



working together  
to eliminate schistosomiasis

# **GLOBAL SCHISTOSOMIASIS ALLIANCE**

## **PROGRESS & ACTIVITY 2024-2025**



# From the GSA Executive Team

“Down but NOT out” — this phrase resonates powerfully as individuals, communities, and organizations face the harsh impact of recent funding cuts. The dismantling of USAID, the U.S. withdrawal from WHO, and further reductions in overseas development aid created significant challenges for global health efforts. These setbacks put our long-term goal of eliminating schistosomiasis at risk.

Yet despite these obstacles, the Global Schistosomiasis Alliance (GSA) and its partners remain committed to finding innovative solutions. In 2024 the GSA worked together to deliver several key events and activities to progress schistosomiasis elimination efforts through a community of practice approach. By sharing experiences of new methodologies, preferred practices, new challenges and key findings from research, technology, public health implementation and health policy development, we have made significant strides. In 2025 our aim is to help countries and partners mitigate the risks presented by the new global health financing situation, by supporting problem-solving, innovation, and partnership.

While challenges lie ahead, the neglected tropical disease (NTD) community has consistently shown resilience and adaptability. By embracing new approaches, strengthening partnerships, and sharing responsibilities, we can turn this period of uncertainty into an opportunity for progress. Together, we can continue advancing toward our goal of elimination.

**Dr David Rollinson (OBE)**  
**Director of GSA**

This report outlines the GSA's activities in 2024 and our priorities and planned activities for 2025.

# Table of Contents

**I**

FROM THE GSA  
EXECUTIVE TEAM

**3**

INTRODUCTION

**4**

VISION, MISSION,  
APPROACH

**6**

PROGRESS 2024

**17**

OPERATIONAL  
STRATEGY 2025

**25**

ORGANISATION  
AND GOVERNANCE

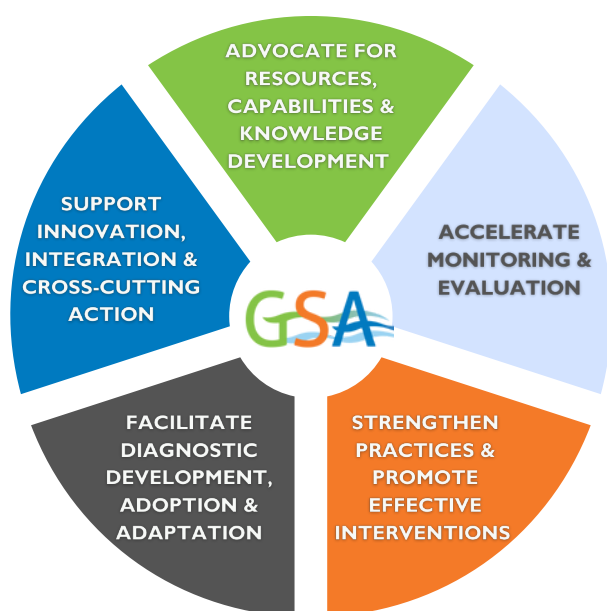
**27**

GLOSSARY

# Introduction

The Global Schistosomiasis Alliance brings the schistosomiasis community together to share experiences, lessons learnt, good practice and innovations, and encourages cross-cutting and cross-sector approaches to quicken the pace to reach elimination of schistosomiasis. We unite stakeholders at all levels to increase commitment, knowledge and encourage long term investment.

The GSA strategic plan (2022-2025) outlines our priorities, which closely align to the WHO 2030 Roadmap and the earlier GSA Schistosomiasis Action Plan.



Our Vision is the elimination of schistosomiasis; our mission is to be the forum for all stakeholders working towards that vision and we aim to achieve this by leading a multistakeholder platform of public and private sector partners across the globe (Figure 2).

*Figure 1 GSA Priority Strategy Objectives*

Our five focus areas and associated actions (Figures 1 and 3) act as the guiding objectives for our activities as reported here. It is with the aim of enhancing and strengthening collective knowledge, public health interventions, monitoring and evaluation methods, and cross sector control activities that our groups, together with our website and many outreach activities bring together the many different strands of schistosomiasis elimination.

# Vision, Mission & Approach

The GSA is an inclusive coalition to mobilise and strengthen efforts to control and eliminate schistosomiasis. It is constituted as a diverse partnership of public health programmes, academic and research institutions, international development agencies and foundations, non-governmental organizations, private sector companies, and advocacy and resource-mobilisations partners. Our alliance is not limited to partner organizations but also includes individuals, research groups and different networks, collaborating as a community to control and eliminate schistosomiasis.

Diversity, equity, and inclusion are at the core of who we are and what we do. They are central to our mission of eliminating schistosomiasis as a public health problem and to our impact as an alliance.

In this annual report we highlight some of the key outputs from our activities in 2024 and operational strategy for 2025. These outputs and plans are organised using the 5 Strategic Priority Objectives (Focus areas) of the [GSA 4-year strategy](#).

We would like to acknowledge the dedicated work and commitment the GSA members and partners have contributed to driving forward these outputs. Our members make up the GSA and it is their work that is presented in this annual report.

**Vision** - Elimination of schistosomiasis.

**Mission** - To be the leading forum for schistosomiasis elimination.

**Approach** - Lead and coordinate a multi-stakeholder platform consisting of public and private sector partners across the globe, contributing to schistosomiasis elimination as a public health problem and ultimately to the sustained interruption of transmission.

Figure 2 GSA Vision, Mission and Approach

Focus areas	Actions
Resources, Capabilities & Knowledge Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promote, support and strengthen schistosomiasis technical and operational capabilities.</li> </ul>
Monitoring and Evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Facilitate and strengthen ways to measure progress and evaluate interventions.</li> <li>• Enable learn &amp; adapt approaches to current and future challenges.</li> <li>• Meet verification/validation requirements for schistosomiasis elimination as a public health problem and interruption of transmission.</li> </ul>
Integrated solutions to schistosomiasis elimination	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enhance practices and improve the quality of services, promoting targeted, context &amp; evidence driven interventions, including preventive chemotherapy, snail control and environmental management, WASH, behaviour change communication and health education and cross-sector collaborative interventions.</li> </ul>
Diagnostics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promote development and adoption of diagnostics to support M&amp;E for MDA, test &amp; treat. surveillance and to facilitate the integration of SCH into all levels of the health system.</li> </ul>
Innovation, Integration & Cross-cutting action	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promote basic, clinical &amp; operational research, to engage with innovations and novel tools from different sector.</li> <li>• Encourage collaborative research to facilitate cross-cutting and cross-sector approaches for sustainable elimination of schistosomiasis.</li> </ul>

Figure 3 GSA Priority Focus Areas and Associated Actions

# Progress 2024

## Governance

The GSA is honoured to welcome a new member to the Advisory Board, **Dr Carol Karutu**, Vice President of programs, The END Fund. Dr Karutu oversees international programs and leads grant-making in more than 30 countries in close collaboration with country governments and on-site partners to control and eliminate NTDs. She is responsible for programmatic strategy development, data management, advocacy, partnership relations, and investor engagement.

Carol is a Doctor of Public Health (DrPH) with 20+ years of senior level experience working on HIV and AIDS, health systems strengthening, workforce development, maternal child health programs, including the provision of strategic technical and management leadership with international and local non-governmental organizations (NGOs).

## Resources, Capabilities & Knowledge Development

### Collaboration & Advocacy

GSA commits to promote, support and strengthen schistosomiasis technical and operational capabilities.

In 2024 we used the following activities to strengthen knowledge sharing and capabilities development:

- Leveraged opportunities and collaborations across partners and stakeholders to share learnings, identify gaps and develop solutions – opportunities include GSA meetings, NNN meetings, COR NTD, and online meetings.

- Leveraged working groups, work streams and special interest groups to participate and feed into a range of NTD/schisto activities, including:
  - GSA-RNAS+ schistosomiasis symposium
  - GSA-ISNTD webinars on “Behaviour Change Interventions for Schistosomiasis Elimination” and “Test and Treat strategies for schistosomiasis elimination”
  - Development of ‘A Protocol for Genomic DNA extraction from freshwater snail tissues’
  - WHO Monitoring & Evaluation (M&E) Framework for Schistosomiasis (SCH) and Soil-Transmitted Helminthiasis (STH)
  - WHO R&D Blueprint for NTDs
  - NNN Quick Guide to Social and Behaviour change for NTDs
  - Minimum Service Package for the integration of female genital schistosomiasis into sexual and reproductive health and rights interventions
  - FIG-IBP Network International Women's Day webinar on “Agents of Change: Your role in addressing FGS”.
- We strengthened the GSA website and resource hub, uploading [40 new resources](#), and over 40 news and event items. We carried out a tone of voice review and reviewed the use of images on the website to improve page load time.

## Communication

GSA ensured schistosomiasis stakeholders were informed of key schisto news, had timely access to opportunities, technical resources, and networking events, and leveraged opportunities to raise the profile of schistosomiasis.

- Increased reach of our communications and network
  - Mailing list: Total of 860 subscribers. In 2024 we shared three Schisto Bulletins to the full mailing list, and four Research Updates to subscribers interested in research related news.

- LinkedIn: 2413 followers – high engagement and impression rate. Followers and visitors mainly from Research, Higher Education, Healthcare and Public health sectors. Geographical representation mainly from the African, European and American region.
- X: 4,790 followers
- BlueSky: 597 followers
- Telegram: GSA Early Career Research Network on Telegram - 95 members mainly from the African region.
- Continued to increase language accessibility, translating the GSA strategy document into French and Portuguese and making the 2024 progress report available in English, French and Portuguese, as well as promotional materials for conferences and meetings. We ensured all updated working group terms of references are available in English and French. We continue to provide translated captioning, live interpretation and translated slides for meetings wherever possible, and ensure our meeting materials and reports are available in English and French.
- GSA leveraged events and opportunities to raise the profile of schistosomiasis and of stakeholders working on schistosomiasis elimination. This included:
  - International days and significant events and meetings such as World NTD Day 2024, International Women’s Day, World Health Day and the 75th anniversary of WHO, World Immunization Week, [Cervical Cancer Elimination Day](#), [World AIDS Day](#) highlight link with FGS and why it matters.
  - Creating communication and engagement opportunities across different sectors that influence schistosomiasis. Thanks to FIG’s continued advocacy activities in January 2024 the UK Parliament International Development Committee called for [the integration of Female Genital Schistosomiasis into Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights programming](#), and has made this recommendation to the UK Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO).

- Similarly, [in January 2024 Malawi MOH working with FIG partners became](#) the first country in sub-Saharan Africa to include Genital Schistosomiasis in the development of its National Guidelines for Syndromic Management of Sexually Transmitted Infections, to reduce misdiagnosis and mismanagement. FIG partners continued advocacy work with representatives from the World Health Organization (WHO), the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development and others through HIV, SRHR, gender equality conferences and events calling for action on FGS to protect women and girls from serious sexual and reproductive health complications, HIV & cervical cancer ([The Time is NOW - Addressing the unmet needs of women and girls in Africa through FGS integration](#)) at the [AIDS 2024 conference](#). On the 14th of October, the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development launched a new initiative '[From Neglect to Action: Invest in Women, Invest in Health](#)' at the World Health Summit in Berlin, Germany. GSA and FIG continued to raise awareness of FGS working with a journalist on an article for [The Guardian on the impact of FGS](#) and the work being done to tackle it in Kenya and organised a webinar with the WHO IBP Network (family planning and sexual and reproductive health) for International Women's Day webinar "[Agents of Change: Your role in addressing Female Genital Schistosomiasis](#)".
- Promote regional and national schistosomiasis events.
  - The GSA and Regional Network for Asian Schistosomiasis and other Helminth Zoonosis (RNAS+) co-hosted the [schistosomiasis focused meeting](#) at the 7th Symposium on Surveillance-Response Systems Leading to Tropical Diseases Elimination (7th SRS) in Shanghai, China. The meeting was an ideal opportunity to share lessons learnt, progress made and innovations to eliminate schistosomiasis and reach the WHO 2030 targets. The GSA leveraged the SRS to strengthen existing collaborations with the Institute for Parasitic Diseases, CDC China and with the Institution-based Network on China-Africa Cooperation for Schistosomiasis Elimination (INCAS) and to establish a new partnership with the Regional Network on Asian Schistosomiasis and other Helminth Zoonoses (RNAS+) to collaborate and share lessons learnt and progress made.

- GSA contributed to the Wellcome Trust meeting to guide research needs and Wellcome Trusts interest - [Wellcome Schistosomiasis Workshop Report](#) and the NTD NGO Network SCH-STH Disease Specific Group session on “[Schistosomiasis and Soil-Transmitted Helminths: Evidence Tracking and Drug Supply](#)”.
- GSA participated at the [17th International Symposium on Schistosomiasis in Salvador, Brazil](#), organised by our partner Fiocruz. The central theme was “Perspectives for the elimination of schistosomiasis”. The symposium drew attention to the significant efforts being made to control and eliminate schistosomiasis in Brazil and highlighted exciting technological advances concerning transmission detection, treatment, diagnostics, mapping and vaccines.
- Other meetings include a scientific research meeting on Female and Male Genital Schistosomiasis with the British Society for Parasitology meeting and an FGS research priorities workshop with LifeArc (manuscript submitted); Conference on Control Strategies for Schistosomiasis in Madagascar, amongst others.

# Monitoring & Evaluation

GSA commits to facilitate and strengthen ways to measure progress and evaluate interventions. Enable learn & adapt approaches to current and future challenges. Meet verification/validation requirements for schistosomiasis elimination as a public health problem and interruption of transmission.

## M&E Working Group

- The [Monitoring & Evaluation WG](#) (47 members) welcomed two new chairs Dr Khadime Sylla (Université Cheikh Anta DIOP, Senegal) and Dr Stella Kepha (Kenya Medical Research Institute, Kenya) and held a meeting on country experiences of implementing the [Schistosomiasis Practical and Precision Assessment \(SPPA\)](#) methodology. The group heard from Kenya, Guinea, and Liberia.

## WHO Monitoring and Evaluation Framework for schistosomiasis and soil-transmitted helminthiasis

- The GSA supported dissemination of the WHO Monitoring and Evaluation Framework for schistosomiasis and soil-transmitted helminthiasis, and opportunities for stakeholders to discuss, ask questions and share experiences on schistosomiasis M&E through platforms such as the NNN SCH-STH DSG meetings ([March 2024](#) and [October 2024](#)) and other stakeholder meetings and webinars (e.g. ESPEN) throughout the year.

# Integrated solutions to schistosomiasis elimination

GSA commits to enhance practices and improve the quality of services, promoting targeted, context & evidence driven interventions, including preventive chemotherapy, snail control and environmental management, WASH, behaviour change communication and health education and cross-sector collaborative interventions. How did we do this in 2024?

## GSA Ambassadors

- [GSA Ambassadors](#) (20 members) The GSA ambassadors met in July 2024 to share country updates on schistosomiasis implementation funding, impact assessments and mapping, and praziquantel supply and access. The ambassadors also discussed the MAP-FGS study, WASH and Snail control interventions, Test and Treat approaches, paediatric formulation of praziquantel, the WHO road map mid-way milestones and the GSA strategy and priorities post 2025. The ambassadors recommended reaching out to the Africa Research Network for NTDS, who are partnering with COR NTD to develop regional meetings and support on operational research for NTDs in Africa.

## Behaviour Change and Health Education Working Group

- The [Behaviour Change and Health Education working.group](#) (35 members) reviewed and updated the terms of references and met to exchange research on the use of games for enhancing health engagement and behaviour change for schistosomiasis. The BCWG fed into the [NNN “Quick Guide on Behaviour Change Interventions for NTD Programmes”](#), launched at the NTD NGO Network annual Conference in October 2024 by the NNN Cross-Cutting Group on WASH.

## Implementation Working Group

- The [Implementation Working Group](#) (21 members) met to share experiences on subdistrict MDA implementation and the findings from Act To End West in Feb 2024.

## Other activities

- In December 2024, the GSA hosted a key stakeholder meeting on “Improving Schistosomiasis Preventive Chemotherapy Implementation”. The meeting hosted by the GSA and led by the moderator, Marianne Comparet from ISNTD, brought together key schistosomiasis preventive chemotherapy (PC) funders, implementation support organizations, ESPEN and GSA IWG chairs, members and ambassadors. It discussed the challenges with PC for schistosomiasis, focusing on the implementation funding shortfall, challenges with balancing supply and demand for countries, issues with transparency on drug allocation criteria, an increasingly unpredictable PC financing landscape and the subsequent impact on praziquantel supply. Actions identified included:
  - Explore the possibility of convening stakeholders with national schistosomiasis programme coordinators at key events in 2025 such as InCORNTD, programme managers meetings and other events to discuss and progress points raised during the meeting.
  - Request for the establishment of a schistosomiasis technical/expert committee by the Global Coordination and Stewardship Committee (GCSC) with clear terms of reference and objectives.

# Diagnostic Development, Adoption & Adaptation

## Diagnostics Work Stream

GSA commits to promote development and adoption of diagnostics to support M&E for MDA, test & treat, surveillance and to facilitate the integration of SCH into all levels of the health system.

- The [Diagnostic work stream](#) (65 members) shared updates from diagnostic research and development and made available standard operating procedures on the collection of samples for molecular diagnostics of parasites, now available on the GSA website.
- The diagnostic group met to discuss updates and priorities for researchers working on schistosomiasis diagnostic development and evaluation. Three potential outputs were discussed:
  - New Terms of Reference as this group changes from a work stream to a working group.
  - Develop a checklist for sample collection and storage for diagnostic development and evaluation.
  - Collect protocols for sample collection and storage and diagnostic tests. These will be uploaded to the [GSA Diagnostic resource collection](#).

# Innovation, Integration & Cross-cutting action

GSA commits to promote basic, clinical & operational research, to engage with innovations and novel tools from different sectors. Encourage collaborative research to facilitate crosscutting and cross-sector approaches for sustainable elimination of schistosomiasis.

## Research Working Group

- [Research working.group](#) (31 members) established the GSA Early Careers Researchers Steering Committee to guide the GSA offer to ECRs, chaired by Omosafe Osinoiki (Sightsavers). The RWG met in September 2024 to share updates about the GSA ECR activities, ideas for conference workshops and experience sharing on the topic of Affected voices-capturing patient input in NTD research.

## Early Career Research Network

- [Early Career Researchers \(ECRs\) Network](#) (95 members): The ECR Steering Committee met twice in 2024 to discuss setting up the GSA Early Career Researchers Network, after consultation with ECRs the steering committee selected Telegram as the platform and launched the GSA ECR Network on Telegram where ECRs can discuss schistosomiasis research, share publications, opportunities, tools, and news by research theme.

## Engineering Working Group

- The [Engineering working.group](#) (30 members) did not meet in 2024. Members of this group continued working on a manuscript for publication. Members of the group were consulted for schistosomiasis control aspects to do with climate change, WASH and water infrastructure.

## Snail Vector Working Group

- [Snail Vector working.group](#) – (101 members) met several times throughout the year to share new research and developed a general [Protocol for genomic DNA extraction from freshwater snail tissues.](#)

## Genital Schistosomiasis CoP & FGS Integration Group [FIG]

- [Genital Schistosomiasis Community of Practice](#) (176 members) welcomed new members including recent FGS scholars from The FAST Package and Geneva Learning Foundation FGS training for francophone country researchers and healthcare professionals. The email group continued to be used to share updates and information on FGS and MGS activities.
- [FGS Integration group](#) [FIG]: GSA is a member of the FIG steering group and comms task team. FIG advocacy is outlined under Resources, Capabilities and Knowledge Development. FIG contributed to the development of the [FGS Minimum Service Package \(MSP\)](#) for governments, public health practitioners, specialists, and programmers in schistosomiasis-endemic countries who need to integrate FGS diagnosis, prevention and control intervention into SRHR services and programmes.

## Other activities

- Conferences and meetings: Schistosomiasis was well represented in 2024 international scientific and public health meetings including: “[Towards the 2030 Schistosomiasis Control and Elimination Goals – Successes and Challenges](#)” at SRS, NNN meetings, [17º Simpósio Internacional sobre Esquistossomose-Brazil](#) and online meetings.

# Operational Strategy for 2025

## Resources, Capabilities & Knowledge Development

### Knowledge and capabilities development

- Leverage opportunities and collaborations across partners and stakeholders to share learnings, identify gaps and develop solutions – opportunities include:
  - The GSA leveraged the [International Conference on NTD Research \(InCORNTD\)](#) held in January 2025 in Kigali, Rwanda to raise this topic with key NTD and global health operational and implementation research organisations and government representatives, organising a Technical symposium during the opening plenary of the conference, reaching the whole audience of InCORNTD, The Technical Symposium “Health systems integration for schistosomiasis and NTDs” introduced perspectives on integrated health service delivery and shared two case studies, one in Uganda and one in Rwanda, as well as the perspective of UNICEF on this approach. This was followed by a detailed 3.5-hour breakout session, titled “Rethinking MDA campaigns: Leveraging integrated health campaigns for improved effectiveness and impact”. The session examined different models for delivering preventive chemotherapy for schistosomiasis and other NTDs, leveraging existing health platforms. This included group activities aimed at identifying factors, barriers and challenges that contribute to the success, or otherwise, of integration strategies, explored the metrics and monitoring processes required to track progress on health deliverables, and considered the policy recommendations and health system strengthening approaches required to enable the development and uptake of integrated health campaigns that address PC-NTDs. The output from this meeting includes a comprehensive report highlighting top research and policy priorities and developing a viewpoint and call to action to be published in a peer-reviewed journal.

- In 2025 the GSA will use key events and meetings such as the WHO AFRO National NTD programme managers meeting, the NNN forum and other opportunities to discuss the delivery of PC for schistosomiasis through integrated delivery mechanisms, such as integrated health campaigns and/or primary and routine health services. Opportunities to facilitate and enable evidence-building, policy recommendations and forward planning will be sought.
- The GSA will continue successful collaboration with ISNTD to deliver insightful webinars highlighting current research, innovation and implementation for schistosomiasis elimination.

## **Raising the profile of schistosomiasis, messaging & advocacy for 2025**

- For the period of 2025-2026 key messages and calls to action will be focused on

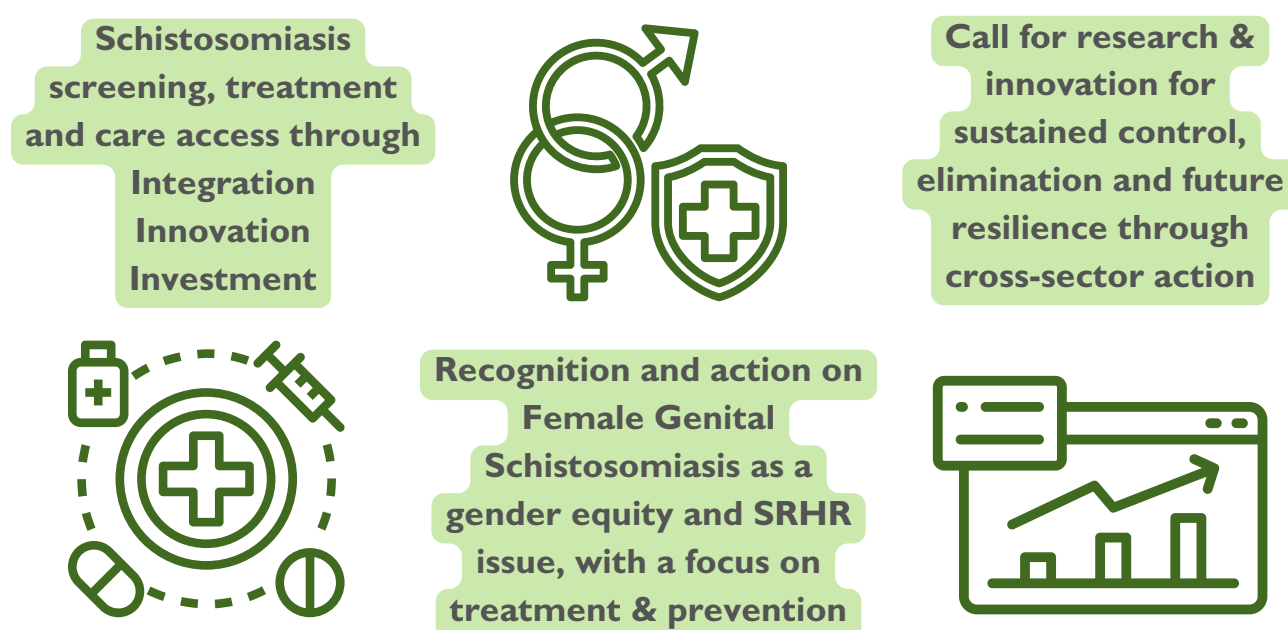


Figure 4 GSA message and advocacy themes 2025

- Building the case of integration for effective delivery and appropriate access to praziquantel. Considering the rapidly evolving global health landscape, and drawing on consultations and discussions held in 2024, including the “Improving Schistosomiasis Preventive Chemotherapy Implementation” meeting, the GSA will look for opportunities to bring together stakeholders to discuss, explore and appropriately advocate for, integrated models of delivery of preventive chemotherapy with praziquantel.
- GSA will leverage the following events and opportunities - GSA working groups and networks
  - The GSA working groups will be leveraged to bring together experts and stakeholders to share new findings and identify challenges and opportunities to accelerate progress for schistosomiasis behaviour change interventions, diagnostic development, integrated delivery of treatments, engineering solutions, research and control of snail vectors, healthcare response to genital schistosomiasis, research and innovation, and monitoring and evaluation. Key stakeholders will be consulted to ascertain whether it would be appropriate and useful to establish a working group or interest group to consider schistosomiasis vaccines.
  - The FGS integration Group will be leveraged to advocate to the global fund and other key SRHR and women’s health and rights stakeholders to recognise FGS as gender equity need in health and development and integrate FGS prevention, screening and treatment/management into appropriate health services.
  - The GSA network will be leveraged to facilitate knowledge exchange and support research on areas of innovations to build resilience for schistosomiasis elimination. This includes the impact of environment, climate & water resource management & WASH on schistosomiasis transmission, prevention and elimination, feeding into potential policy recommendations, and the development of a suite of diagnostics for different needs and contexts, strengthen monitoring and surveillance methodologies and support new tools such as vaccinations and new treatments.

## Communications

- Website:
  - The GSA website and platforms of communication and exchange. The GSA will move to a new and improved website platform in 2025 that will deliver a comprehensive, searchable and user-friendly resource database, strengthening the one-stop-shop objective of the website. This new platform will also improve content management and content visibility.
- Newsletter:
  - Regular Schisto Bulletin newsletter, covering schistosomiasis news circulated 3-4 times a year.
  - Frequent Schistosomiasis Research Update bulletin.
  - Ad hoc announcements to mailing list.
- Social Media Channels
  - promote explanatory animations, calls to action, resource and tool dissemination and events.
  - The GSA will look at how different social media platforms can be used – optimise LinkedIn, explore Bluesky and other platforms. We will review our communication channels to ensure we are getting good reach across geographical areas and across different stakeholder groups. We will increase our use of communication tools that reach professional stakeholders, early career researchers and global health activists, such as LinkedIn, Telegram and Bluesky.
  - Strengthen current collaborations and seek new opportunities to deliver webinars and talks on schistosomiasis elimination to diverse global health and development researchers, campaigners and stakeholders.
- In 2025 the GSA will begin a strategic review process to identify priorities and areas of need for 2026-2030.

# Monitoring and Evaluation

- Monitoring and Evaluation working group, under the leadership of the co-chairs Dr Khadime Sylla (Université Cheikh Anta DIOP, Senegal) and Dr Stella Kepha (Kenya Medical Research Institute, Kenya), will convene meetings to discuss challenges and needs for achieving the target of “Elimination as a Public Health Problem (EPHP)” and to feed into the Subnational Framework & Action Plan for SCH & STH (SNAPS) project.
- The GSA & M&E WG members will explore opportunities for workshops on M&E experience-sharing, good practice, tool development etc, e.g. NNN and COR NTDs forums.

# Integrated solutions to schistosomiasis elimination

## GSA Ambassadors

- Participate in a consultation on an individual basis online and through various meetings for guidance and advice on schistosomiasis elimination updates, challenges and needs.

## Behaviour Change and Health Education Working Group

- Co-chairs Ms Naomi Caplan and Ms Willemijn Zaadnoordijk. The group met in February 2025 to hear about Social and Behaviour Change interventions in Bench Maji, Ethiopia and to discuss M&E methods and metrics for behaviour change interventions. The group plans to continue sharing behaviour change intervention experiences and preferred practices.

## Implementation Working Group

- The Implementation Working Group is currently paused due to the fallout from the funding cuts. We will monitor the situation and continue to use the communication channel to share updated with working group members. We hope members continue to input into ongoing discussions concerning schistosomiasis preventive chemotherapy.

# Diagnostic Development, Adoption & Adaptation

## Diagnostics Working Group

- Diagnostic working group, under the leadership of Dr Jean Coulibaly (Université Félix Houphouët-Boigny) and Dr Pytsje Hoekstra (Leiden University). This group will convene to share updates on diagnostic research and development projects and to further develop the working document on sample collection and storage criteria, checklist for biobanking samples and review of the document on commercially available diagnostic tests to ensure it is up to date. The group will also look for opportunities to meet and network at relevant upcoming events, e.g. EDCTP, ECTMIH, ASTMH etc.

## Innovation, Integration & Cross-cutting action

### Research Working Group

- Co-Chairs Dr Derick Osakunor and Dr Justin Komguez Nono. This group will discuss upcoming conferences and events that could be leveraged to explore research topics on optimizing praziquantel use, vaccinations, immunology and pathology as well as networking opportunities. The RWG are looking at increasing collaborations between GSA working groups and diverse research groups.

### Early Career Researchers Network

- Early Career Researchers Network, guided by the ECR Steering Committee, chaired by Omosafe Osinoiki (Sightsavers), are developing plans to strengthen the network on Telegram, and host two events online to support ECRs with career development skills.

## Engineering Working Group

- Engineering working group chairs, Prof Giulio De Leo (Stanford University) and Dr May Sule (Cranfield University) have submitted a scoping review on schistosomiasis linked to water resource infrastructure and have collaborated on a proposal aimed at understanding schistosomiasis transmission and water resource management in five countries. The chairs plan to convene key meetings to discuss schistosomiasis, snail vectors and water infrastructure, and to review an information piece targeting policy makers working in the water, agriculture, development and infrastructure sectors to advocate for stronger cross-sector collaboration to mitigate schistosomiasis and other water related infections.

## Snail Vector Working Group

- Snail Vector Working Group, led by Dr Fiona Allan (London School Hygiene and Tropical Medicine & Natural History Museum, London), Dr Martina Laidemitt (University of New Mexico) and Dr Tom Pennance (Natural History Museum, London), will continue the successful model of short research focused talks in their meetings, and will look at developing resources, visual aids and practical guides from existing materials to share on the GSA website.

## Genital Schistosomiasis Community of Practice

- Continue to serve as a forum for biomedical, social and clinical researchers as well as health care professions (gynaecologists, nurses, midwives) working on Female and Male Genital Schistosomiasis, to increase knowledge sharing and lessons learnt. GSA will work with FIG members to see if there is scope for the GS CoP to evolve into a more interactive forum and directory of FGS and MGS research and healthcare professionals in endemic countries.

## FGS Integration Group [FIG]

- In the first quarter of 2025 the FIG Comms Task Team developed a Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) document on FGS meant for the lay reader [bit.ly/FGS\\_FAQs](https://bit.ly/FGS_FAQs).

- FIG organised two webinars: one with the Eastern Africa National Networks of AIDS and Health Service Organisations (EANNASO) and Women For Global Fund on “Ending the Neglect - Unlocking the potential of including FGS in Global Fund HIV prevention programmes” and the other with Canadian Network for NTDs on “Integrating FGS to Optimize Women and Girls’ Health in Africa.”
- The GSA represented FIG during a session on “Progress in FGS Control Introduction in Countries”. FIG will continue to raise the profile of FGS and schistosomiasis with healthcare professionals, advocate, funders and leaders, including planning further webinars targeting country-based Global Fund and HIV advocates, organising side events and sessions at the World Health Assembly and the STI and HIV Congress. FIG will work with ESPEN to review FGS tools currently available and plan how they can help NTD programme managers, as well as identify gaps.

## Other activities

- The GSA collaborated with the ESPEN team on a plenary session “Strengthening NTD Elimination in the WHO African region through Innovation, Integration, and Investment” at the WHO NTD Programme Managers meeting in Togo in April 2025.
- The GSA is supporting the NNN SCH-STH DSG with their virtual spring meeting and the planning of their workshop at the NNN annual meeting.
- The GSA will work with working group members and partners to leverage opportunities for developing strategies, toolkits, resources and experience sharing to strengthen innovation, integration and cross-cutting action.
- The GSA will explore opportunities to collaborate with partners and stakeholders, strategically positioning schistosomiasis within cross-sector initiatives that focus on environmental and climate change frameworks, WASH, food security, nutrition, and agricultural development programs.

# Organization and Governance

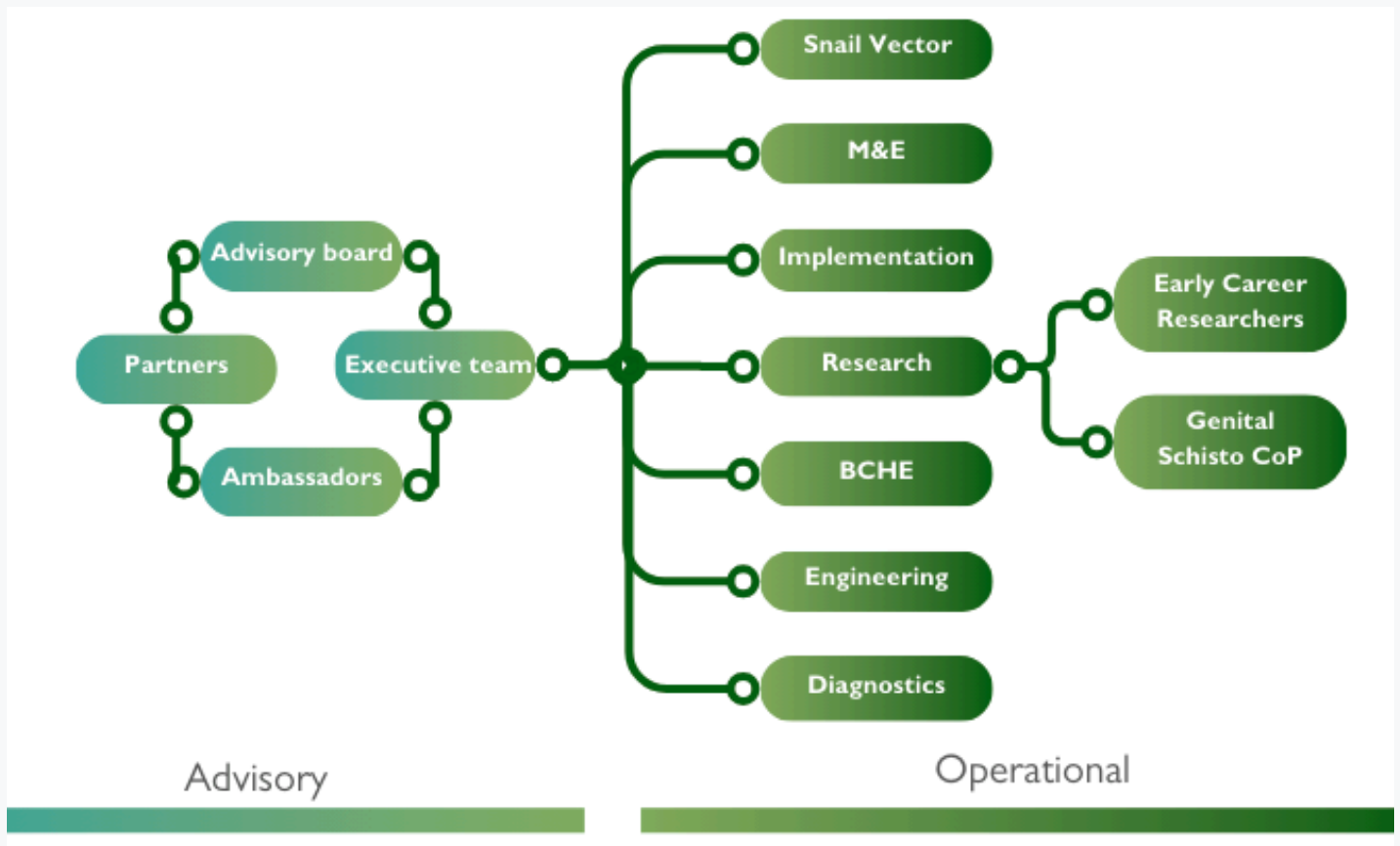


Figure 5 - GSA Network and community

The GSA is managed by an Executive Group and Coordination Team which oversees and supports the GSA Working Groups (WG) and other interest groups. Working Groups bring together relevant experts and stakeholders, drawn from the partner organizations and from other organizations, research groups and programmes, to produce tangible outputs addressing specific challenges or barriers to schistosomiasis control and elimination as identified in the GSA Schistosomiasis Action Plan.

The working group outputs are aimed at accelerating progress towards the WHO roadmap goals and beyond. The [GSA Executive Group and Coordination Team](#) works with the Working Group Chairs to develop an annual operational strategy and plan and consults with the WHO NTD Department on a regular basis.

The alliance also has a network of GSA Ambassadors who are GSA points of contact in endemic countries and advise on progress being made and challenges being faced in-country with regard to the control and elimination of schistosomiasis. They contribute to discussions to determine actions required by the schistosomiasis community and feedback on their experience and concerns to the community via the GSA and fellow Ambassadors. The annual operational strategy and progress report is reviewed by [the GSA Advisory Board](#).

# Glossary

- AIDS – Acquired Immune Deficiency Disorder
- BCHE – Behaviour Change Health Education
- BC – Behaviour Change
- BCWG – Behaviour Change Working Group
- COR NTD – Coalition for Operational Research for NTDs
- CoP - Community of Practice
- EANNASO -Eastern Africa National Networks of AIDS and Health Service Organisations
- ECR – Early Career Researcher
- ECTMIH – European Congress Tropical Medicines and International Health
- ESPEN – Expanded Special Project for Elimination of NTDs
- EWG – Engineering Working Group
- FGS – Female Genital Schistosomiasis
- FIG – FGS Integration Group
- GCSC - Global Coordination and Stewardship Committee
- GSA - Global Schistosomiasis Alliance
- HIV – Human Immunodeficiency Virus
- IBP Network - Implementing Best Practice Network
- INCAS - Institution-based Network on China-Africa Cooperation for Schistosomiasis Elimination
- INCORNTD – Internation Conference on NTD Research in Africa
- ISNTD – International Society for Neglected Tropical Diseases
- IWG – Implementation Working Group
- MDA – Mass Drug Administration
- M&E - Monitoring and Evaluation
- NIPD – China National Institute for Parasitic Diseases
- NGO – Non-Governmental Organizations
- NTDs – Neglected Tropical Diseases
- NNN – NTD NGO Network
- OR – Operational Research
- PC – Preventative Chemotherapy
- RNAS+ - Regional Network for Asian Schistosomiasis and other Helminth Zoonosis
- SCH – Schistosomiasis
- SNAPS - Subnational Framework & Action Plan for SCH & STH
- SPPA - Schistosomiasis Practical and Precision Assessment
- STH – Soil-transmitted Helminthiasis
- STI -Sexually Transmitted Infections
- SRS - Symposium on Surveillance-Response Systems Leading to Tropical Diseases Elimination
- SRHR – Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights
- FCDC - UK Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO)
- USAID – U.S. Agency for International Development
- WASH – Water, Sanitation and Hygiene
- WG – Working Group
- WHA – World Health Assembly
- WHO – World Health Organization
- WHO HQ – WHO Headquarters in Geneva, Switzerland
- WHO AFRO – WHO Regional Office for Africa

working together

to eliminate schistosomiasis

*Global Schistosomiasis Alliance 2025. All rights reserved*



*\*Design by Kat Gulyas GH Communications Consultancy*

