MAGGIE STEBER/*THE WASHINGTON POST*/GETTY

Elephantiasis is the result of a neglected tropical disease that overwhelmingly affects poor people.

but the lack of reliable distribution systems has often kept people from receiving treatment. Since 2006, USAID has been trying to fix that issue. One way is by funding non-governmental organizations that ensure community workers in remote towns have the tools they need to treat people who are ill.

As a result of this and other efforts, disease transmission has slowed. More than 300 million people who required treatments for at least one neglected tropical disease five years ago no longer need them.

But millions of people around the world still need therapies and cures. Scientists could speed up progress by considering the challenges in places where neglected diseases occur, says David Molyneux, a parasitologist at the Liverpool School of Tropical Medicine, UK. For example, strategies to train and pay health workers to spot early signs of infection might save more lives than sequencing parasitic genomes.

And simple tests for detecting several neglected diseases would also be advantageous for people around the world, says Tom Frieden, a former CDC director.

All of this work requires money, which might be a problem if the US Congress approves President Donald Trump's request to cut the budget of the state department and USAID by 37%. "Any drop of funding in this area will lead to more death and more suffering," Gates says.

However, the partnerships formed over the past five years provide a kind of safety net. And the fact that the United Nations chose alleviation of poverty as its first Sustainable Development Goal — a list of targets for 2016–30 made by global leaders to improve the world — gives researchers such as Molyneux hope. "Unless you are going to do something about these diseases, people in poverty will continue to be constrained by poverty." ■

CORRECTION

The News story 'Cassini's science swansong' (*Nature* **544,** 149–150; 2017) erred in implying that the inner rings are known to contain propeller-shaped gaps. The gaps are known to exist in outer rings, but no hints have yet been seen of them in the inner ones.