ADVOCACY GUIDE

CAMPAIGNING FOR AN AFRICA FREE OF NTDs

SpeakUpAfrica.

NO NEGLECTED TO TROPICAL DISEASES

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WHY ADVOCATE?

Neglected tropical diseases (NTDs) are associated with poor socio-economic development and marginalization. These factors have dimensions that extend well beyond the health sector. NTDs impede progress on nearly all Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and have multiple negative impacts, with a particularly acute toll on the most vulnerable populations. Addressing the NTDs burden in a way that is effective, scalable and sustainable can only be achieved with adequate domestic and international funding streams.

However, while global funding for NTDs has increased in the past decade, with around 17.8 billion USD in donations from pharmaceutical companies, donor funding for long-term NTD elimination will be increasingly insufficient for affected countries to achieve their national strategic plan goals. African countries will therefore need to seek new sources of funding, particularly domestic sources, and use existing donor funding with greater efficiency in program implementation.

Despite the long road that remains ahead of us, Africa is making considerable progress towards our NTDs control and elimination goals. In 2017, Togo eliminated lymphatic filariasis as a public health problem. In 2018, Ghana did the same with trachoma, and Egypt with lymphatic filariasis. These achievements illustrate public health at its best with countries and their partners coming together with a clear objective to improve the lives of millions of the most vulnerable people.

This guide is intended to support countries in accelerating the elimination of NTDs by advocating for increased funding and stronger political commitment at the national level. Achieving the control and ultimate elimination of NTDs must be a high priority for every affected country, not only because of health gains that will be made but also because NTDs control and elimination are critical to the economic development of endemic countries. With this in mind, this guide will help NTD country programmes and their frontline partners with advocating for the political will and accountability required to achieve NTD elimination.

In large measure due to increasing political commitment and government leadership in African countries, in recent years, there has been significant progress in tackling NTDs. Building on this political commitment and leadership, ESPEN will continue to support country programmes in their efforts to mobilize national resources towards eliminating NTDs. The time has come for the final push to make NTDs elimination a reality in Africa. Let's make it happen!

Dr. Maria Rebollo Polo
ESPEN Team Leader

ESPEN'S SUPER GOALS

SCALE UP:
Reaching 100% geographical coverage of 5 PC-NTDs.

SCALE DOWN:
Supporting countries to stop treatment and achieve WHO validation as soon as elimination is reached.

IMPROVE UTILIZATION OF DONATED MEDICINES
to reach those who need them.

FOSTER PARTNERSHIPS AND STRENGTHEN ADVOCACY
for increased resource mobilization for NTD elimination.

STRENGTHENING INFORMATION SYSTEMS
through the ESPEN Portal, for evidence-based action.

THE ESPEN PORTAL

The ESPEN Portal is an electronic platform designed to enable health ministries and stakeholders to share, and exchange subnational programme data, in support of the NTD control and elimination goals.

Through this Portal, ESPEN illustrates, in the form of maps, site and district-level data that can be aggregated by disease and country. These maps, along with the downloadable underlying data, are tools to aid health officials and their partners in boosting and developing NTD interventions and strategies to reach key targeted communities.

ESPEN's aims to equip all stakeholders with the evidence they need to successfully tackle each disease, mobilize resources more efficiently and target interventions appropriately.

http://espen.afro.who.int/

For information about partnership opportunities and donors, contact ESPEN's Team Leader:
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GETTING STARTED

THE NTD LANDSCAPE IN AFRICA

Throughout Africa, countries are making progress towards NTD control and elimination goals. In 2017, Togo eliminated lymphatic filariasis (LF) as a public health problem and in 2018, Ghana has done the same with trachoma and Egypt with LF.

These successes also attest to what effective partnerships and collaborations can help achieve. Today 44 countries in Africa have developed integrated multi-year national plans, known as NTD Master Plans, and NTD programs are improving by the day.

44 NTD MASTER PLANS DEVELOPED

There is a gap, however, in domestic resource mobilization and other forms of support in the countries with the heaviest burden of NTDs. NTD programmes still often do not receive the required priority in government funding. There is a critical need to scale up the advocacy and visibility of NTD programs at the national and sub-national levels.

Overall Economic Impact

NTDs in Africa pose a critical threat to development by imprisoning the most vulnerable people in a brutal cycle of poverty and disease. Africa will not reach its Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) while 620 million people in Africa are affected by NTDs[5]. Research shows that "while NTDs do not pose an immediate threat to mortality, the disability associated with these diseases is extremely burdensome.

> One of the main reasons for the important progress on NTDs is that countries have translated international targets into national goals and strategies, with the support of the international community. We have seen over the years that country ownership is essential if we are to deliver tangible results at scale.
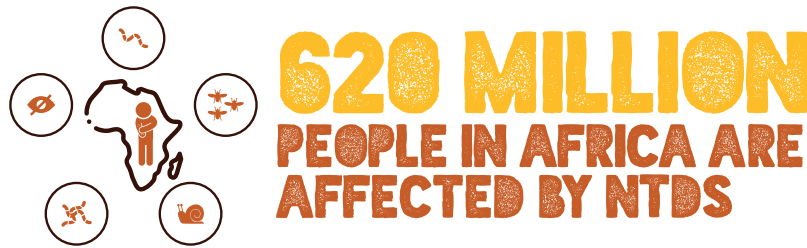>
> Dr. Tedros Adhanom
>
> *World Heath Organization's Director General*

620 MILLION
PEOPLE IN AFRICA ARE AFFECTED BY NTDS

They disproportionately affect the world's poor, decreasing quality of life, worker productivity, and agricultural outputs. The inescapable conclusion is that NTDs are a serious detriment to economic development in many developing nations[6]."

Conversely, the cost-effectiveness of NTD programs is arguably one of the best health investments in global public health today – with small investments yielding large returns. Healthy people are productive people and as countries become healthier, countries become wealthier. Evidence shows that NTD control programs increase school attendance, increase workers' productivity, arable land available for agriculture, increase income among households and improve health. This is especially true in areas of integrated programming with more than one NTD present[7].

While NTDs do not pose an immediate threat to mortality, the disability associated with these diseases is extremely burdensome. They disproportionately affect the world's poor, decreasing quality of life, worker productivity, and agricultural outputs. The inescapable conclusion is that NTDs are a serious detriment to economic development in many developing nations.

05· *http://unitingtocombatntds.org/news/alma-ntds-2018/*

06· *Jeremiah Norris, Carol Adelman, Yulya Spantchak, and Kacie Marano, "Social and Economic Impact Review on Neglected Tropical Diseases (2012).*

07· *https://www.hudson.org/content/researchattachments/attachment/1083/social_and_economic_impact_review_on_neglected_tropical_diseases_hudson_institute_and_sabin_institute_november_2012.pdf*

PURPOSE OF THIS GUIDE

What is this Guide and Who Should Use It?

This guide provides NTD Programme managers and their teams with a model game plan for undertaking an advocacy initiative that aims to promote greater in-country support for achieving NTD programmatic goals. The guide is also useful for NTD stakeholders at the country-level who are working with the NTD programme to achieve its advocacy goals.

This guide is designed to give you, the user, clear directions for successfully arriving at the destination of effective advocacy. In this sense, the guide provides step-by-step directions for:

- Engaging in advocacy for improved policy design, including strategic integration of effort with other public health programs,

- Ensuring political, social and legislative support of NTD prevention, treatment and care as well as the time-sensitive goal of NTD elimination,

- Mobilizing domestic resources, both governmental and private, to meet unmet NTD resource requirements.

How Will This Guide Assist You?

This guide will provide you with practical advice for:

- Defining your advocacy strategy including the objectives and the types of implementation steps that will help ensure that your advocacy initiative is successful,

KEY COMPONENTS OF AN ENABLED ENVIRONMENT

Political commitment to NTDs

Budget line dedicated to NTD control and elimination

Strong partnerships working in synergy towards NTD control and elimination
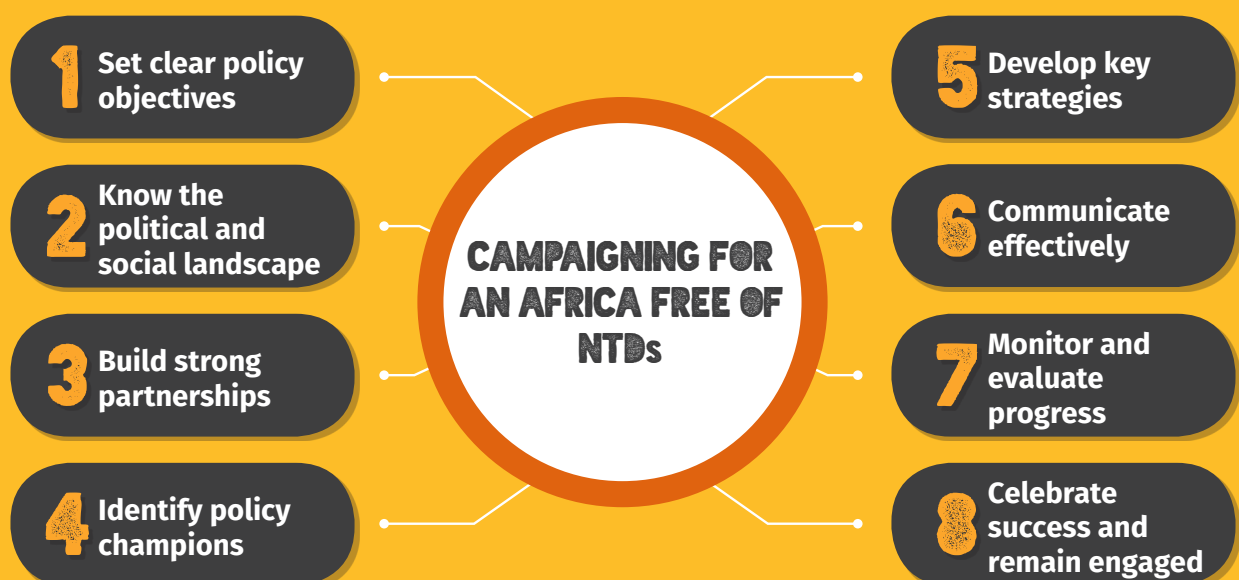
- Building coalitions with government and private sector stakeholders, both decision makers and influencers to champion NTD prevention, treatment, care and elimination,

- Engaging traditional media and using social media to build popular support for NTD goals and to motivate specific target audiences, including opinion makers and public and private sector leaders to make NTD programmatic goals their priority and take the requested actions,

- Developing tools to assist stakeholders in mobilizing support and resources for NTD prevention, treatment and care as well as elimination.

CRAFTING YOUR ADVOCACY STRATEGY

Determining Your Advocacy Priorities by Taking Inventory of Implementation and Resource Requirements

Your analysis of a programme's progress and future resource and implementation requirements for achieving NTD elimination within a specific time frame will contribute greatly to the design of a realistic advocacy strategy. Such an analysis will give the programme a clear indication of what actions need to be asked for in its advocacy outreach.

This planning will allow for a clear view of the current NTD landscape and what it will take to achieve the elimination of NTDs by specific dates. This will allow the Programme to decide upon what sorts of further integration with other public health intervention are desirable and allows for an enumeration of current funding commitments and the additional resources that will need to be mobilized. Based on this analysis, programmes can more easily enumerate future costs and existing funding commitments in order to coordinate external and domestic funding requests.

1 Set clear policy objectives

2 Know the political and social landscape

3 Build strong partnerships

4 Identify policy champions

CAMPAIGNING FOR AN AFRICA FREE OF NTDs

5 Develop key strategies

6 Communicate effectively

7 Monitor and evaluate progress

8 Celebrate success and remain engaged

Analytical steps for defining needs typically consist of:

1 **Identifying the programmatic needs:** Based on the best available information, identify priority areas and populations requiring NTD interventions and quantify the medicines, services and activities required for each intervention.

2 **Identifying practical and effective integration:** Identify how NTD interventions can best take advantage of parallel public health interventions and how best to integrate.

3 **Identifying what is currently financed:** Assess the commodities and activities already covered within existing systems and resources.

4 **Identifying additional programmatic and funding requirements:** Identify the commodities, services and activities that still need to be covered.

The data produced in this analysis will feed into the development of the advocacy strategy, for it will help determine what types of specific support and actions will be asked of decision makers.

AN IDEA THAT WORKED

In Tanzania, the NTD program used NTD disease mapping as a tool to make regional political officials and representatives in the National Assembly aware of the fact that NTDs were harming people in their constituencies. This tactic helped the NTD program to obtain greater support and cooperation at the national, regional and district levels for achieving its goals and objectives.

ESPEN has created a valuable online platform that contains maps of PC-NTDs, highlighting at the subnational level the endemicity of NTDs and the status of Mass Drug Administration interventions. You can reach this portal to download useful maps at http://espen.afro.who.int/.

Establish SMART Objectives

The goal of your advocacy plan should reflect how domestic resource mobilization and integration with other public health programs contributes to the overall goals of the NTD programme.

The advocacy objectives are the incremental steps in the overall development and implementation of an integrated NTD advocacy plan.

This table should be populated with specific goals – the description of the destination – and the objectives – the steps needed to be taken to arrive at the destination.

SMART OBJECTIVES		TIPS AND SAMPLES
(S)pecific	What in particular will be achieved if advocacy efforts are successful?	Being specific in framing one's objective helps partners and policymakers mobilize behind a desired outcome and clarifies when an advocacy effort has succeeded.
(M)easurable	To know whether expected results have occurred, quantitative or qualitative descriptors are used to frame the objective.	"Increase a budget allocation for Neglected Tropical Diseases Programmes by 5 percent in the next year"
(A)chievable	Results should be within reach.	Questions to ask when defining the objectives: Is the result achievable with available resources? Is the result possible in the time frame we have? Is there existing support for this issue, within the government and among other key stakeholders?
(R)elevant	The objective being pursued should actively contribute to the overall goal of your advocacy efforts.	There should be a plausible and close link between the planned activities, the resources available, partnerships in hand, and the desired outcomes.
(T)ime-bound	Objectives are more likely to be met when a specific date for achievement or completion is set.	Agreeing on a specific time helps with planning the deployment of resources (e.g., staff or volunteer time, finances) and activities (e.g., policy briefs, budget analysis meeting minutes).

TIP: BUILD INTERNAL CAPACITY FOR ADVOCACY

The NTD Programme must lead the advocacy effort and take responsibility for the success of activities.

This leadership ensures country ownership and accountability for mobilizing resources, as well as engagement of other government departments where appropriate. To exercise its leadership in NTD advocacy, it is recommended that the Country Program appoints an Advocacy Focal Person (AFP) to provide oversight and coordination of the advocacy effort.

The AFP could organize an NTD advocacy working group within the Ministry of Health that will assist the AFP in the oversight of the advocacy effort. The working group may include Ministry of Health, personnel from the Finance Department, Health Promotion and Education, pharmaceutical and supply chain, health services and the Ministry of Health office responsible for inter-governmental liaison and private sector outreach, among others. This internal working group will help assure coordination with appropriate Ministry of Health departments to assure effectiveness and compatibility of advocacy activities with other Ministry of Health efforts.

39% of the global NTD burden occurs in Africa, these diseases destroy lives, prevent children from going to school and keep communities in cycles of poverty.

What Needs to Be Done?

Analysing the background information you have gathered will help you identify the best policy objective(s). Ideally, your policy objective will address a gap or weakness in the existing policy environment and provide an evidence-based solution.

Developing a policy objective may be the most essential step of your campaign plan. Your objective describes the change you want to see happen and helps to identify the actions needed in order to achieve that change. You'll only want to choose actions that you're sure will advance you towards that goal.

NTD PROGRAM GOAL	NTD ADVOCACY GOAL	NTD ADVOCACY OBJECTIVES
Build a sustainable integrated national NTD control program that would eliminate NTDs in accordance with national milestones.	Create an enabling environment with adequate resources and institutional integration to build a sustainable NTD control programme.	• Increase NTD programme visibility among the country's decision-makers and influencers. • Engage and mobilize key decision-makers and influencers. • Expand NTD advocacy groups to create a network of partners.

FROM 2010 TO 2016, THE NUMBER OF PEOPLE AT RISK FOR NTDS FELL BY **25%** FROM 2 BILLION TO 1.5.

That means that over **400 MILLION PEOPLE** *no longer require NTD treatment.*

As a guiding framework, check to make sure your objectives are all SMART, or Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-bound. Policy objectives should also always contain three key items:

- **A policy "actor" or decision-maker – the person(s) or decision-making body with the power to make your desired change a reality.**
  Example: Member of Parliament, minister, relevant parliamentary committee, sub-national legislature, or ministerial office.

- **A policy "action" or decision – the specific action you want them to take or decision you want them to make.**
  Example: enact, amend or repeal a policy, allocate funds, or issue a mandate to affect change.

- **Timeline for change – the date by when you want them to act or decide.**
  Example: the day, month, project quarter, or year.

Determine Target Audiences

Once you have identified your advocacy objectives, the next step is to identify the target audiences. There are two categories of target audiences: decision-makers and influencers. You need to target decision-makers and influencers with the right message, on the right platform at the right time.

Who are your Decision Makers?

Decision-makers are individuals who can take decisions that affect NTD policies, programmes and resources. They include government officials (Prime Minister or President, Minister of Health, Minister of Finance, other mid-level ministry officials, the Cabinet, parliamentarians), and funders (private sector).

Based on your advocacy objectives, it will be important to identify the decision makers and institutions that define the policies to address NTDs as a public health issue (executive, legislative, and ministry). It is also important to determine if these decisions will be taken at national or subnational levels, so that you know who to target.

You may also decide that it is important to include as part of your target audience those who may be consulted by the decision makers before they take the action that you have requested of them. This may include advisors, NGOs and research institutions. It may be important to bring them into the conversation to help ensure that your advocacy effort will be effective.

Try to understand your issue from each of your decision-makers' perspectives. What is their level of awareness and what might be their motivation for support? Understanding the decision-maker will help you figure out how to move them closer towards NTD program support.

Who Are Your Influencers?

Influencers are individuals or groups who have access to the decision-makers and who may be able to influence them. Influencers come from across sectors, including medical associations and other health-care professionals, faith-based groups, opinion leaders, the media, international leaders, entertainment and sports personalities, academics and may include the general public especially if they vote. Again, it is important to identify key individuals, know their issue interests and understand their motivations.

EXAMPLES OF HOW TO IDENTIFY DECISION MAKERS AND INFLUENCERS AND HOW TO TARGET THEM			
	TARGET 1	**TARGET 2**	**TARGET 3**
Target Audience Ministry of Health	Minister	Head of Infectious Diseases	Head of Pharmaceutical Services
Target's Authority (low, medium, high)	High	Low	Medium
Target's Awareness of NTD Issues	Low	Medium	High
Target's Motivational Triggers	Meet SDG goals	Meet health sector targets	Integrate NTD medicines into supply chain
Level of Access	Low	Low	Low
Influencers	Donors, media	Health professional association	Pharmacies

TIP

- **The power of many voices with one message.**
- **Thousands of voices speaking independently can be ignored or dismissed.**
- **But by working together to deliver a message with one voice, advocates can make a real difference.**

NTDS KILL AT LEAST 170 000 PEOPLE EVERY YEAR AND 600 MILLION PEOPLE REQUIRE TREATEMENT

Obstacles and Opportunities

Bearing in mind your goal and objectives, consider the political landscape, the opportunities and obstacles you may encounter:

- To what extent is the general public aware of NTD-related issues?

- Does the government need to be convinced that there is widespread popular support for action? Or of the economic benefits of integrated action on NTD control and elimination? Or of the political benefits that have been obtained by other countries that have taken tangible action?

- Will it be enough to communicate directly with decision-makers? Do you need to communicate with influential individuals and groups, too?

- Along with ministries of health, which other ministries can make a difference? For example, can the education and sanitation ministries take steps to improve sanitation infrastructure in schools?

- What influence does the mass media carry? What are the communication channels most commonly used by your target audience – the Internet, television, radio or print?

Develop Key Strategies

After you identify your target audiences, you must now determine what activities or outputs are needed to achieve your objectives. The most effective activities will have an immediate and direct impact on your targets. Activities should be chosen based on the objective you are trying to meet as well as your target. It is also useful to coattail an activity around a bigger event, such as World Health Day or a global conference. This will maximize your visibility and ensure the right people are hearing your messages.

OBJECTIVE
Increase NTD programme visibility among the country's decision-makers and influencers.

ACTIVITY
- On World Health Day, organize a press conference to report on a success of the country's NTD program.

- Write an op-ed for a major newspaper on an NTD success story.

- Carry out a social media campaign disseminating information about the NTD program, its activities and/or successes.

AN IDEA THAT WORKED

In Nigeria, letting political figures know that the same type of mosquito that transmits malaria can also transmit Lymphatic filariasis (LF) made them realize that they and their families were also vulnerable to LF and its disfigurements. This realization helped spur support for vector control, including the universal use of Long Lasting Insecticidal Nets.

THE POWER OF BRANDING

Creating visual products and content associated with your NTD programme — is an effective tool for awareness, recognition and also partnering. Branding is a set of associations that links your NTD programme to a graphic, to an idea and even to a partnership. Branding is an attempt to harness, influence, generate or control these associations to advance the goals of your NTD program to prevent, eliminate and eradicate these harmful diseases.

The NTD brand itself is an excellent case study in the significance of branding for creating awareness and action. Branding the various diseases into a category called "neglected tropical diseases" played a decisive role in bringing global attention to NTDs. In 2000, NTDs were not explicitly mentioned in the Millennium Development Goals. They were listed under "other diseases" in MDG 6. By 2015, NTDs had achieved its own "brand" under the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), explicitly mentioned under target 3.3 of the health-related SDG3, with progress measures by "number of people requiring interventions against NTDs".

This was a breakthrough at the highest policy level.

It was only when NTDs became "branded" that donors began to pledge billions of dollars and leaders throughout Africa have formed strategies for prevention, elimination and eradication. Branding as "neglected tropical diseases" also helped align efforts to study and treat the diseases, such as programs that simultaneously distribute drugs for five diseases at once. By creating and maintaining a consistent brand in your advocacy, the target audience will have an embedded impression of your NTD program.

There are different ways to promote your NTD programme brand in your advocacy work. The most important rule is consistency. If your program has a logo, then everything produced by the program should feature the logo. This includes brochures, policy briefs, fact sheets, press releases, PowerPoint presentations, talking points and promotional items. The logo creates an immediate visual association with the NTD program.

You can also create a tagline for your program advocacy. A tagline is a catchphrase or a slogan that, like a logo, creates an immediate association in a person's mind. A tagline can be a few words, such as "For an Africa Free of NTDs" If the tagline is used consistently, your audiences will internalize the message.

No to Neglected Tropical Diseases

In November 2018, the "No to Neglected Tropical Diseases" movement was launched. Through this movement, individuals, political leaders, private sector companies and civil society organizations (CSOs) come together to increase awareness, prioritization and national commitment to accelerate the control and elimination of NTDs in Africa.

Campaigning for an Africa Free of NTDs
Dr. Gashumba, Minister of Health of Rwanda and and Pr. Meda, Former Minister of Health of Burkina Faso, participated in the campaign launch during the 1st Forum Galien Africa on November 28, 2018, and encouraged all African countries to join the movement.

Combating NTDs and reaching all communities in need can put countries on the pathway to achieving universal health coverage. Where there is poverty, NTDs are commonly an accepted part of life. But this is not inevitable, nor should we accept it. In this sense, the campaign aims to:

1. Increase overall political engagement to NTDs to increase domestic resources for NTDs;

2. Build the capacity of civil society organizations to make NTD decision-making spaces more inclusive;

3. Create an enabling environment at the national level for increased prioritization of NTD elimination.

An online plateform has been developped (www.notontds.org) to enable knowledge sharing and facilitate the spread of the No to NTDs movement in Africa. It is designed for stakeholders in all African countries working on NTD control and elimination. The resources aim to support all stakeholders with NTD campaign planning, strategic partnership building, increased visibility and monitoring and evaluation.

Visual identity

SAY IT LIKE YOU MEAN IT!

Developing compelling messages to use in your advocacy work is critical. Each message should convey the importance of the problem, a viable solution, the benefits of solving the problem and end with a clear request for a certain action to be taken.

Messages should (be):

- Clear and direct

- Use precise language and active verbs

- Simple and able to be understood by non-technical audiences

- Evidence based and build on your program's experiences

- Action-oriented

- Suggest solutions and a request for action from your target

How do you create your key messages?

Invest time and effort in crafting and refining strong, effective messages that will convince decision-makers and/or influencers that action is needed. Design your messages to appeal to your target audiences. Remember that it is always easier to motivate someone to act on the basis of their already existing beliefs than trying to convince them of something radically new or different.

- Consider your aims and objectives. What do you want to achieve?

- Consider your audience(s). What will motivate them to act? What benefit will action on NTDs bring them? What attitudes will prevent them from acting? Equally, consider cultural and political feelings and sensitivities. Connect to their value systems and political views. Remember that competition for the delivery of messages is intense.

- Combine the rational and logical with the emotional in order to appeal to people's heads and hearts. On NTD control and elimination, for example, you can refer to protecting future generations from preventable disabilities and stigma.

- A good model is often one of problem-solution. "We are doing A because it will solve/improve problem

AN IDEA THAT WORKED

In Malawi, the NTD program Manager needed government support to deliver the critical medicines and supplies sitting at the airport. He calculated the value of the medicines and supplies on the bill of laden into kwachas and brought it to the appropriate authorities. Seeing the value in national currency, government authorities were spurred into action to provide the logistical support for delivery.

B"; or "We want X to do Y because it will solve/improve problem Z". Unlike education messages which attempt to explain issues and raise awareness in order to create a context for action, advocacy messages are often more persuasive and include calls to action.

• Do not use jargon or acronyms.

> **Ideally, you should have one primary key message and two or three secondary key messages.**

Your primary or core message should be broad – appealing to all audiences, the theme that will hold your advocacy campaign together, simple and direct in order to gain maximum attention – you may be addressing an audience of thousands or even millions of people with widely differing views and knowledge. More technical and complex arguments can be brought in at a later stage.

Your secondary or tailored messages should support your core message and explain how it can be achieved; be concise and memorable; be targeted to the needs, perceptions and preferences of your target audiences – answering the question "what does this have to do with me?".

It is helpful to test your messages with a focus group to ensure that the target is getting the message that is intended. A focus group is a small group of people whose opinions about the message are studied to learn the opinions that can be expected from a larger group. For example, once you have developed a set of messages, you could invite a demographically diverse group of people (e.g. men and women, young and old, urban and rural) to give their opinions about the messages (e.g. what does the message mean, what is your response to the message). Based on the different feedback from the people in the focus group, you will be able to fine-tune your messages for maximum impact.

AN IDEA THAT WORKED

In Nigeria, including pictures of people with NTD-related disabilities in advocacy materials captured the attention of high-level political figures who were unaware of how NTDs could disfigure and impair people from leading productive lives. This new realization helped spur politicians to take the budgetary actions that were requested of them. **If you use pictures of people with NTD-related disabilities, be sure that the pictures used respect the subjects and are not offensive to your target**.

Be sure to also put a human face on the NTD story. Effective advocacy relies on conveying the human dimension of the problem; this can trigger an emotional response and create empathy in your target audience. For example, this might be a story about how physical disfigurement led a person to be stigmatized and lead an unproductive life; or how a child with an NTD was unable to attend school because of illness. With proper treatment, the child recovers and is able to be educated - fulfilling his or her potential on the path towards leading a healthy and productive life.

A set of clear messages can help you develop impactful talking points:

Have stories, arguments, evidence and data to support claims, and photographs to illustrate them. Real-life stories are a powerful way of showing why comprehensive, integrated action is vital.

Consider creating quotes.

Facts and figures are useful, but use numbers carefully – if you use too many it can overload and confuse your audience. Balance statistics with stories that convey the human cost of NTDs.

Sample Messages

Neglected tropical diseases (NTDs) are a group of parasitic and bacterial infectious diseases that affect more than **1.5 billion** of the world's most impoverished people, including **836 million children**.

40% of the global NTD burden occurs in Africa, these diseases destroy lives, prevent children from going to school and keep communities in cycles of poverty.

From 2010 to 2016, the number of people at risk for NTDs fell by **25%** from 2 billion to 1.5. That means that over 400 million people no longer require NTD treatment.

In 2016, NTD programs reached **one billion people** with treatment for at least one NTD.
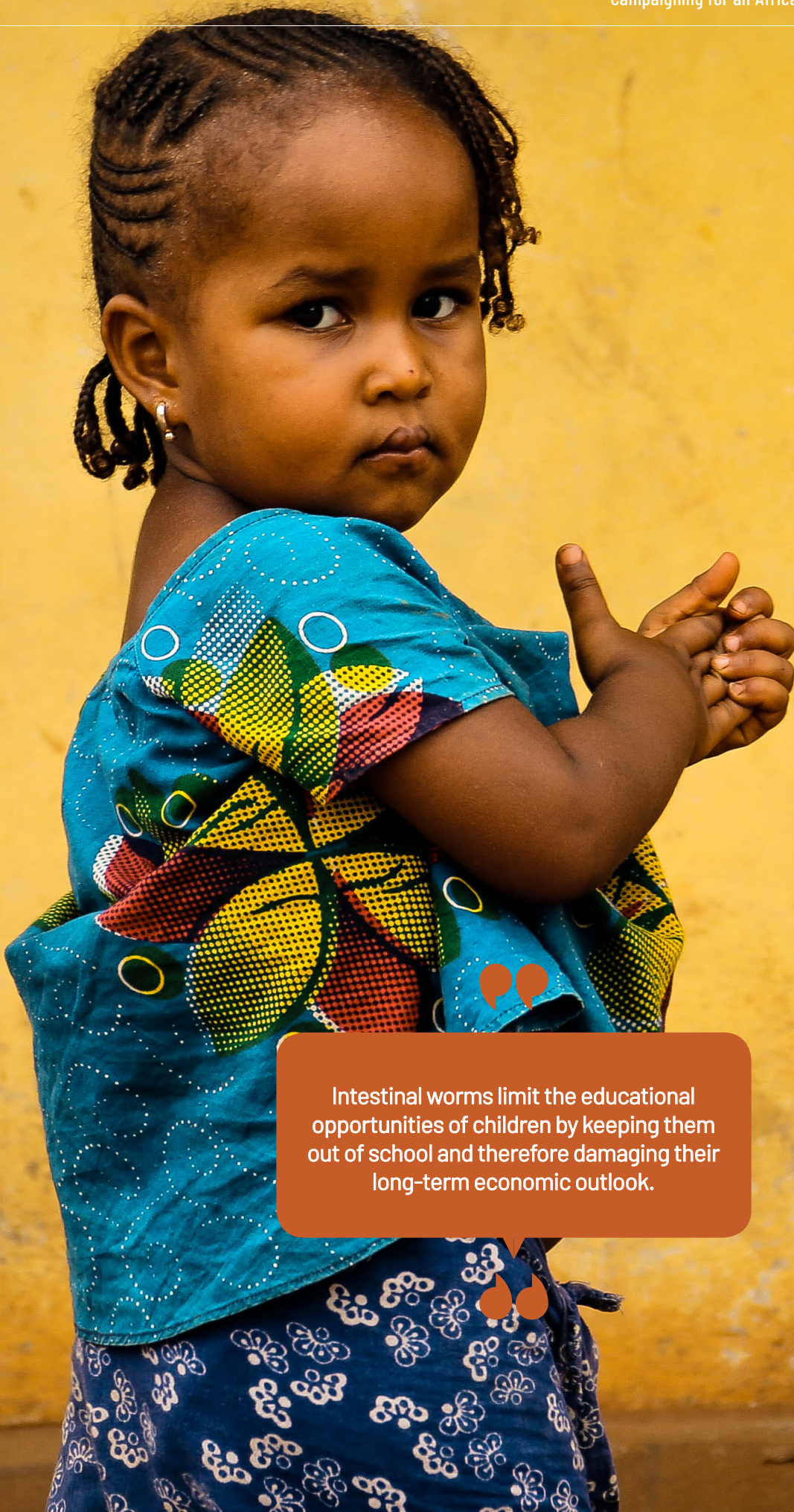
Intestinal worms limit the educational opportunities of children by keeping them out of school and therefore damaging their long-term economic outlook.

Onchocerciasis also known as river blindness is an eye and skin infection caused by parasitic worms. In 2016, more than **197 million** people in **31 countries** worldwide needed treatment for river blindness, the majority of the burden occurs in Africa, according to the World Health Organization.

The five most common NTDs can be treated for less than **US$ 0.50 person**, per year.

Lymphatic Filariasis is a mosquito-borne disease caused by parasitic roundworms. It is a serious threat to approximately 406 million people in the African Region.

Women who contract **schistosomiasis** are **up to three times** more likely to contract HIV/AIDS. Prevention and treatment of **female genital schistosomiasis** is a social justice, reproductive health and **human rights issue**.

Every **US$1** invested in NTDs leverages **US$26 drug donations** for mass treatment campaigns.

Soil-transmitted Helminths / Intestinal worms are caused by the feces of an infected person, intestinal worms thrive in resource-deprived areas that lack proper sanitation infrastructure. More than 1.5 billion people, or **24%** of the world's population, are infected with soil-transmitted helminth infections worldwide.

In June 2018, **Ghana** has become the first country in sub-Saharan Africa to eliminate the painful and potentially blinding eye condition **trachoma**.

YOUR ADVOCACY ALLIES

BUILDING SUPPORT WITHIN GOVERNMENT

It comes as no surprise that the support of your government ministries and agencies is key to the success of your NTD program. The political environment and competition for government resources require a consistent targeted campaign of advocacy for government actors to support the NTD program. It is especially difficult sometimes to engage the interest of the government when other diseases, such as HIV, TB and malaria, occupy a centre stage both globally and nationally. And while the Ministry of Health is a natural partner, it is important to seek the support of other ministries and agencies as well.

Political will among affected countries to control, eliminate and eradicate NTDs has increased in the last five years. This has been extraordinarily helpful in the progress being made in a number of African countries. However, tapping into that political will can be a challenge for even the most active NTD program manager.

Political decisions are made differently depending on the nature of the state, politics, and media. In some places, the legislature has more authority. In other places, the Minister of Finance dominates policymaking. Countries have different levels of freedom and access to the public sector.

Overall, advocacy with government officials at the national or subnational level aims to ensure adequate and sustained political and financial commitment for the NTD Program. The development of ties within the state apparatus will likely require advocacy efforts towards the following, among others:

Parliamentary health and budgetary committees to provide funding and support to NTD programs.

Ministry of Finance (Planning Commission/ Division) to ensure timely and adequate release of funds for NTD activities.

The Ministry of Information/Communication (or equivalent) to encourage state-owned broadcasting organizations to develop special programmes around NTD issues and events.

The Ministry of Education to incorporate a strong NTD component in its primary and secondary school health curricula.

The Ministry of Women's Affairs to mobilize women and incorporate information about NTD treatment and prevention in their service delivery.

DRC now provides **25%** of funding for its NTD programs, up from 0% in 2011[1]

Tanzania's national government accounts for more than **40%** of total spending on NTD programs[2]

The Sudanese government allocated over **$1.5 MILLION** to NTD projects in 2016[3]

With support from ESPEN and modest domestic investments, health ministries can achieve universal healthcare, strengthen health systems and build integrated approaches to advance NTD control and elimination goals, to protect the most vulnerable communities from five devastating diseases and improve millions of lives.

Dr. Matshidiso Moeti
Regional Director for WHO Africa

01· WHO Fourth Report, Page 130.
02· WHO Fourth Report, Page 130.
03· WHO Fourth Report, Page 131.

Your advocacy effort at the highest level of government, including the office of the head of state, should demonstrate how strengthening the country's NTD effort will help the country meet its international commitments with regard to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The SDGs, which the UN General Assembly passed, are a universal call to action to end poverty, protect the planet and ensure that all people enjoy peace and prosperity. The SDGs provide clear guidelines and targets for all countries to adopt in accordance with their own priorities and the environmental challenges of the world at large. African governments have embraced the SDGs, and many countries are making significant progress in reaching their targets.

In specific, the SDGs include a call to end the epidemic of NTDs by the year 2030, and high-level government officials will likely want to insure the international community that the government is living up to its commitments. It will also be important to illustrate to government officials how investments made toward reaching the NTD elimination goal make the achievement of the goal of Universal Health Coverage more affordable. Eliminating illness and disabilities of NTDs will reduce the costs of hospitalization to health systems and individuals, thus equating to a reduction of expenditures to achieve Universal Health Coverage. The NTD elimination effort also closely relates to the SDGs established for clean water supplies and sanitation.

The yearly Voluntary National Reviews (VNRs) of SDG progress[8] provides your government with the opportunity to showcase its actions and achievements toward reaching the goal of ending NTDs. As part of your NTD advocacy intervention, you can target government officials with messaging around the international commitment to review the progress towards eliminating NTDs and highlight the country's successes.

In addition to demonstrating progress on the SDGs, your advocacy effort can use the ALMA scorecard to promote sustained political will for NTD elimination. In January 2018, at the 30th African Union summit, 30 heads of states belonging to the African Leaders Malaria Alliance (ALMA) added neglected tropical diseases (NTDs) to its annual scorecard on disease progress.

> **By adding NTDs to the scorecard, African leaders made a public commitment to hold themselves accountable for progress on these diseases and put NTDs alongside malaria and maternal and child health as top health priorities for the continent.**

NTD progress index for the ALMA scorecard, which can be found at http://unitingtocombatntds.org/africa/, provides an overview of each country's progress in reaching people in need of mass treatment and country-specific recommendations on improving performance. The criteria established for the scorecard are monitored every 3 months to track progress and identify bottlenecks. The index also ranks country progress, allowing each Head of State to compare a country's standing on NTD progress compared to other African countries. The scorecard is personally reviewed by African heads of state every year.

08· *Visit the Uniting to Combat NTDs website to see when your country undergoes a review http://unitingtocombatntds. org/vnrs/voluntary-national-reviews-2018/*

> We intend to establish and fully fund the Neglected Tropical Diseases program to enable us to meet the ambitious yet attainable targets of eliminating these diseases, together with other low burden countries in the Southern African Region by 2023.

H.E Slumber Tsogwane
Vice President of the Republic of Botswana

Domestic resource mobilization in Burkina Faso

Burkina Faso provides a good example of the power of domestic support. In a 10-year period (2004–2014), Burkina Faso's government provided US$ 300,000– 400,000 per year to support their NTD programme costs. In 2016, the programme was assisted with a World Bank loan, to cover per diems and other expenses for community mobilization, monitoring and evaluation. Today, Burkina Faso, with the support of USAID and UK aid, has achieved nearly 90% coverage of its population at risk with MDA.

Source: Uniting to Combat NTDs, 5th Progress Report

In **Uganda**, for instance, the Ugandan Inter-religious Council (UIRC) has been active in lobbying government for improved health policies.

The **Nigerian** Inter-faith Action Association (NIFAA) has mobilized Christian and Muslim leaders to engage religious communities in the fight against malaria as well as other diseases and poverty and obtained funding from the World Bank in support of their program.

In **Mauritania**, on the other hand, which is a predominately Muslim country, the National Association of Imams plays a similar role.

At the Global Citizen Festival Mandela 100 Festival, celebrated in South Africa on December 2, 2019, Mozambique committed US$ 6 million allocation to the NTD program for the schistosomiasis mapping exercise and increased coverage of soil-transmitted helminths.

Engaging the Private Sector

Advocacy with private sector businesses can potentially yield important in-kind and monetary dividends to your country's effort to end NTDs. Advocacy with the private sector may also target businesses to adopt workplace policies and other actions that seek to protect employees from NTDs.

In other public health interventions such as malaria prevention, companies have often promoted prevention in communities where they have investments, but companies can also be encouraged to do so on a wider, even national scale. In some countries, telecoms have been important supporters of public health campaigns providing resources and free services, such as SMS messaging, to support campaign objectives. Both small and large businesses can be important contributors to the campaign to end NTDs, irrespective of whether they work independently or partner with international organizations, national governments or non-governmental organizations.

In inviting the private sector to become a partner to end NTDs, appeals to action can be made directly to businesses or through their membership with business associations, as well as through service organizations such as Rotary and Lions Clubs. Some Ministries of Health already have in place cooperative Memoranda of Understanding with private sector firms for public health intervention that the NTD elimination campaign can build upon. Often large firms will have dedicated staff to further a business's good corporate citizenship goals as well as foundations through which they channel donations. **Private sector representatives can be invited to become members of the NTD Partners' Coalition providing support to the NTD program's advocacy effort.**

In approaching businesses, foundations and related associations, it is good practice to be prepared with fact sheets and/or Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) that can be handed out to their representatives. This supporting documentation must convincingly make the case why participation in a campaign, or more generally the effort to eliminate NTDs, is in the interest of their firms, the economy and society as a whole.

In approaching the private sector, it is important to remind business leaders of the goodwill they can generate with the public by fulfilling their commitment to good corporate citizenship. Business leaders will need to know how their support will be acknowledged. Such acknowledgements may include company logos on campaign printed material or credits on video and radio public service announcements. The advocacy team may also work with a company to send press releases to journalists and news outlets to generate coverage of private sector support to specific interventions or broader efforts towards elimination of NTDs.
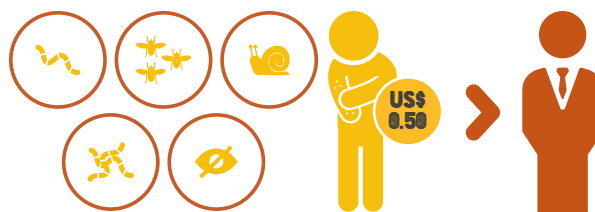
THE FIVE MOST COMMON NTDS
CAN BE TREATED FOR LESS THAN
US$ 0.50 PERSON, PER YEAR

NTD PARTNERS' COALITION IN A NUTSHELL

What is a Coalition?

A coalition is a group of organizations, companies or individuals that "commit to a common purpose and share decision making to influence an external target."[1] Forming an advocacy coalition is an important stride, or interim outcome, in seeking change. However, creating a coalition cannot achieve the advocacy objective alone and the coalition must be part of and implement a comprehensive advocacy strategy to shape policy and/or funding.

Why are Coalitions Critical for Advocacy?

Advocacy and coalition building are essential aspects of improving the policy and funding environment for successful and sustainable long-term health programs. Advocacy can raise awareness of important, yet neglected, issues and can encourage greater political commitment for necessary programs that leads to increased resources. While this guidance focuses on creating NTD Partners' Coalition, it may make sense in some settings to engage with currently established coalitions to take up a NTD agenda, rather than create a separate coalition to influence policy or funding.

Pros and Cons of Forming an Advocacy Coalition[2]

Pros

- Increases your base of support so you can achieve more together than alone

- Pools organizational financial and human resources

- Enhances credibility and legitimacy

- Facilitates coordination, information sharing, and collaboration

- Develops new leadership and technical skills among members

- Creates collaboration and relationships with new organizations and key actors

- Builds support, encouragement, and motivation

Cons

- Agreeing on common objectives can be difficult

- One organization or person may dominate

- Action can be slow because of additional processes and consensus

- Recognition may go to the coalition rather than an individual or organization

29

- Seeking consensus or "common ground" with a unified voice may overlook the asks of individual organizations

- Time-consuming

Who Should Be Involved?

- Ministry of Health and National NTD Control Programme

- Ministry of Finance - Health Officer

- Actors outside of the Health Sector as relevant in the country context

- Civil Society and NGOs

- Private Sector and related industries that are affected by NTDs

- Donors and financial partners, including UN Agencies

- Faith-based organizations

Agriculture **Education** **Environment** **Housing** **Water and Sanitation**

What Could Be Done Within the Coalition?

- Establishment of a national NTD Day.

- Identification of opportunities for outreach or events where decision makers can be targeted, such as strategic planning meetings, World Health Day, National NTD Day, etc.

- Identification of partners to undertake specific actions with the required levels of funding.

- Engagement of champions, members of parliament and corporate executives through NTD themed symposiums or networking lunches.

- Development of targeted media opportunities or op-eds led by champions to highlight success and gaps.

- Identification of opportunities for corporate engagement and the development of proposals that define how corporations can contribute to NTD programming.

01· (http://www.mcf.org/system/article_resources/0000/1297/What_Makes_an_Effective_Coalition.pdf)

02· Adapted from the International HIV/AIDS Alliance's Training Package for Advocacy Strategy Development

Companies may be inclined to make financial donations to the NTD elimination effort. There are many examples of corporate giving by multinational corporations to reduce, for instance, malaria's impact. For instance, BHP Billiton, through its foundation, Sustainable Communities, provided the Global Fund with USD 30 million (26,1 million Euros) over five years to support malaria prevention, diagnosis and treatment in Mozambique[9].

The petroleum giant, Chevron, supported the malaria programme implemented by Angola's Ministry of Health with a USD 5 million (4.6 million Euros) donation to the Global Fund[10]. The petroleum company, Esso Angola, gave USD 4 million (3.7 million Euros) to support malaria projects in Angola through grants from the ExxonMobil Foundation. These grants were given to USAID on condition that the President's Malaria Initiative use the funds to fight malaria in Angola[11].

Engaging Religious Leaders

Religious leaders are potentially important allies in your advocacy effort. Indeed, there are many examples of national religious organizations taking on the cause of health improvement for the benefit of their own followers and more generally for society. Religious leaders should be invited to become NTD champions, using their influence with political figures and government officials to adopt sound policies and to adequately fund NTD elimination. Religious organizations may host advocacy events with political, governmental and private sector leaders such as an advocacy lunch where participants will learn about the NTD elimination effort and will be asked to take action in support of the NTD program goals and activities. There is also the potential for national religious institutions to secure their own funding from international donors, which may be used in support of social mobilization for NTD elimination, by enhancing their ability to leverage congregations and social welfare organizations in support of behaviour change communication and campaign roll outs.

In the area of social mobilization and behaviour change communication, religious institutions may:

- Help local people understand what NTDs are and why they contribute to poverty
- Encourage local people to have confidence in treatment offered by Ministries of health
- Encourage local people's demand for treatment and services

How religious organizations function at the national level varies among countries. Some are interfaith in character.

09· www.theglobalfund.org/en/news/2014-03-26_Mozambique_Aims_to_Reach_Universal_Malaria_Protection_in_2014/

10· www.theglobalfund.org/en/blog/2012-07-02_The_Global_Fund,_Angola_and_Chevron__together_against_malaria/;

11· www.pmi.gov/docs/default-source/default-document-library/malaria-operational-plans/fy16/fy-2016-angola-malaria-operational-plan.pdf?sfvrsn=6; www.usaid.gov/angola/angola-celebrates-world-malaria-day; oig.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/audit-reports/4-654-12-006-p.pdf.

CASE STUDY

Rotary International's commitment to water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) programs

Rotary is an international community service organization with clubs on six continents. Rotarians are well positioned to bring leaders and stakeholders together to shape visions into productive action. Rotary International and The Rotary Foundation are well known for their leading role in the global initiative to eradicate polio. In addition to this «corporate» cause, Rotarians have been key players in other health efforts such as safe water and malaria control.

Rotary International and Rotary Foundation have taken up WASH as one of its signature causes, and because of the close connection with NTD elimination and WASH objectives, Rotarians in your country may be highly receptive to become NTD partners.

According to Rotary International, it has partnered with the United States Agency for International Development in Ghana, Madagascar, and Uganda to implement sustainable, long-term programs to improve water supplies, sanitation, and hygiene. Rotary has challenged its members to develop sustainable water, sanitation, and hygiene education projects in five countries: Belize, Guatemala, Honduras, India, and Kenya. The Rotary Foundation has invested in more than 1,000 WASH projects in more than 100 countries. Through grants from the Rotary Foundation and fundraising by Rotary clubs, its volunteers have supported water purification, hygiene education, latrine construction, and waste management.

For more, see: **https://www.rotary.org/en/our-causes/providing-clean-water**

WORKING WITH THE MEDIA

The mass media, both electronic (television, radio, online) and print (newspapers, magazines) are valuable allies in your advocacy effort.

Because of their significant role as key gatekeepers for disseminating information and as socializing agents, media institutions will have a powerful impact in terms of creating support among both the general public and specific audiences for NTD elimination. Very importantly, the media can influence opinion makers and public actors – such as political, business and religious leaders to make NTD a greater public health priority. In the journalism field, such influence is widely recognized as the media's agenda-setting role.

Policy-makers usually respond to popular appeal, and to their own social network of policy and decision makers. Political leaders, especially elected officials, are sensitive to public opinion and expectations about health and social issues because public perception of government health service delivery effectiveness may influence the way the electorate will vote. **Mass media can play two kinds of advocacy roles: (a) supporting development initiatives by the dissemination of messages that encourage the public to support development-oriented projects; and (b) providing the decision-makers with the necessary information and feedback needed to reach a decision**.

Media coverage of NTD issues will also broaden the understanding of how a relatively modest expenditure on NTD elimination will produce long term gains in reducing the human and economic burden of these diseases, thus highlighting the broader social and developmental gains to be made from NTD reduction with the goal of elimination.

The NTD program should develop and coordinate with partners to implement the media engagement strategy.

Ways of engaging the media

Media workshops with journalists and editors to educate them about the NTD elimination effort and the gains that will be made through elimination are a common way of engaging the media. Media workshops should be organized as opportunities for the journalists to hear from and interview a variety of sources pertinent to telling the NTD story to the public in ways that will resonate. These sources may include:

• Spokespersons for the NTD program.

• NTD champions, including members of the NTD Partners' Coalition.

• Persons whose lives have been negatively affected by the burden of NTDs and improved because of treatment.

In countries with strong subnational political and administrative structures, workshops with the local media may be called for in order to build up support for the NTD program among subnational and district level administrative and political actors. These actors often have budgetary discretion in establishing line items, so it is important to impact them.

It may also be helpful to have a workshop at the national level for media outlets that have national reach, especially because of their potential of reaching national political leaders and national religious and civil society organizations. Those journalists participating in a workshop should be selected based on the ability of their outlets, whether traditional broadcast, print or online, to reach targeted audiences. If there are journalists working for international broadcasters such as RFI, BBC, VOA and Deutsche Welle, it may be important to include them in workshops because in many countries where the international broadcasters have large audiences, they can be extremely influential, including with politicians sensitive to international opinion of domestic program effectiveness.

Journalists participating in the workshop should commit to producing, at least, one feature story or, even better, a series on NTDs. The journalists should be encouraged to put a human face on their NTD stories as a way of creating empathy with those who have had to deal with the NTD burden; this is a powerful way to go beyond numbers and statistics that illustrate the impact of NTDs. Formats such as call-in shows, round table discussions and interviews also resonate well with audiences.

NTD KEY FACTS

1,5 BILLION affected by NTDs worldwide.

Nearly **39%** of the global NTD burden occurs in Africa.

600 MILLION people require treatment in Africa.

170 000 deaths occur annually.

Journalists participating in the workshop can also be invited to become members of an NTD elimination journalist group, perhaps with a Facebook page where they can upload their stories and share information, and to which the Program and its advocacy partners can distribute press releases and acquaint the journalists with the ongoing roll out of NTD elimination activity.

These journalists should also be provided with a media kit, ideally with a NTD elimination cap and t-shirt that they can wear, a CD with a standard musical theme to be played in association with broadcast programs dealing with NTDs, and factsheets about the NTD burden, the gains to be achieved through control and ultimately elimination, the country's programmatic goals, the international commitments that the government has made to achieve elimination, and the level of domestic and international funding.

News pegs

Besides the productions that come out of the workshop, typically journalists will produce stories or programs that are "pegged" to a particular event or activity. Such pegs may include:

• The launch of a mass drug administration campaign

• The arrival in country or in a subnational region of donated medicines

• The attaining of milestones in reaching program objectives

• An international report on NTD progress

Journalists should be sent invitations to cover such events, and provided with a press release whose information is embargoed until after the day and time of the particular event.

The Power of Social Media

The pervasiveness of mobile devices and social networking apps has resulted in a revolution of E-Health Communication in Africa that can be applied to advocacy. Today, social media is one of the most powerful tools available for increasing the visibility of your NTD work and influencing the audiences that you are targeting as part of your advocacy strategy. Social media is a frontline strategy for getting your NTD messages across to decision makers and influencers in government, private sector, civil society and the media.

Social media is an opportunity to tell your story, engage with supporters and get results. Rather than a one-way communication channel, social media creates conversations. The NTD program manager and staff can use social media to talk directly to decision-makers, partners and stakeholders.
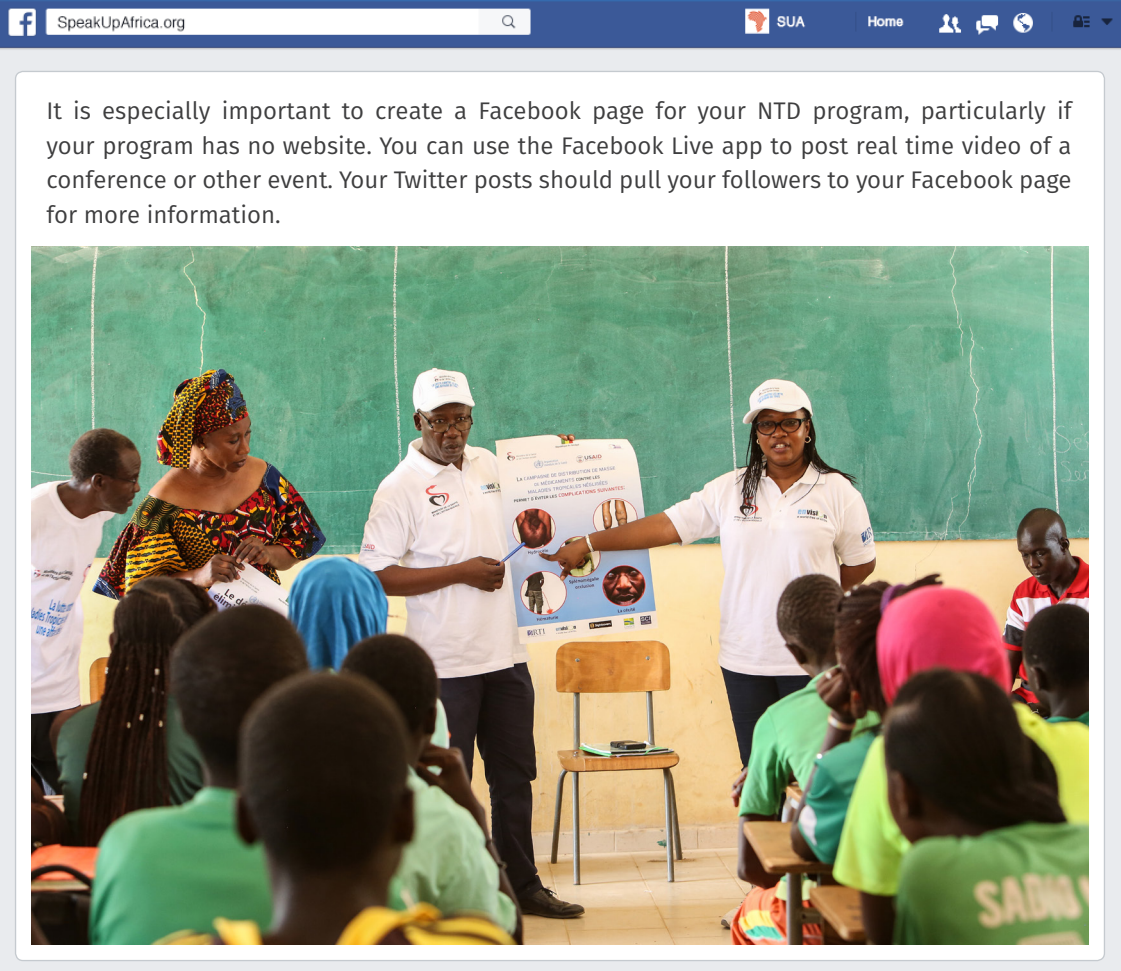
Social media is a game-changer in that it connects governments, civil society and ideas. In an environment of competing interests, the effective use of social media can have a significant impact on the outcome of public policy decision-making that affects your NTD program. An active social media engagement can get the attention of decision-makers, potential partners, influencers, the media and your stakeholders. It's like having everyone in a room, and you, the program manager, is holding the microphone.

Your use of social media should be content-driven; in other words, what are the most effective messages and the most efficient platform to get the word out about NTD goals and objectives.

Facebook is the most popular social media network in Africa, with millions joining in recent years, mostly on their mobile phones. Today many decision-makers and influencers use Twitter and belong to Whatsapp groups. The technology for developing a Facebook page, a Twitter account and a Whatsapp group are relatively straightforward and can be easily mastered by people who have had little experience in social media.

Facebook connects users by posting interactive content such as status updates, photos, links and videos. Twitter is an information network that delivers real-time updates of the latest stories, opinions, news and ideas in 280- character format as well as photos and short videos. Organizations can quickly 'tweet' information and build relationships with their followers.

It is especially important to create a Facebook page for your NTD program, particularly if your program has no website. You can use the Facebook Live app to post real time video of a conference or other event. Your Twitter posts should pull your followers to your Facebook page for more information.

WhatsApp

WhatsApp is a text messaging services. WhatsApp uses the internet to send messages, images audio or video and is similar to text messaging, and has the advantage of being less expensive. With the exception of a few countries, WhatsApp is easily the most popular platform across Africa. Your NTD program can build broadcast lists of people who can receive invitation to meetings, information, updates and news about your NTD program.

Another important **Whatsapp** list would be your NTD Partners' Coalition where you can share information, organize meetings and engage in strategic conversations to advance the objectives of the group. Other lists would include your advocacy partners, such as NGOs, religious institutions, private sector companies and the media.

Whatever platform you decide to use, and it is best to use multiple platforms depending on the target audience and the message, it is important to develop a social media playbook for the NTD team.

Elements of a Social Media Playbook

1. Be clear about your objectives. Is the goal to raise the visibility of the NTD program nationally among the broader public or to raise visibility among decision-makers and influencers? Or both. How will you target decision-makers? What kind of information will you post to get your target audiences' attention? It is important to post no more than once a day. Most people scroll through their newsfeeds so too many posts will saturate your audience.

2. After identifying your target audiences, match them with the appropriate social media platform. At initial meetings with your NTD Partners' Coalition or with media professionals, discuss with them what platform works best for them.

3. Define your message. What story are you telling? Be clear on what kind of values, problems, solutions, and actions are involved. Use compelling photos and graphics.

4. Engagement is the active participation of the reader or follower. This can mean a "share" on a Facebook post or a "re-tweet" on Twitter. The engagement of a community on your social media platform is a good indicator of how your messages are resonating and reach of your followers.

Facebook and Twitter are two of the most important social media platforms in Africa. Here are some tips for maximizing the impact of your social media.

FACEBOOK

- **Keep it short**. Most Facebook users skim their newsfeeds, so they're most likely to interact with content that is brief and concise. Facebook Posts of up to just 40 characters — a few words, or a short sentence at most — generate the highest engagement.

- **Make it visual**. Photos and images are overwhelmingly the most engaging type of content on Facebook, generating a whopping 87 percent interaction rate from page followers. Avoid text-only Facebook posts at all costs, and be sure to include an image whenever possible. Photos also help to humanize the story that you want to get across, and helping your story to resonate with the audience at a human level.

- **Post regularly**. The more you engage with your audience, the better off you will be. Try to post to the NTD Facebook Page at two or three times a week, but not more than once a day.

- **Activate your followers**. Every time an individual shares, likes, or comments on posts on your Facebook page, your page is made visible to that individual's own Facebook friends. That means potentially hundreds of users — including potential donors and members — see your content. The NTD program staff and its partners can be encouraged to share and like your posts. It's an easy lift with huge rewards. You can also encourage them to turn on "notifications" to find out whenever there is new content on your page, so that they can be sure not to miss a beat.

- **Branding is essential**. Make sure the content you post is branded with your NTD logo. Branding ensures that the post is credited to the NTD program and raises its visibility.

- **Push traffic to your website**. Most of the links for your posts should bring your follower to the NTD website.

TWITTER 🐦

- Tweet regularly. It's best to tweet not more than once every hour. If you're just starting off, aim to tweet at least once a day, or about five to 10 times a week. The key is not falling dormant.

- A hashtag is created by including the symbol "#" in front of a word or words without spaces. A hashtag is a label used on social media sites that makes it easier to find information with a theme or specific content. Hashtags are used to reach target audiences and to help filter information. The NTD community uses the following hashtags in their tweets:

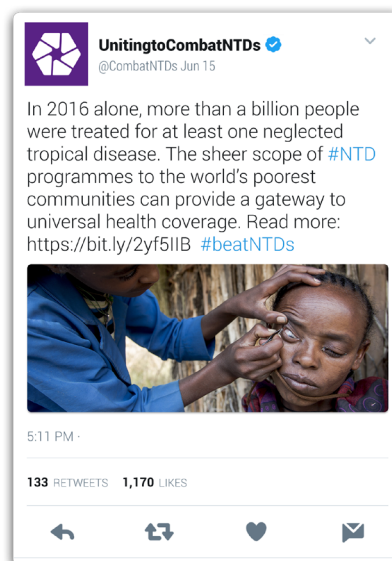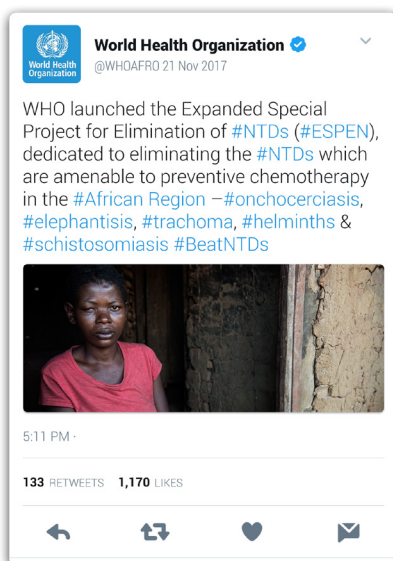#NoToNTDs   #ISayNoToNTDs

#BeatNTDs   #ESPEN

#NeglectedTropicalDiseases

- Make it visual. You can get a 150% increase in retweets just by attaching images. Try to attach an image to a tweet whenever possible, even if it means shortening your word count.

- Carry out direct outreach to your key decision-maker and influencer groups. Social media is all about interaction. If you follow an account, that user will receive a notification and will likely follow you back. The goal is for them to engage and share your message.

- The traditional media. Find the Twitter accounts for local journalist and bloggers, and tweet them links to your events, announcements, or press releases. Many journalists list their Twitter handles in their bylines, or you can Google the journalist's name and the word "Twitter" to find it.

- Government officials. Twitter is a great way to interact directly with government officials, who are often highly active on the platform. Tweet the government official with your message. Write a sample tweet and encourage your followers to tweet the link or message to the government official. Here are some examples of NTD tweets:

World Health Organization ✔
@WHOAFRO 21 Nov 2017

WHO launched the Expanded Special Project for Elimination of #NTDs (#ESPEN), dedicated to eliminating the #NTDs which are amenable to preventive chemotherapy in the #African Region —#onchocerciasis, #elephantisis, #trachoma, #helminths & #schistosomiasis #BeatNTDs

5:11 PM ·

133 RETWEETS   1,170 LIKES

UnitingtoCombatNTDs ✔
@CombatNTDs Jun 15

In 2016 alone, more than a billion people were treated for at least one neglected tropical disease. The sheer scope of #NTD programmes to the world's poorest communities can provide a gateway to universal health coverage. Read more: https://bit.ly/2yf5IIB #beatNTDs

5:11 PM ·

133 RETWEETS   1,170 LIKES

Global Citizen Impact ✔
@GlblCtznImpact · Jan 7

Soccer legend ⚽ @didierdrogba is using his platform to say #NotoNTDs!🙌 @SpeakUpAfrica1 #BeTheGeneration

The Clock Is Running Out: Let's Team Up and Say No To NTDs
As the African continent and the entire world celebrate the 100th birthday of the great Nelson Mandela with the 2018 Global Citizen Festival
africa.com

133 RETWEETS   1,170 LIKES

MONITORING AND EVALUATION

Measuring the Impact of Your Advocacy

Monitoring and evaluation are important procedures to measure progress toward short and long-term objectives and goals. A monitoring and evaluation plan needs to be included in the advocacy strategy.

Monitoring generally consists of the routine tracking of the key elements of implementation through record-keeping and regular reporting. A monitoring system focuses above all on examining the processes as the strategic plan is implemented. Through monitoring you will be able to ascertain, for instance:

• If the planned products such as toolkits, message guides, factsheets have been developed and tested;

• If the planned activities such as advocacy meetings, the formation of the Partners Coalition, the creation of an NTD journalism group, etc. have been carried out;

• If an NTD logo and slogan have been developed and resonate with the target audience.

The NTD program members should also attend the activities that take place to observe the quality of the undertakings, especially to ensure that influencers and decision makers are receiving the right messages and taking the requested action.

And, if the plan is not being implemented as expected or not obtaining commitments to take action, this will allow the NTD Program to consider requesting that mid-course corrective actions be taken in order to insure success. Samples of indicators to track long-term and intermediate outcomes:

EXAMPLES OF LONG AND INTERMEDIATE OUTCOMES TO MONITOR IN ADVOCACY	
Long-term outcomes	**Tipping points** • Change in policy • Change in legislation: changes of national legal frameworks in favor of NTD spending or interventions and/or rhe establishment of Parliamentary groups on NTDs • Budgetary commitments: percent change in domestic financing for NTDs • Implementation of commitments • The establishment of national Partners Coalition No to NTDs Councils • The number of people reached by mass media campaigns with NTD messages
Intermediate outcomes	**Coalition building** • New or stronger networks • More effective network activities **Shaping the policy agenda** • Changes in oral and written rhetoric: mentions of NTDs in the media by political leaders • New items appear in political discussions • Items are framed in new ways within policy arguments • Coverage of issue in the media: the number of societal (political/private sector/community/religious) leaders publicly committed to say no to and end NTDs

EXAMPLES OF LONG AND INTERMEDIATE OUTCOMES TO MONITOR IN ADVOCACY	
	Influencing policy maker attitudes and behavior • Key decision makers change rhetoric in public and in private • Key decision makers change knowledge, attitudes and behaviors
	Private sector contribution • Percent change in private sector donations or in-kind support for NTD programs
	Building a social movement • Communities acquire new information • Communities change attitudes • Communities change behaviors • Communities acquire a new strength within democratic processes (voting, speaking to their MP, getting involved in decision-making process

Program impacts are results that are directly attributed to program activities rather than external factors.

Types of questions answered by impact evaluations:

1. Was an action taken or commitment made by a decision maker in support of a policy, programmatic or budgetary request that was made?

2. When was the commitment made?

3. When was a concrete action fulfilling the commitment taken?

4. Does the level of commitment and action fulfil the goal? Or do other requests have to be made to in-country or external decision makers to achieve NTD program goals?

5. If no commitment was made or action taken, what other messages, tactics or communication channels may be used to reach more effectively that decision makers or other decision makers to achieve the goal?

6. What are the lessons and the best practices learned from this experience that can be applied to other NTD advocacy activities?
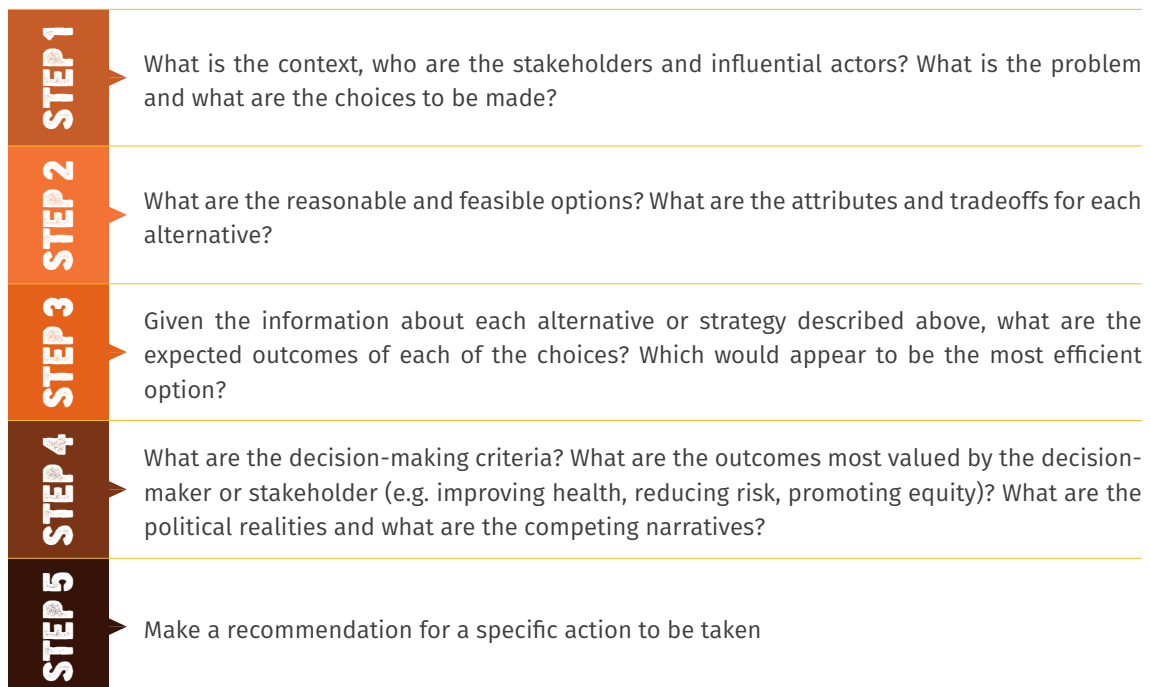
ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Policy Briefs

A policy brief is a very important tool in your NTD advocacy efforts. The policy brief targets the decision-maker, whether at the national level or sub-national level, and is the preferred form of communication favoured by policy actors. Research shows that 79% of policy actors from both developing and developed countries rated policy briefs as a 'key tool' for making decisions[12].

The objective of your policy brief is to advocate for a change in policy—from a budget request to a change in the country's health policy concerning NTDs. It is important to keep in mind the audience for your policy brief. Officials in the Ministry of Finance will expect a policy brief that focuses on issues related to budgets, costs and other financial issues. At the Ministry of Health, officials will respond to the public health issues around NTDs.

The position of the official is also important. Technical staff will respond to evidence-based arguments. At higher levels of the government, a policy brief should lay out the policy options—keeping in mind the political realities and the competing narratives.

Policy briefs should be no more than two-pages. There is a useful five-step framework for writing a policy brief for a public health issue:

STEP 1	What is the context, who are the stakeholders and influential actors? What is the problem and what are the choices to be made?
STEP 2	What are the reasonable and feasible options? What are the attributes and tradeoffs for each alternative?
STEP 3	Given the information about each alternative or strategy described above, what are the expected outcomes of each of the choices? Which would appear to be the most efficient option?
STEP 4	What are the decision-making criteria? What are the outcomes most valued by the decision-maker or stakeholder (e.g. improving health, reducing risk, promoting equity)? What are the political realities and what are the competing narratives?
STEP 5	Make a recommendation for a specific action to be taken

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12· *See Nicola Jones and Cora Walsh, Policy briefs as a communication tool for development research (Overseas Development Institute: 2008).*

POLICY BRIEF: LYMPHATIC FILARIASIS

Lymphatic filariasis, commonly known as elephantiasis, is a neglected tropical disease (NTD). Infection occurs when filarial parasites are transmitted to humans through mosquitoes. Infection is usually acquired in childhood causing hidden damage to the lymphatic system.

When lymphatic filariasis develops into chronic conditions it leads to lymphoedema (tissue swelling) or elephantiasis (skin/tissue thickening) of limbs and hydrocele (scrotal swelling). Involvement of breasts and genital organs is common. Such body deformities often lead to social stigma and sub-optimal mental health, loss of income-earning opportunities and increased medical expenses for patients and their caretakers. The socioeconomic burdens of isolation and poverty are immense.

LF KEY FACTS

- Lymphatic filariasis impairs the lymphatic system and can lead to the abnormal enlargement of body parts, causing pain, severe disability and social stigma.

- 856 million people in 52 countries worldwide remain threatened by lymphatic filariasis and require preventive chemotherapy to stop the spread of this parasitic infection.

- In 2000 over 120 million people were infected, with about 40 million disfigured and incapacitated by the disease.

- 499 million people no longer require preventive chemotherapy due to successful implementation of WHO strategies.

THE WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION'S (WHO) RESPONSE

World Health Assembly resolution WHA50.29 encourages Member States to eliminate lymphatic filariasis as a public health problem. In response, WHO launched its Global Programme to Eliminate Lymphatic Filariasis (GPELF) in 2000. In 2012, the WHO neglected tropical diseases roadmap reconfirmed the target date for achieving elimination by 2020.

WHO's strategy is based on 2 key components:

- Stopping the spread of infection through large-scale annual treatment of all eligible people in an area or region where infection is present; and

- Alleviating the suffering caused by lymphatic filariasis through provision of the recommended basic package of care.

GLOBAL PROGRAM SUCCESSES

- From 2000 to 2016, 6.7 billion treatments were delivered to more than 850 million people at least once in 66 countries, considerably reducing transmission in many places.

- The population requiring MDA has declined by 36% (499 million) where infection prevalence has been reduced below elimination thresholds.

- The overall economic benefit of the programme during 2000-2007 is conservatively estimated at US$ 24 billion

- Preventive chemotherapy is still required in 52 countries but has not been delivered to all endemic areas as of the end of 2017.

LF ELIMINATION: PROGRESS IN AFRICA[1]

An unprecedented effort of mapping NTDs in the African Region has narrowed the scope of LF endemicity. Among the 35 countries originally considered endemic, an estimated 395.3 million persons are currently considered to require MDA. Based on data reported from 20 countries, 176.5 million persons were reported covered in MDA for a regional coverage of 44.7%, representing an 18% increase from 2014. MDA scale-up as observed in 2015 compared to 2014 is encouraging for Cameroon, Democratic Republic of Congo, Ethiopia, Kenya, Nigeria, Senegal, and Zambia, highlighting the many examples of success with MDA in the region.
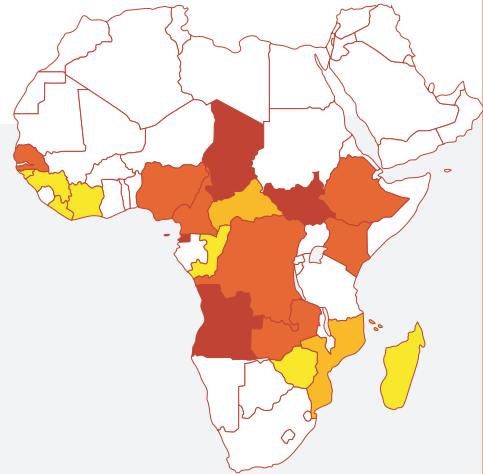
- MDA scale-up as observed in 2015 compared to 2014
- Rapid scale-up of MDA to all endemic IUs is still required
- MDA needs to start urgently
- MDA was also required but not implemented

LEVERAGING THE BENEFITS OF LF TREATMENT

LF medications provide effective prevention of and treatment for several medically important intestinal helminth (parasitic worm) infections. For example, one medication used to treat LF, albendazole, also treats hookworm, roundworm, and whipworm infections. Prevention of and treatment for these infections (also NTDs), contribute to greater productivity and better quality of life by protecting children from cognitive impairment, anemia, and malnourishment.

RECOMMENDATIONS

In support of the global program, countries and partners are encouraged to:

Continue and scale-up MDA programs;

Develop and implement strategies to accelerate the elimination of LF;

Increase efforts to provide disease management for persons with LF;

Wherever possible, integrate LF programs to deliver services for other NTDs and diseases.

01· WHO's Weekly Epidemiological Record, 20 September 2016

PowerPoint Presentations

PowerPoint is a widely used software application that provides visual content for presentations. As the NTD program manager, it is important to use the presentation platform to increase awareness, create partnerships and advocate for resources. Creating good PowerPoint presentations can be challenging— so much so that there is a syndrome called "death by PowerPoint." However, by following a few simple guidelines, your PowerPoint can be a useful advocacy tool.

1 **Simplicity is best. Create a template with your NTD logo/graphics for brand recognition. Be consistent with font, colors and background.**

2 **Limit the number of words on each slide. The text should not be the content of your presentation. Use key phrases and only essential information.**

3 **Limit punctuation and using capital letters.**

4 **Don't overuse special effects.**

5 **Use good quality photos and simple graphics.**

6 **Limit the number of slides.**

7 **Don't read your slides.**

It is most efficient to develop a basic presentation that can be adapted for different purposes and different audiences. Keep in mind your audience. An audience of technical experts will expect technical information about the program. For a non-technical audience, it is more important to present the big picture along with results and desired actions.

Press Releases

The press release is a direct communication to the news media about an event, a milestone or a result in your NTD program. The press release has a standard format and goes out to the media as an announcement. There are a number of ways to disseminate your press release.

You can send it to your local newspapers, radio stations and television stations, targeting the Editor or Managing Editor. You can also send it electronically to websites hosted by partner organization and other websites that focus on public health issues.

The timing of your press release is important. If you are sending it electronically to an Editor, you will get more attention if you send it out at 9:08 a.m. instead of 9:00 a.m., which may get lost at the top of the hour. It is also a good idea to include a high-quality photo to accompany the press release.

Here is a template for writing a press release:

[Print on your letterhead with your logo and address]

[ORGANIZATION NAME]   Contact Name:

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: Day, Month, Year   Mobile

                                                            Email address

HEADLINE

[example: Campaign Launched to Eliminate NTDs]

Sub-headline: No to NTDs Campaign Will Meet Elimination Target by 2020

City, State (Date) – One (maybe two) sentences that summarize the whole story. If the reader gets no further, they will know what this story is about.

"Follow up with a quote as soon as possible," the Prime Minister said at the launch of the new government campaign to eliminate neglected tropical diseases held at the Sheraton Hotel on May 21, 2018. If the quote is attributed to the same person introduced in the first paragraph, just use their last name and don't repeat the title.

Support what you said in the first paragraphs with more about why this article is relevant and any facts to back it up and make the point stronger.

If the release goes to a second page, make that known by writing ... MORE at the bottom of the page.

Advocacy Tools

The Program should prepare advocacy tools to be given to champions and other public figures. Such tools should contain written material, such as talking points and factsheets.

In addition to written material, the advocacy materials could include visual such as the campaign t-shirt/cap/apron, posters and other visual aids that the leaders can display in and around their offices. The use of such items helps them to demonstrate their commitment to, and involvement with the effort to end NTDs.

Advocacy Events

In organizing public advocacy events for government officials, their own public relations staff must be involved throughout the planning process to ensure their effective and efficient involvement during the implementation of communication activities as well as to ensure that established protocols are followed.

There should be agreement on the statements that will be made, as well as which partners and individuals are to be named consistently in statements to the media and the general public. Invitations should be made to dignitaries to attend and to journalists to cover these public events. Press releases and Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) should be made available to the broadcast, digital and print media highlighting the key points that will be made at the event and why the event is important to cover. Under the pressure of deadlines, journalists will often integrate much of the content of a press release into their reports.

The Uniting to Combat NTDs Partnership

UNITING to **COMBAT**
NEGLECTED TROPICAL DISEASES

Uniting to Combat NTDs is a collective of invested, interested and dedicated partners, working to fulfil the London Declaration on Neglected Tropical Diseases. Through collaboration, information sharing, and aligned strategies, the diverse partners of the Uniting to Combat NTDs complement and extend the reach of the World Health Organization to support national programs in their efforts to build and implement NTD programs.

On their website, unitingtocombatntds.org, the Partnership developed country profiles that are available for download in their resources section. Here is a sample for Senegal:

2016 NTD COUNTRY PROFILE
Senegal

This country profile provides an overview of Senegal's progress in reaching people in need of mass NTD treatment based on 2016 data.

NTD mass treatment coverage index: 44/100
Overall rank: Joint 18th

LYMPHATIC FILARIASIS	ONCHOCERCIASIS	SCHISTOSOMIASIS	SOIL-TRANSMITTED HELMINTHS	TRACHOMA
71% coverage	**69%** coverage	**35%** coverage	**63%** coverage	**15%** coverage

7.2 million
people received treatment in Senegal in 2016

4.4 million
people in need did not receive treatment in Senegal in 2016

How the index is calculated

The index is an average of coverage across the diseases endemic in your country that are amenable to mass treatment, calculated using the geometric mean.

By using the geometric mean for the index, it prevents high coverage of one disease compensating for very low coverage of other diseases. This provides countries with a sense of how well they are delivering integrated treatment across diseases.

The methodology used is comparable to WHO's proposal for a Universal Health Coverage (UHC) index. It can therefore help to monitor equity in progress towards UHC, making sure that the least well-off are prioritised at every step.

The index was developed by the World Health Organization, using data reported by member states.

Senegal and neglected tropical diseases | 3

2016 NTD COUNTRY PROFILE - SENEGAL
Diseases

Lymphatic filariasis
⊕ Treatment coverage increased from 56% in 2015 to 71% in 2016.

PEOPLE NEEDING TREATMENT	PEOPLE RECEIVING TREATMENT
8.53 million	6.09 million

Onchocerciasis
⊕ Treatment coverage increased from 51% in 2015 to 69% in 2016.

PEOPLE NEEDING TREATMENT	PEOPLE RECEIVING TREATMENT
915,000	629,000

Schistosomiasis
⊖ Treatment coverage decreased from 100% in 2015 to 35% in 2016.

SCHOOL-AGED CHILDREN NEEDING TREATMENT	SCHOOL-AGED CHILDREN RECEIVING TREATMENT
1.59 million	561,000

Soil-transmitted helminths
⊖ Treatment coverage decreased from 84% in 2015 to 63% in 2016.

PRE-SCH & SCHOOL-AGED CHILDREN NEEDING TREATMENT	PRE-SCH & SCHOOL-AGED CHILDREN RECEIVING TREATMENT
6.42 million	4.04 million

Trachoma
⊖ Treatment coverage decreased from 37% in 2015 to 15% in 2016.

PEOPLE NEEDING TREATMENT	PEOPLE RECEIVING TREATMENT
2.77 million	413,000

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USEFUL LINKS

- **ALMA and NTDs:** https://unitingtocombatntds.org/africa/
- **Beat NTDs:** https://www.beatntds.org/
- **SDGs Knowledge Platform:** https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/vnrs/

In January 2019, The World Health Organization today launched a new toolkit to help improve delivery of water, sanitation and hygiene services to underserved populations affected by many neglected tropical diseases: "WASH and health working together, A 'how-to' guide for Neglected Tropical Disease programmes". Here is the link to the downloadable toolkit:
https://www.who.int/water_sanitation_health/publications/wash-health-toolkit/en/
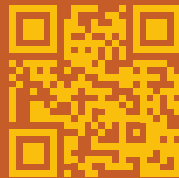
48

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

THE NO TO NTDs ONLINE PLATFORM

The online toolbox aims to enable knowledge sharing and facilitate the spread of the No to NTDs movement in Africa. It is designed for stakeholders in all African countries working on NTD control and elimination.

The downloadable resources aim to support all stakeholders with NTD campaign planning, strategic partnership building, increased visibility and monitoring and evaluation.

Check out the toolbox here:

www.notontds.org

info@speakupafrica.org
www.speakupafrica.org