

Host a Screening

Escape the Neglect: Stories from the Frontlines

A docuseries on ending neglected tropical diseases (NTDs)

Preventable diseases.

Powerful stories.

A chance to move people to act.

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Neglected tropical diseases, or NTDs, are a group of conditions that affect over a billion people worldwide, disproportionately impacting the most vulnerable communities and causing disability, suffering, and persistent cycles of poverty. Despite being preventable and treatable, these diseases too often remain invisible.

Escape the Neglect: Stories from the Frontlines brings that reality into focus. Produced by Devex in partnership with the Gates Foundation, this three-part docuseries follows communities, health workers, scientists, and partners who are proving that progress toward disease elimination is possible—and happening faster than ever before.

Why Host a Screening?

Because stories move people in ways data alone can't.

A screening creates space for conversation—about progress, about gaps, and about what it actually takes to eliminate diseases that have been ignored for far too long. Whether you're gathering colleagues, students, partners, or community members, Escape the Neglect helps ground big global health goals in lived experience.

To mark World NTD Day on January 30, or at any point throughout the year, Screening-in-a-Box makes it easy to bring these stories to your community, campus, workplace, or event and help turn awareness into action.

About the Films

The docuseries spans three countries and three critical NTDs, highlighting the people and partnerships driving real progress:

- **Episode 1:** Fighting Filariasis: India's Grassroots Approach to Eliminating Elephantiasis
- **Episode 2:** Modern Tools, Enduring Fight: Nigeria's Push to Eliminate River Blindness
- **Episode 3:** From Risk to Remedy: Fast-Tracking the End of Sleeping Sickness

Each episode is 5-10 minutes long and designed to spark discussion about what's working and what is needed to finish the job.

How to Host (It's easy!)

If you can press play and ask one good question, you can host a screening. This can be as simple as:

Lunch and learn with a single episode and discussion

Virtual watch party of all three episodes with discussion

Screening incorporated into an existing event

Some ideas for different settings:

- **Academic and research settings:** Host a campus screening as part of a global health student club with discussion among classmates, or integrate into a lecture series and invite guest experts, to bring abstract concepts to life.
- **Community health worker or practitioner trainings:** Screen an episode as part of learning sessions to prompt discussion on what makes health programs effective, dignified, and sustainable on the ground.
- **Pharmaceutical and private sector partnerships:** Use the series to humanize the impact of public-private collaboration and catalyze dialogue among internal audiences about how partnerships can evolve to accelerate elimination.

Big or small, in-person or virtual, the goal is the same: create space for people to learn, connect and engage. You don't need to be an NTD expert—just willing to convene a conversation.

► **Film access:** Stream the episodes on YouTube here: [Episode 1](#), [Episode 2](#), [Episode 3](#) (coming soon).

► **Factsheet:** An overview of NTDs, and disease-specific context for each episode to provide to attendees.

► **Discussion Guide:** Flexible, action-oriented questions for different audiences.

► **Invitation language:** Email templates and social media copy to help you promote the event and get the right people in the room.

Want to go further? Consider adding one simple action:

- Invite local or virtual speakers with experience in NTD programs
- Leverage videos to engage policymakers
- Continue the conversation online by tagging Devex and using #EscapeTheNeglect

About *Escape the Neglect*

Escape the Neglect is a storytelling platform that elevates the people and partnerships driving progress toward ending neglected tropical diseases. In addition to the docuseries, the platform features a wide range of stories—from testimonials from pharmaceutical partners that donate medicines to a photo essay chronicling Tanzania’s path to elimination at scale.

Together, these stories examine innovation, hard-won progress toward elimination, and the global investment needed to sustain momentum toward a world free of NTDs.

Host a screening. Start a conversation. Join the movement to escape the neglect.

For questions, please contact EscapeTheNeglect@globalhealthstrategies.com.

Discussion Guide

Use this guide to facilitate conversation after screening one episode or the full *Escape the Neglect* docuseries. You do not need to use all questions—choose the questions that best fit your audience and adapt them as needed to encourage open, thoughtful discussion.

The questions that follow are organized by episode. Alternatively, you may choose to anchor your discussion around one or more of the following themes:

- The economics of NTD elimination: Why NTDs are one of the most cost-effective, high-impact investments in global health today
- Community health workers as the backbone of disease elimination
- From neglected to priority: What it takes to shift global health narratives
- Government ownership: How endemic countries are stepping up following aid cuts
- Gender equity and NTDs: Understanding disproportionate impacts on women and girls

Start here: Core discussion questions

1. What moment from the film/docuseries stayed with you most, and why?
2. After watching this episode/docuseries, what does “escaping neglect” mean in practice, not just in theory?
3. What trade-offs or choices stood out in the film—between cost, scale, innovation, and sustainability—and how were those decisions made?
4. How did the role of national governments, local institutions, or communities shape what was possible in each setting?
5. What feels most hopeful, and what challenges still feel hardest to overcome?

Episode 1: Fighting filariasis – India’s grassroots approach to eliminating LF

1. What makes India’s community-led approach—particularly the role of ASHAs—effective at scale?
2. How can government or health systems sustain and scale the critical role of community health worker engagement beyond periodic mass drug administration campaigns over the long-term?
3. What lessons from India’s LF response could inform elimination strategies for other NTDs or broader health priorities by other countries?
4. How might digital tools or alternative diagnostics strengthen surveillance and long-term program efficiency?
5. What role can civil society play in ensuring that innovative tools are accessible, trusted, and well-understood at the grassroots level?
6. How can research better capture the long-term social, mental health, and economic impacts of lymphatic filariasis—and the sustainability of community-led elimination efforts?

Episode 2: Modern tools, enduring fight – Nigeria’s push to eliminate river blindness

1. How do targeted, data-driven interventions compare to traditional mass approaches as diseases near elimination?
2. What does this episode reveal about the role of local scientists and national leadership in driving innovation?
3. As tools become more technical, how can trust and understanding be maintained at the community level?
4. What does “successful elimination” look like beyond declining case numbers—in terms of equity, accountability, and long-term resilience?
5. As diseases near elimination, how should priorities shift between developing new tools and optimizing existing ones—and how can research and evidence better inform policy and program decisions?

Episode 3: From Risk to Remedy: Fast-Tracking the End of Sleeping Sickness

1. What conditions and partnerships between pharma, governments, and global health organizations made long-term R&D investment in gHAT viable despite limited commercial incentives?
2. What does the shift from injectable to oral—and potentially single-dose—therapies reveal about designing innovation that improves patient experience and reduces health system burden, not just clinical efficacy?
3. How does an all-oral, single-dose treatment change the feasibility, cost, and design of national elimination strategies?
4. How should success be measured for innovation in elimination-stage diseases—beyond product approval or case reduction?
5. What are the long-term health system and economic benefits of eliminating gHAT compared with continuing disease control?
6. How did conducting trials and implementation research in endemic settings like the DRC strengthen the relevance, quality, and uptake of the evidence?

Invitation and Promotional Materials

Below are ready-to-use invitation email language and sample social media posts to help you promote your Escape the Neglect screening. Please customize dates, locations, links, and audience references as needed, and feel free to adjust tone or length to align with your organization's channels and voice.

Email Template

Dear [Name / Colleagues / Students / Team],

In anticipation of World NTD Day on January 30, you are invited to join us for a screening of Escape the Neglect: Stories from the Frontlines, a three-part docuseries produced by Devex in partnership with the Gates Foundation that brings to life the fight against neglected tropical diseases (NTDs).

Date: [Insert date]

Time: [Insert time]

Location: [In-person / Virtual / Hybrid]

Details: Followed by facilitated discussion

NTDs are a group of infections that affect over a billion people worldwide, disproportionately impacting the most vulnerable communities and causing disability, suffering, and persistent cycles of poverty. They are preventable and treatable—yet too often overlooked.

Through on-the-ground storytelling, Escape the Neglect: Stories from the Frontlines follows community-led efforts accelerating India's path to eliminating lymphatic filariasis, innovative approaches in Nigeria advancing progress against river blindness, and breakthrough science reshaping the fight against sleeping sickness in the Democratic Republic of Congo.

The screening will be followed by a facilitated discussion, creating space to discuss what's working and what is needed to finish the job. This event is open to [students, faculty, employees, partners, or internal teams] interested in global health, science, and how progress actually happens.

We hope you'll join us for this shared viewing and conversation—and be part of the movement to escape the neglect.

Warm regards,

[Your name]

[Title / Organization]

[Optional—include relevant episode description(s)] About the episode(s) being screened:

Episode 1: *Fighting Filariasis* explores India's long-running efforts to eliminate lymphatic filariasis, highlighting the critical role of community health workers and local health systems in sustaining mass drug administration and reaching populations often missed by formal care.

Episode 2: *Modern Tools, Enduring Fight* follows Nigeria's push to eliminate river blindness, examining how programs are adapting from long-standing control approaches toward elimination through data-driven surveillance and vector control.

Episode 3: *From Risk to Remedy* traces the remarkable transformation of sleeping sickness treatment in the DRC—from painful injections to a groundbreaking single-dose oral cure—showcasing the power of long-term innovation and partnership.

Social Media Copy

Tags:

X: @Devex

LinkedIn: @Devex

Instagram: @Devex_com

Hashtags:

#EscapeTheNeglect

#WorldNTDDay

#NTDs

Post 1

Short form (X):

From India to Nigeria to the DRC, @Devex captures the extraordinary progress being made against neglected topical diseases in the docuseries, "Escape the Neglect."

Join us for a special screening for #WorldNTDDay:

 [DATE]

 [TIME]

 [LOCATION/LINK]

Long form ((LinkedIn, Instagram, etc.):

From India's grassroots fight to eliminate elephantiasis to Nigeria's push to end river blindness, the docuseries "Escape the Neglect: Stories from the Frontline," produced by @Devex, captures the extraordinary progress being made against neglected tropical diseases (NTDs) around the world.

Join us for a special screening for World NTD Day to see how local action is driving global change.

 [DATE]

 [TIME]

 [LOCATION/LINK]

Post 2

Short form:

Behind every neglected tropical disease is a community fighting back. @devex's "Escape the Neglect" docuseries tells the story of hope, resilience, and innovation in the fight against NTDs.

Join us on  [DATE] to see how change happens on the ground.

Long form:

What does it take to eliminate a neglected tropical disease (NTD)? The docuseries "Escape the Neglect: Stories from the Frontline," produced by @Devex, follows three diseases, three countries, and three approaches making it happen.

Join us on [DATE] and [TIME] at [LOCATION] for a special screening of the series for World NTD Day to learn why these diseases deserve the world's attention.

Post 3

Short form:

From the lab to the last mile: what does real progress against neglected tropical diseases look like?

“Escape the Neglect,” produced by @Devex, takes you inside that fight.

Join us on [DATE] at [TIME] for a special screening.

Long form:

From the lab to the last mile: what does real progress against neglected tropical diseases look like?

The “Escape the Neglect: Stories from the Frontline” docuseries, produced by @Devex, takes you inside the fight to eliminate three diseases—and the people making it happen.

Join us on [DATE] at [TIME] at [LOCATION] for a special screening followed by a facilitated discussion.

Post 4

Short form:

1.5 billion people live with neglected tropical diseases—preventable, treatable illnesses that thrive where poverty and stigma persist.

On [DATE], join us for a screening of @devex’s “Escape the Neglect” docuseries and be part of the global conversation.

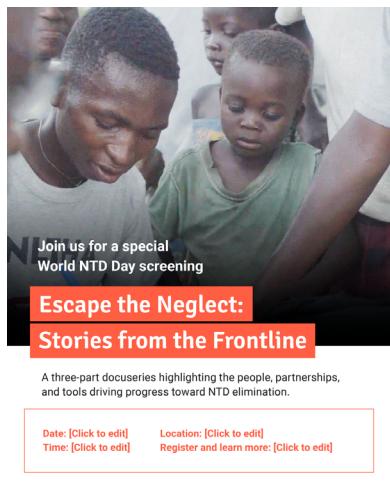
Long form:

1.5 billion people live with neglected tropical diseases (NTDs), preventable and treatable illnesses that persist where poverty, stigma, and weak health systems intersect. Their stories deserve our attention.

On [DATE], we’re screening “Escape the Neglect: Stories from the Frontline” a docuseries produced by @Devex showing how communities around the world are making progress toward ending these diseases.

Join us to watch, discuss, and be part of the conversation.

Visual Asset



[Download Canva Template](#)



Escape the Neglect: Stories from the Frontlines

Fast Facts on Ending Neglected Tropical Diseases



Three short films. Three countries. One story of progress and possibility.

Nearly 1.5 billion people¹ are at risk of neglected tropical diseases (NTDs)—21 conditions that cause disability, disrupt lives, and push communities to the margins. But NTDs are preventable and treatable, and years of global collaboration have brought extraordinary progress toward ending them.

Escape the Neglect: Stories from the Frontlines is a three-part docuseries produced by Devex with support from the Gates Foundation that brings viewers face to face with the people on the frontlines—those living with NTDs and those working to stop them—showing what it takes to eliminate these long-overlooked diseases.

What you need to know about NTDs

Source: Uniting to Combat NTDs

NTDs are widespread and costly.

NTDs cost families an estimated \$33 billion each year in lost income and out-of-pocket expenses, keeping communities trapped in poverty.

Global progress is real and accelerating.

58 countries have already eliminated at least one NTD, improving the health and economic security of millions.

Ending NTDs pays off for everyone.

Every \$1 invested in preventive treatment for NTDs yields about \$25 in economic benefits for affected populations.

Inside the films: The facts behind the stories



Fighting Filariasis: India's grassroots approach to eliminating elephantiasis

India's frontline health workers are beating elephantiasis, also known as lymphatic filariasis, with a mix of community trust, door-to-door care, and national-scale commitment. Their progress shows how people-powered systems can end even the most entrenched health challenges.

- 657 million people live in areas where lymphatic filariasis is still a risk
- India carries roughly 40% of the global disease burden, but a whole-of-society approach is driving rapid progress
- Spreads through mosquito bites that pass

- on parasitic worms to people—causing severe swelling, disability, and stigma
- India's Accredited Social Health Activists (ASHAs) deliver preventive medicines and support care directly in communities
- Prevented and treated with antiparasitic

- medicines, including those donated by GSK and Merck (MSD outside the U.S. and Canada)
- 21 countries globally have now eliminated the disease

[Source: WHO](#)



Modern Tools, Enduring Fight: Nigeria's push to eliminate river blindness

In Nigeria, scientists and community volunteers are rewriting the fight against onchocerciasis, also known as river blindness. With new surveillance and flycatching tools, they're moving beyond mass treatment to hunt down the disease's last pockets—paving the way for every country still fighting it.

- More than 250 million people still need preventive treatment
- More than 99% of infected people live in Africa and Yemen
- Spreads when infected blackflies that breed near rivers bite people, causing

- severe itching, skin changes, and irreversible blindness
- Bellec blackfly traps and advanced surveillance are helping find remaining hotspots without putting workers at risk
- Prevented and treated with antiparasitic

- medicines, including those donated by Merck (MSD outside the U.S. and Canada)
- 11 Nigerian states have halted transmission and treatment, and 5 counties have eliminated the disease

[Source: WHO](#)



From Risk to Remedy: Fast-Tracking the End of Sleeping Sickness

In the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), innovation is reshaping the fight against human African trypanosomiasis (HAT), also known as sleeping sickness. New medicines and community-led detection are pushing this silent killer toward elimination, reaching people in the most remote settings.

- 65 million people in rural sub-Saharan Africa are at risk, mostly in the DRC
- The first available treatment, melarsoprol, had a fatality rate of 5-10%—but innovation has completely changed the treatment landscape
- Has two forms: Gambiense HAT (gHAT)

- in 24 west and central African countries, and Rhodesian HAT (rhAT) in 13 east and southern African countries
- Fexinidazole, the first all-oral treatment, and Acoziborole, a new single-dose therapy candidate—both donated by Sanofi's Foundation S—are simplifying care

- Caused by parasites spread to humans by tsetse flies and fatal if untreated
- Only 675 gHAT cases were reported in 2023 and 7 countries have eliminated the disease

[Source: WHO](#)

Dig deeper

World Health Organization – NTD Information

Key global data, disease fact sheets, and elimination progress. [Read here](#)

The Case for Investing in NTDs

Evidence from Uniting to Combat NTDs showing why investment accelerates elimination. [Read here](#)

Stories of Progress

Reporting and more human-centered storytelling from Devex's Escape the Neglect series. [Read here](#)