

# DECLARATION

## The No To NTD Civil Society Network Speaks Up AGAINST COVID-19

**As Civil Society Organisations, we understand the pivotal role we can play to help stop the spread of misinformation, encourage good habits to slow down and ultimately prevent the spread of Covid-19 through Africa.**

Our coalition focuses on Neglected Tropical Diseases, as they affect 1.5 billion people worldwide and Africa bears close to 40% of the burden. They thrive in areas where access to healthcare, adequate sanitation and clean water is limited, such as in remote and rural areas or informal settlements. They affect some of the continent's poorest, most marginalized and remote communities, costing affected economies billions of dollars every year.

These communities are at an increased risk for Covid-19, as the virus is likely to spread more rapidly because these communities may not be able to implement the most effective prevention measures such as regular hand washing without readily available water and soap, or social distancing. People are also likely to suffer complications because of neglected tropical diseases prevailing in their communities, as well as other diseases of poverty.

In relation to the unprecedented challenges we are facing, and in support to the Stay Safe Africa campaign, we shall work to implement all necessary actions to protect Africans and our communities, through communication of the WHO recommended prevention methods, including handwashing, social distancing and rebutting misinformation.

### WE ARE COMMITTED TO

**INTEGRATE COVID-19 MESSAGING** into NTD activities.

**SHARING BEST PRACTICES** to prevent and tackle Covid-19 with leaders and our communities, particularly if a citizen is also suffering from an NTD.

**JOIN FORCES** for a regional advocacy towards the prevention of the spread of misinformation and address sustainable investment in health systems strengthening.

**ENSURE COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT** is an important pillar in the fight against COVID-19.

**ENSURE THAT INTERVENTIONS AGAINST NTDs** are sustained during the management of the pandemic.

