

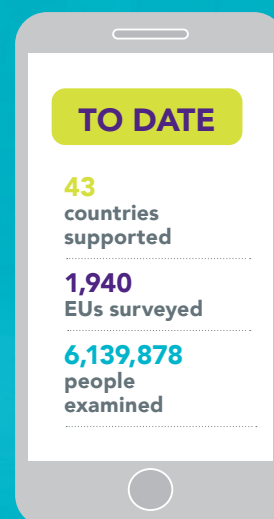
# The Download Sept 2020

These past months have brought strangeness and uncertainty to so many of us round the world. We have all needed to adapt in different ways, to new priorities and ways of working. Our thoughts and best wishes are with all of you during these difficult times.

While survey fieldwork has been on hold, the Tropical Data team has continued to support countries with their planning for when surveys are able to restart. We have also been working on a range of **new and updated tools and resources** to better support countries, which we will start to publish in the Autumn. For now, you can review our existing materials on our **resources page**. Do let us know if there are topics you would like to have more information or clarity on.

If you want more details on what we have been up to, please check out this recent **blog** by Sarah from the data team. You may also be interested in seeing our Chief Scientist Emma in our new **video** "What is Tropical Data?".

Do **reach out** if there is anything we can do to support you or if you have any questions about surveys restarting. We do hope to see many of you again soon, and not just virtually. Meanwhile we leave you with some case studies and updates from Nigeria and our publications team.



## Operational Research

In addition to supporting health ministries conduct routine surveys for programmatic decision-making, Tropical Data is involved in some operational research projects.

This **recent publication** from the Solomon Islands and Vanuatu shows early signs of trachoma-related pathology in adolescents are less common than we would have expected given the prevalence of TF. This supports previous data suggesting further MDA may not be necessary here.



Share your survey stories and case studies with us, including photos! On social media use **#TropicalData** or email us at **admin@tropicaldata.org**

# Restarting NTD Activities in Nigeria -

an account by Nicholas Olobio, Assistant Director/Program Manager, National Trachoma Elimination Programme

As at Monday 24 August, confirmed COVID-19 cases in Nigeria stood at 52,548 across 24 states. In June, the national NTD Programme developed guidelines for the resumption of NTD activities in the context of COVID-19, and the national trachoma elimination programme developed SOPs in-line with these. With trachoma impact and surveillance surveys planned in around 60 LGAs (equivalent to EUs) in the coming months, we have also been working

through a risk assessment and mitigation action (RAMA) tool with the different states, partners and donors to be able to resume our activities in a way as to minimise the risk of SARS CoV-2 transmission.

The RAMA tool is quite detailed and requires a collaborative approach to develop detailed SOPs, updated budgets and an understanding of the COVID-19 trend in the areas where surveys will be undertaken, on top of

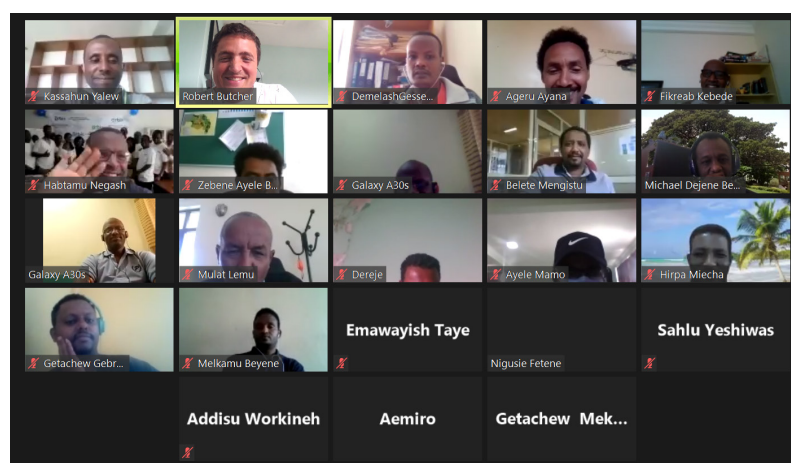
any normal activity planning and preparation. All this must then be reviewed and signed off before a decision can be made for the work to go ahead. My advice for countries planning to restart NTD activities, is to plan ahead of time. For example, if you have a survey scheduled for December, then you need to start working on your COVID-19 RAMA measures now, to ensure these are completed, to allow work to go ahead as scheduled.

## Publication workshops in Ethiopia

Ethiopia completed baseline trachoma mapping for all suspected endemic districts in 2013/14, and the country went to scale with Zithromax treatment in over 588 districts. By the end of 2019, 354 districts had conducted trachoma impact surveys with the technical support of Tropical Data. With the aim of publishing progress made towards elimination targets post-intervention, regional teams are currently participating in a series of virtual publication workshops. Each team is composed of Ministry of Health and Regional Health Bureau personnel, partners, and academic experts. The authors will analyse baseline, impact and surveillance surveys conducted with Tropical Data support.

Dr Fikreab Kebede, Senior Technical Advisor for Trachoma, commented "This undertaking will inform policy makers, trachoma managers, donors, and researchers, strengthening the trachoma elimination program, while it equally contributes in enhancing the scientific stature of local trachoma actors."

The workshops are organised by the Ministry of Health of Ethiopia in collaboration with Tropical Data. Emma Harding-Esch, Robert Butcher and Michael Dejene (all from Tropical Data), Fikreab Kebede (MOH), and Wondu Alemayehu (The Fred Hollows Foundation) helped design the workshops, which are facilitated by Robert.



**TROPICAL DATA**

Tropical Data helps countries to collect high quality data by providing epidemiological, training, logistical and data management support to national programmes carrying out all types of cross-sectional surveys on trachoma. More info at: [www.tropicaldata.org](http://www.tropicaldata.org)