

Global messaging guide: World NTD Day 2026

Theme: Unite. Act. Eliminate NTDs.

- **Unite.** Bring together governments, communities, civil society, donors, and partners to achieve our shared goals and end NTDs.
- **Act.** Turn commitment into impact through innovation, integrated approaches, strong country leadership, new and sustained resources, technical guidance, solidarity, and coordination.
- **Eliminate.** Build on proven progress by scaling prevention and treatment, strengthening surveillance, advancing research and development, interrupting transmission, managing disability, and ending stigma.

Key Messages

NTDs are a massive but solvable global health challenge. Over one billion people worldwide are affected by NTDs. These diseases are preventable, treatable, and increasingly being eliminated – yet NTDs remain one of the most underfunded areas of global health.

Proven, low cost tools exist to prevent and treat NTDs. These interventions are cost-effective to deliver and scalable – making NTDs one of the smartest and most solvable health investments.

Progress is real, measurable and unprecedented. To date, fifty-eight countries have eliminated at least one NTD, showing that sustained commitment and resources deliver tangible and historic results.

Investing in NTDs delivers extraordinary returns. Every US\$1 invested in preventive chemotherapy for NTDs generates approximately US\$25 in economic benefits for affected communities..

Ending NTDs builds a safer and more resilient world for everyone. Sustained investment in NTDs has compounding benefits – it strengthens global health security, creates healthier and more equitable communities, drives stronger economies and creates safer, more stable societies.

Domestic ownership and financing of NTD programs are crucial, and increasing, laying the foundation for long-term sustainability. Investing in better tools, systems, approaches and partnerships helps countries move closer towards independence from external aid.

Sustained political and financial commitment is urgently needed. Two decades of progress are now at risk from cuts to foreign aid, global conflict, and climate change. To achieve global NTD goals, we must protect existing commitments, secure new commitments, unlock innovative financing and implement new approaches – with endemic countries leading the way.

The cost of inaction is staggering. NTDs drain an estimated US\$33 billion from families and communities in lost wages and out-of-pocket expenses alone each year – trapping communities in cycles of poverty and hindering development.

Messaging sub-themes

Country leadership and sustainable domestic action.

Progress against NTDs to date has been driven by strong country leadership and national commitment. Sustained prioritisation of NTDs within national plans and budgets — alongside increased domestic financing — is more critical than ever to protect gains and keep elimination on track.

Integrated approaches to fighting NTDs.

NTDs cannot be addressed through vertical efforts alone. Integrating NTD prevention, diagnosis, treatment and care into primary health care, UHC, WASH, education, and other essential services strengthens health systems and expands access. Partners should use World NTD Day to advocate for practical, well-resourced integration that protects existing gains while reaching underserved communities.

Elevating community voices and lived experiences.

People affected by NTDs must be at the centre of elimination efforts. Meaningful inclusion of community voices, lived experience, and disability perspectives leads to more effective, dignified, and sustainable programmes. World NTD Day 2026 should elevate these perspectives and shift the narrative to people-centred impact and accountability.

Expanding partnerships and collective action in a changing world.

Climate change, conflict, and economic instability are reshaping NTD risk and response. Addressing these challenges requires coordinated action across health, climate, humanitarian, water, education, and development sectors. World NTD Day is an opportunity to strengthen cross-sector partnerships, engage new actors, and

mobilise collective action to protect progress in an increasingly complex global landscape.

Calls to Action

Protect existing commitments. Safeguard two decades of progress by acknowledging and increasing donor support, the vital role of drug donation programmes, and the political will that has enabled historic achievements.

Secure new pledges and leadership. Call on donor and endemic countries to commit fresh resources, endorse and implement the Kigali Declaration, and embed NTDs in national development and health plans and budgets.

Invest in innovation. Champion investment in the development and uptake of new tools, diagnostics, treatments, and delivery models that can close persistent gaps and make elimination more efficient and cost-effective.

Integrate and strengthen systems. Advocate for NTD interventions to be embedded into universal health care and primary health care, and integrated within WASH, education, and other sectors for maximum impact.

Unlock innovative financing. Advocate for and promote new funding pathways – including domestic financing, cross-sector investments, dedicated disease elimination tracks in the World Bank's IDA21 and the African Development Bank, and pooled or catalytic funding platforms – to close the gap and ensure sustainability.

Celebrate success and build momentum. Highlight success stories including elimination milestones, new commitments, country leadership and innovation to inspire action, raise awareness of new financing models, and drive renewed investment.

Priority Data Points

- The human cost of NTDs is severe. NTDs cause around 120,000 deaths and the loss of 14.1 million DALYs each year. [[WHO Rationale for Investment](#)]
- The economic burden of NTDs is staggering. The household income lost from out-of-pocket health expenditures and the wages lost due to NTDs is estimated to be at least US\$33 billion per year. [[An Investment Case for Ending Neglected Tropical Diseases](#)]

- Investing in solutions for NTDs pays for itself many times over. Preventive chemotherapy yields an estimated US\$25 benefit for every US\$1 invested. [[WHO NTD Road Map 2021–2030](#)]
- The pharmaceutical industry has committed 28 billion units of medicine for NTDs from 2021 through 2030, underscoring its critical role in accelerating progress and making it one of the largest drug donation programmes in the world. [[Uniting to Combat NTDs-Commitment Tracker](#)]
- The number of people requiring NTD interventions decreased from 2.2 billion in 2010 to 1.4 billion in 2024, despite the fact that many NTD-endemic countries have seen a significant increase of their resident population. [[WHO Report on neglected tropical diseases 2025](#)]
- Progress is proof that NTD elimination is possible. Guinea worm disease cases fell from 3.5 million in the 1980s to just 15 in 2024, while Human African Trypanosomiasis cases declined from 40,000 annually in the 1990s to fewer than 583 cases in 2024. [[WHO Report on neglected tropical diseases 2025](#)]
- Ending NTDs unlocks education and opportunity. For example, deworming schoolchildren can raise future earnings by up to 20%. [[Hamory et al., 2021](#)]
- A recent study showed that Nigeria could gain approximately US\$19 billion in increased productivity by meeting its 2030 elimination targets for NTDs. [[Deloitte/The End Fund](#)]
- The potential benefits of global NTD elimination are estimated at US\$342 billion in averted health expenditures and increased productivity from 2015–2030. [[An Investment Case for Ending Neglected Tropical Diseases](#)]