

# 8-point manifesto urges increased control, elimination and R&D efforts against Neglected Tropical Diseases

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Although advances in the control and elimination of neglected infections have been steadily increasing in the past decade—specifically with heightened interest by policy makers, governments, the World Health Organization (WHO), and private philanthropies—more can and must be done, says a new editorial, "'Manifesto' for Advancing the Control and Elimination of Neglected Tropical Diseases," published May 25 in the open-access journal *PLoS Neglected Tropical Diseases*.

In the eight-point "manifesto" for [neglected tropical diseases](#) (NTDs), co-authors Peter Hotez, President of the Sabin Vaccine Institute and Distinguished Research Professor of The George Washington University Medical Center, and Bernard Pecoul, Executive Director of Drugs for Neglected Diseases Institute (DNDi), outline reasons why the global community should increase financial support for NTD control and elimination efforts and research and development.

Specifically, the manifesto states that:

- All NTDs are "tool ready" with cost-efficient and effective interventions that could be implemented now, even if for some diseases such tools are far from being perfect or complete.
- At the same time that NTDs are tool ready they are also tool

deficient, signifying that the tools are incomplete, or inadequate, to sustain elimination efforts.

- NTDs have received little attention from the international community during the past ten years despite their large disease burden.
- Increasing evidence indicates an association between NTD prevalence and conflict and violation of human rights.
- NTDs can be particularly destabilizing and disrupt agricultural productivity and [food security](#). Many poor societies with high NTD burdens have been recently engaged in a civil or international conflict or are currently at war.
- Sustained involvement by the WHO and other international health agencies is crucial for current and future NTD control and elimination efforts.
- Nothing is more important to the success of global NTD control than the involvement of communities themselves and disease-endemic countries' health ministries.
- Achievement of Millennium Development Goal 8 ("develop a global partnership for development") will rest with stakeholders—health ministries, affected communities, public-private partnerships, large and small non-governmental organizations, etc.—establishing a well-functioning international strategy for NTD control.

According to the authors, tackling the issue of NTDs will have an impact on other global health crises and be an agent to achieving various Millennium Development Goals.

"[NTD control] activities have facilitated the delivery of additional interventions such as insecticide-treated bed nets, antimalarial drugs, micronutrients, and childhood immunizations," Hotez and Pecoul say.

The authors conclude by urging scientists working on NTDs to collaborate more and identify funding opportunities and cost-efficient interventions.

"By highlighting important challenges in the fight against NTDs, this 'manifesto' calls on the global community for urgent, renewed, and innovative efforts."

**More information:** Hotez PJ, Pecoul B (2010) "Manifesto" for Advancing the Control and Elimination of Neglected Tropical Diseases. PLoS Negl Trop Dis 4(5): e718. [doi:10.1371/journal.pntd.0000718](https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pntd.0000718)

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