

# The Download March 2021

## Celebrating FIVE years of Tropical Data

Welcome to the latest edition of The Download! Recently, Tropical Data celebrated our **5th Birthday!** But how did it all begin? Following the close of the Global Trachoma

Mapping Project (GTMP), global partners recognised the need to sustain the efforts made, to build global capacity and ensure high quality trachoma surveys to achieve WHO targets for trachoma elimination. Partners including WHO, ITI, RTI, Sightsavers, and

funders including USAID and the FCDO, got together to solve this challenge, and Tropical Data was born! We wanted to say a big **thank you** to all the health ministries and partners, for your collaboration and support. And for allowing us to be part of your journeys to reach the elimination of trachoma as a public health problem.

We have been very busy since the last edition of The Download, supporting **countries to restart their postponed trachoma survey activities due to COVID-19.**

**Burkina Faso** was the first country to re-start surveys in September and was closely followed by the **DRC**. We appreciate the challenge this has been for countries as they adapt to, and adopt, COVID-19 mitigation measures. Tropical Data has supported some of these measures, including working with partners on an **Operational Research project** assessing use of face shields.

We were excited to see the launch of the new **WHO NTD Roadmap** in January, and we look forward to

developing the Tropical Data service to further support multi-sectoral approaches and integrated surveys. Click the link below to read our recent publication, outlining the key elements for successful integrated surveys: <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/33305311/>



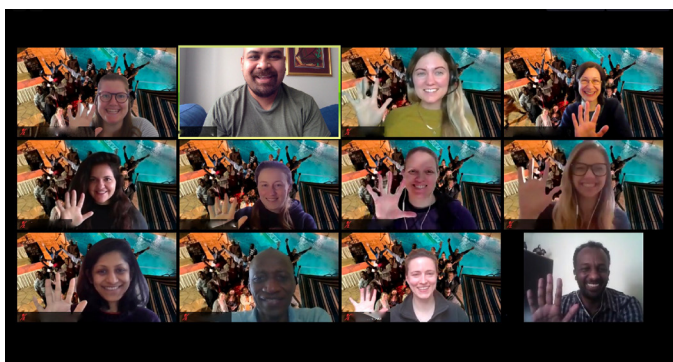
## TO DATE

**45**  
countries  
supported

**2,200**  
EUs surveyed

**6,824,997**  
people examined

## Our 5th Birthday team meeting



Share your survey stories and case studies with us, including photos! On social media use #TropicalData or email us at [admin@tropicaldata.org](mailto:admin@tropicaldata.org)



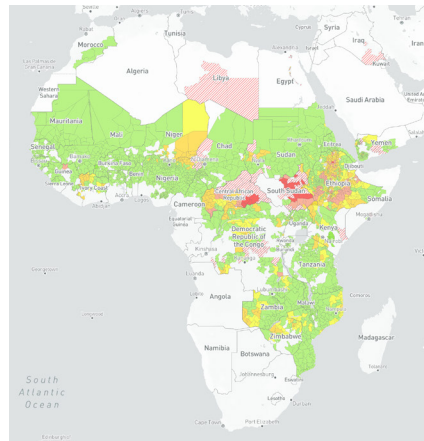
See Tropical Data's snap shot of success over the last five years in our new **infographic**

## Data team updates

First, we have just completed an update to the public version of the Tropical Data analysis code to enable health ministries to easily reproduce the survey results found in our District Report. This new version of the analysis code also allows users to analyse EUs that used the original GTMP/Tropical Data methodology along with EUs that used the 2019 updated Tropical Data methodology. The code repository is available here: <https://github.com/itidat/tropical-data-analysis-public>.

Second, we have just completed a redesign of the ITI-managed Trachoma Atlas. This open-access tool (<https://atlas.trachomadata.org/>) has a streamlined interface that is more user-friendly and responsive. New features allow users to create custom multi-country or multi-region maps, to

visualise certain layers together (e.g. TF with TT, TF with treatment), to export maps as either a raw image file or a formatted PDF file and to search for any administrative unit (not just country). And, perhaps most importantly, the data used to render the maps are now refreshed nightly from the joint ITI/WHO GET2020 Database.



### Legend

#### TF Prevalence

- <5%
- 5-9.9%
- 10-29.9%
- 30-49.9%
- ≥50%
- ▨ Suspected Endemic

A screenshot of the Trachoma Atlas, showing TF prevalence for African Countries in 2021

## As part of our celebrations, we have a spotlight on Patrick Massae, one of our Reference Grader Trainers, discussing his journey working with trachoma and Tropical Data.



"I became an eye care worker in 1983, I won't forget the late Dr Taylor who was a founder of the eye department at Kilimanjaro Christian Medical Center who persuaded me to join the course for eye care. I had little experience with trachoma until I joined the Mvumi Hospital and soon became involved in activities at a district level leading onto a trachoma research project being run by Prof David Mabey and Dr Anthony Solomon in Kahe village, Rombo District. From there I gained a lot of experience and attended international meetings presenting scientific findings. And that is when GTMP started and I automatically got involved.

I was trained as a grader at the beginning, then a trainer, and when Tropical Data started I became a Principal Trainer. I have trained people in both Tanzania, where I live, and abroad and later became a Reference Grader (the top level of Tropical Data trainer), something I wouldn't expect in my life. I really appreciate the Tropical Data team for making me known all over the world and who gave me many chances for trainings in-country and abroad.

Although we were expecting to eliminate trachoma by the year 2020 (GET 2020), we did not all make it. But I congratulate the TD team and countries for the effort they did up to this stage, and those countries who were able to meet the objective. My advice for the countries which still need to eliminate trachoma is to work with Tropical Data, because the team is expert in data analysis and scientific method internationally, providing technical support and materials, working in co-operation with health ministries."



**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)