

Partner's Playbook: Why World NTD Day 2026 matters more than ever

The global landscape for neglected tropical diseases (NTDs) has shifted dramatically over the past year. Historic progress is now under threat from deep cuts to global health financing, growing geopolitical instability, climate-driven health risks, and increasing competition for development resources. Together, these pressures have created the most challenging environment for NTD programmes in more than a decade – putting hard-won country achievements and global momentum at risk.

In this context, extensive consultation with partners highlighted a preference to retain the familiar rallying cry “Unite. Act. Eliminate.” After a year of significant change, partners emphasized the value of continuity, clarity, and a shared framework that the global NTD community can mobilise around quickly and confidently.

Against this backdrop, World NTD Day 2026 is not simply a moment for awareness – it is a rallying point for collective resolve. As the global community once again unites under “Unite. Act. Eliminate.”, this year’s messaging reflects the urgency of protecting progress while accelerating action toward the WHO 2030 NTD Roadmap targets.

World NTD Day 2026 is a critical opportunity to:

- Protect progress by safeguarding existing commitments, national programmes, and drug donation partnerships
- Accelerate action to help keep countries on track to meet elimination targets
- Unlock new financing through domestic resources, integrated funding mechanisms, and innovative investments that can close emerging gaps

NTD elimination remains one of the most cost-effective, equity-driven, and achievable goals in global health. At a moment of uncertainty, World NTD Day offers a powerful platform to reaffirm why sustained investment in NTDs is essential for resilient health systems, thriving communities, and sustainable development.

World NTD Day 2026 Theme: Unite. Act. Eliminate.

Unite. Bring together governments, communities, civil society, donors, the private sector and partners around a shared commitment to end NTDs.

Act. Turn commitment into impact through innovation, integrated approaches, strong country leadership, new and sustained resources, technical guidance, solidarity, and coordination.

Eliminate. Build on proven progress and country successes by scaling prevention and treatment, strengthening surveillance, advancing research and development, interrupting transmission, managing disability, and ending stigma.

This umbrella theme is designed to be flexible and adaptable, enabling partners to apply it to their own priorities while reinforcing a shared narrative of urgency, collaboration, and collective action.

The role of partners

Every partner has a vital role to play in keeping NTD elimination on the global agenda. By using World NTD Day to raise visibility, reinforce political will, and advocate for sustained investment, partners help protect progress and accelerate action toward the WHO 2030 NTD Roadmap and SDG 3. Partners are encouraged to take action independently using their own platforms, networks, and voices.

Advocate

- Publish or share op-eds, blogs, or statements calling for sustained political and financial commitment to NTD elimination
- Engage national decision-makers with messages aligned to Unite. Act. Eliminate.
- Highlight the high return on investment of NTD programmes and advocate for new funding

Amplify

- Share World NTD Day messages and assets across social media channels
- Spotlight country successes, community impact, and frontline health workers
- Reinforce shared calls to protect progress and accelerate action

Communicate

- Conduct national or regional media outreach where possible
- Issue press releases or media statements tied to national priorities or milestones
- Frame NTD elimination as a national success story worth protecting and scaling