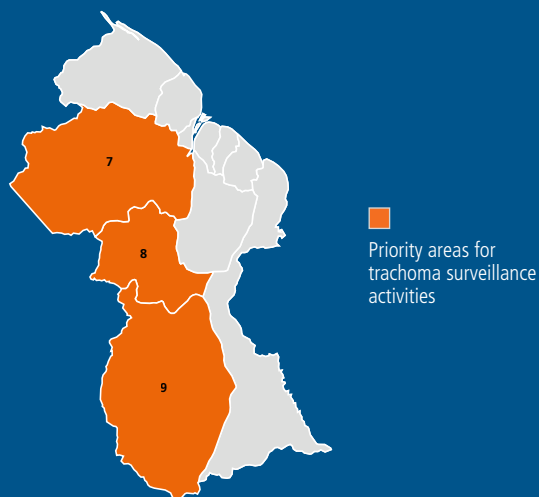
What key actions will Guyana take to accelerate trachoma elimination?

To accelerate the elimination of trachoma, Guyana will implement trachoma “plus” prevalence surveys that include indicators related to eye health, Chagas disease, and hepatitis B. The activities will take place in regions 7, 8, and 9.

Key actions include training field teams according to international standards and providing comprehensive health care in the target communities, with a particular emphasis on neglected tropical diseases.

In addition, efforts will be made to strengthen the capacity of health workers through training aimed at identifying other neglected diseases, including skin diseases.

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.



For more information, scan the QR code
or follow this link:
<https://www.paho.org/en/topics/trachoma>