

World Rabies Day  
28 September 2016

### Joint Statement

World Health Organization (WHO), World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE), Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)

## **EDUCATE, VACCINATE, ELIMINATE: Achieving zero human deaths from dog-transmitted rabies by 2030**

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Today, on the occasion of World Rabies Day, WHO, OIE and FAO are calling on countries to accelerate efforts to combat rabies in three steps:

**EDUCATE** by raising awareness of rabies among at-risk populations

**VACCINATE** by implementing large-scale dog vaccination and ensuring prompt delivery of post-exposure treatment to humans in areas at risk of rabies

**ELIMINATE** by targeting a world free from dog-mediated human rabies deaths by 2030

**28 September 2016** – The World Health Organization (WHO), the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) are reiterating their call for a world free from human rabies transmitted by dogs by 2030. This year's theme – Educate, Vaccinate, Eliminate – outlines the key steps required to attain this goal in line with the global vision endorsed at the WHO/OIE [Global Rabies Conference](#) organized in collaboration with FAO and the Global Alliance for Rabies Control held in December 2015.

Children in underserved, rural populations are particularly vulnerable, and face a daily threat of rabies. Of all the neglected tropical diseases, rabies ranks as one of the highest, with as many as an estimated 59 000 estimated deaths worldwide.

Rabies is 100% vaccine-preventable in animals and humans. Most cases can be prevented by vaccinating dogs, avoiding dog bites and raising awareness among communities. There is no cure for rabies once symptoms develop, and bite victims invariably die a slow, painful death unless post-bite treatment is promptly administered.

**EDUCATE.** A cornerstone of rabies elimination is raising public awareness of rabies as an entirely preventable disease.

Rabies awareness campaigns adapted to the local situation are essential to motivate responsible dog ownership, including vaccination of dogs against rabies, prevent dog bites and administer first aid for bite victims including wound washing and rabies post-exposure injections. Awareness raising encourages communities to fight rabies and fosters political commitment at local, national, regional and international levels for allocating the needed resources.

**VACCINATE.** Vaccination of dogs prevents rabies at its animal source and stops the rabies virus from circulating. Human vaccines reduce fatalities induced by bites of possible rabies-infected dogs.

Wider access to safe, efficacious and accessible dog and human vaccines and immunoglobulins is needed in all communities at risk of rabies. Mass vaccination of dogs in at-risk areas has proven the most cost-effective, long-term intervention for interrupting transmission of human rabies transmitted by dogs.

Since 2012, the OIE dog Rabies Vaccine Bank has provided a secure supply of quality-assured vaccines manufactured in accordance with OIE international standards. To match the OIE-led dog Rabies Vaccine Bank, WHO plans to create a human rabies vaccine stockpile to be operational by the end of 2017. These initiatives are intended to accelerate rabies elimination programmes in countries.

**ELIMINATE.** Achieving zero human deaths from dog-transmitted rabies by 2030 is feasible but relies on political commitment and support. The 2015 Global Rabies Framework promotes a stepwise approach to assist countries to successfully eliminate rabies, by prioritizing actions and allocating resources.

WHO, OIE and FAO together with countries and partners target the elimination of rabies through education and vaccination, contributing to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, by ensuring healthy lives and promoting well-being for all, at all ages, everywhere.