How programs are adapting during the #COVID19 crisis

USAID’s Act to End NTDs | East Program
Chief of Party, Ethiopia
Sharone Backers
USAID’s Act to End NTDs | East Program

**Goal:** Support countries to reach their control and elimination goals for neglected tropical diseases (NTDs) through proven, cost-effective public health interventions.
COVID-19 in Ethiopia

- First COVID-19 case reported March 13
- Federal preventive measures include:
  - ban on mass gatherings
  - school closures
  - border closure
- State of Emergency starting April 9 for tentatively 5 months
World Health Organization issued guidance for NTD programs to postpone:
  - community-based surveys
  - active case-finding activities
  - mass treatment campaigns

All NTD field activities suspended
Challenges of a “new normal”
Learning: Act to End NTDs | East Program

- Collaborating with the MOH
- Planning ahead for NTD activities to resume
- Maintaining commitment to support communities to reach NTD elimination goals
Adapting during COVID-19

- Working with staff to accommodate to a changing work environment
- Establishing new communications systems
- Focusing on personal connection
- Commitment to maintain and engage staff
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