



USAID
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

Mapping for AIDS and Malaria Reduction with the Young African Leaders Initiative

In an effort to mobilize youth in Africa to work with data to address challenges in public health, community development, and humanitarian response, the U.S. Department of State (DoS) and the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) are coordinating “mapathons” for Young African Leaders Initiative (YALI) alumni to be hosted at YALI Regional Leadership Centers (RLCs) in Kenya, Ghana, and South Africa, as well as at U.S. universities currently hosting Mandela Washington Fellows. Concurrently, the [Tanzania dLab](#)—founded under the U.S. President’s Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) & Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC) Data Collaboratives for Local Impact (DCLI) [partnership](#)—will also host a similarly focused mapathon.

Participants at these events will have the opportunity to contribute to mapping projects designed to improve the effectiveness of programs supported by PEPFAR, the President’s Malaria Initiative, humanitarian aid programs, and others through the availability of more accurate, updated, and free geographic data. Organizations affiliated with [YouthMappers](#), [MapGive](#), and DCLI will facilitate the mapathons.

The mapathons are taking place in advance of a [high-level conference](#) on data and development in Africa, organized by the [Global Partnership for Sustainable Development Data](#). With the participation of senior government officials across the region, this is an opportunity to highlight the benefits of engaging African youth in data-driven initiatives that support development and humanitarian programs while promoting civic engagement and fostering in-demand technical skills.

Moving forward, we will continue to engage the YALI community to participate in mapathons to enhance their technical skills, identify ways to participate in the global mapping community, and develop sustainable linkages with development and humanitarian programs addressing challenges in their countries.

What is a mapathon? Mapathons are coordinated mapping events, typically held inside computer labs and other open spaces. With an internet connection and available computers, participants contribute to mapping projects using the online OpenStreetMap platform. Mapathons are the primary way to quickly contribute digital mapping data to locations anywhere in the world and are critical in supporting programs working directly in communities.

Watch our video to learn more! “*Why map?*” <https://mapgive.state.gov/why-map>

