

# Hispaniola Initiative

THE  
CARTER CENTER



The Carter Center works with the ministries of health in Haiti and the Dominican Republic to eliminate malaria and new cases of lymphatic filariasis from the island of Hispaniola.

## ABOUT THE CARTER CENTER

A nongovernmental organization, The Carter Center has helped to improve life for people in more than 80 countries by resolving conflicts, advancing human rights, preventing diseases, and improving mental health care.



Haitian Antoinette Sainfabe, pictured with her son, has a severely swollen leg and foot due to lymphatic filariasis. A support group has helped her cope with the disease.

## WHAT ARE MALARIA AND LYMPHATIC FILARIASIS?



Malaria is a widespread **mosquito-borne parasitic disease** that destroys a person's red blood cells. Symptoms include fever, intense headaches, vomiting, body-shaking chills, and other flu-like symptoms. Without treatment, malaria can lead to anemia, hypoglycemia, cerebral malaria, coma, and death.



Lymphatic filariasis is a leading cause of disability worldwide. It is caused by thin worms transmitted to humans by the bites of mosquitoes. The worms damage the lymphatic system; fluid collects in the tissues—most commonly the legs and genitalia—**causing severe swelling and fevers**. A long-term lymphatic filariasis infection results in irreversible elephantiasis, in which hardened, enlarged skin resembles that of an elephant.

## HOW WIDESPREAD ARE THE DISEASES?



Malaria kills approximately **400,000 people** worldwide each year, mostly children, with about 228 million cases of the disease reported worldwide. Approximately **120 million people** are infected by lymphatic filariasis, with more than 1.1 billion in 72 countries at risk of infection.



Hispaniola is the only island in the Caribbean region that has not eliminated malaria. Hispaniola also bears about **95%** of the lymphatic filariasis burden in the Western Hemisphere. Most areas within Haiti remain at risk for transmission of both diseases. In the Dominican Republic, malaria now occurs mainly in and around the capital, Santo Domingo, while **LF transmission is nearing elimination**.

*The Carter Center is a leader in the elimination and eradication of neglected tropical diseases.*

## OUR STRATEGY



The Carter Center assists the ministries of health of Haiti and the Dominican Republic by **strengthening cooperation between the two countries**, providing technical assistance for elimination of both diseases, and helping to integrate activities between the countries. This includes support for lymphatic filariasis surveys, mass drug administration to interrupt transmission of lymphatic filariasis, and malaria surveillance.

## WHERE WE WORK



## RESULTS AND IMPACT

**700,000** bed nets

distributed in Haiti with the Carter Center's assistance to protect against mosquito bites

**75%** drop

in confirmed cases of malaria on Hispaniola from 2010 through 2020

**100%** of formerly endemic districts in the Dominican Republic and

**86%** of districts in Haiti

have met criteria to stop mass drug administration for lymphatic filariasis



A Haitian girl receives a dose of medication to prevent the parasitic disease lymphatic filariasis.

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