

WHO issues new 10-year plan to end suffering from neglected tropical diseases

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Ending the neglect to attain the Sustainable Development Goals: a road map for neglected tropical diseases 2021–2030



A new World Health Organization (WHO) road map for neglected tropical diseases (NTDs) proposes ambitious targets and innovative approaches to tackle 20 diseases that affect more than a billion mainly poor people and which thrive in areas where access to quality health services, clean water and sanitation is scarce.

Targets include the eradication of dracunculiasis (guinea worm) and yaws and a 90% reduction in the need for treatment for NTDs by 2030. *Ending the neglect to attain the Sustainable Development Goals: a road map for neglected tropical diseases 2021–2030* aims to accelerate programmatic action and renew momentum by proposing concrete actions focused on integrated platforms for delivery of interventions, and thereby improve programme cost– effectiveness and coverage. It was endorsed by the World Health Assembly ([WHA 73\(33\)](#)) in November 2020.

The road map is designed to address critical gaps across multiple diseases by integrating and mainstreaming approaches and actions within national health systems, and across sectors.

The 2030 targets

The road map, developed through a wide consultative process involving countries, partners, stakeholders, the scientific community. The overarching 2030 global targets are:

- reduce by 90% the number of people requiring treatment for NTDs
- at least 100 countries to have eliminated at least one NTD
- eradicate two diseases (dracunculiasis and yaws)
- reduce by 75% the disability-adjusted life years (DALYs) related to NTD

Additionally, the road map will track 10 cross-cutting targets and disease-specific targets that include a reduction by more than 75% in the number of deaths from vector-borne NTDs such as dengue, leishmaniasis and others, promote full access to basic water supply, sanitation and hygiene in areas endemic for NTDs and achieve greater improvement in collecting and reporting NTD data disaggregated by gender.

In the past decade, substantial gains have been made, resulting in 600 million fewer people at risk of NTDs than a decade ago and with 42 countries eliminating at least one NTD, including some defeating multiple NTDs. Furthermore, global programmes treated more than 1 billion people a year (Coverage averaging 60% or more of the 1.7 billion who require treatment) for 5 consecutive years between 2015 – 2019.

NTDs affect over 1 billion people globally and cause pain and disability, creating lasting health, social and economic consequences for individuals and societies.