

World NTD Day 2024: Ongoing Canadian Engagement is Needed to End Neglected Tropical Diseases

Canadian Network for NTDs Word NTD Day (January 30th) 2024 Press Release

OTTAWA, ONTARIO, CANADA, January 29, 2024 /EINPresswire.com/ -- As the world marks the annual Neglected Tropical Diseases (NTD) Day on January 30, the Canadian Network for

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Alison Krentel, PhD

Neglected Tropic Diseases (CNNTD) calls on Canada to stay the course in seeing the end of NTDs in Canada and around the world.

NTDs affect 1.6 billion people globally (nearly 1 in 5 people) that have limited access to clean water, sanitation and health care. NTDs are called neglected diseases because they are underfunded and often ignored. NTDs are, in fact, often diseases of neglected populations.

“Canada can’t turn a blind eye to people living in the most vulnerable communities who struggle with neglected

tropical diseases,” says Dr. Alison Krentel, associate professor, School of Epidemiology and Public Health, University of Ottawa and founding member and current chair of the Canadian Steering Group for Neglected Tropical Diseases. “The good news is that even an incremental investment – for example, equivalent to the cost of a house in downtown Toronto or Vancouver – can go a long way in changing many lives affected by NTDs.”

Canadian NTD experts have long worked in more than 60 countries around the world in the forefront of diagnostics, treatment, vaccine development and research.

“These are diseases of poverty and continue to cause significant global morbidity,” says Isaac Bogoch, clinical investigator focusing on infectious and tropical diseases, Toronto General Hospital Research Institute (TGHRI). “We aim to implement cost-effective and innovative mechanisms to better prevent, identify and treat these infections at the individual and population level.”

In 2021, Canada supported the launch of the World Health Organization's [Neglected Tropical Diseases Roadmap](#) (2021-2030) ratified at the World Health Assembly in November 2020.

In 2022, the Government of Canada signed the Kigali Declaration on Neglected Tropical Diseases, signaling its commitment to making sure proven treatments and prevention solutions reach those in need. The goal of the Kigali Declaration is to mobilize political will and commitments to achieve the Sustainable Development Goal 3 (SDG3) targets on neglected tropical diseases set out in the WHO NTD Roadmap.

At the United Nations meetings in 2023, Canada announced [a \\$15 million CAD investment](#) to eliminate trachoma in 10 countries in the Americas. Trachoma is the leading infectious cause of blindness globally, with a disproportionate impact on women and children.

"I'm pleased that Canada has made a commitment to eliminate trachoma in the region of the Americas," says the Honourable Dr. Stanley Kutcher, an independent senator from Nova Scotia and a long-time advocate of the fight against NTDs. "We realize this is only part of the work that needs to be done globally. We are moving in the right direction, but we are not where we need to be. It's like running a 400-meter race, and we are at the 350-meter mark, and we have work to do. I am very proud of Canada for stepping up and getting us through the last 50 meters to finish the race."

"Canada has made progress in the fight against NTDs, but we can't stop here," says Dr. Krentel. "Now more than ever, the world needs Canada to do its share to achieve the WHO NTD Roadmap goals. Our call to action is for Canada to stay the course with incremental contributions to the prevention and treatment of NTDs. Let's help countries reach their goals of elimination. We know even small investments can go a long way in transforming communities affected by NTDs."

About World NTD Day

In 2021, the World Health Assembly (WHA) recognized January 30 as World Neglected Tropical Diseases Day to raise awareness of the devastating impact of NTDs on the poorest populations around the world and support the growing momentum for the control, elimination and



World NTD Campaign photo with mother and child

eradication of these diseases. To Learn more please visit on CNNTD's website.

About the Canadian Network for Neglected Tropical Diseases (CNNTD)

The Canadian Network for Neglected Tropical Diseases (CNNTD) was founded in 2018 by Canadians working in NTDs. Currently, it represents a group of 10 Canadian-based organizations, two international organizations and 260 Canadian and international individual members who share a vision to end the neglect of NTDs and support greater engagement of the Canadian government in global efforts to prevent and treat NTDs.

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