



**UNITING TO COMBAT**  
NEGLECTED TROPICAL DISEASES



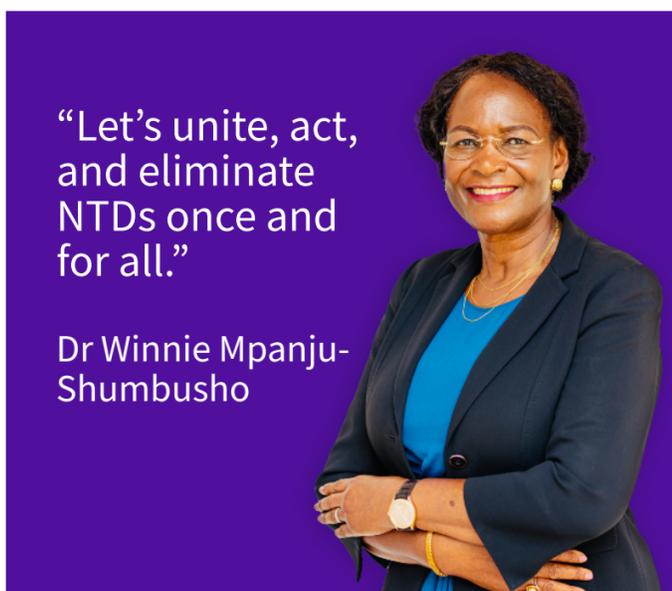
**ANNUAL  
REPORT  
2023**

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## Message from the Chair of the Uniting Board



Dear partners,

I am delighted to be writing this introduction to Uniting's 2023 Annual Report after recently being appointed Chair of the Board in January 2024.

It has been my long-held belief that we can change the course of over one billion people who continue to be held back by neglected tropical diseases (NTDs), so the opportunity to continue serving these individuals and communities after retiring from the World Health Organization (WHO) was simply not something I could turn down.

This is a really exciting time to be joining the organisation with a newly refreshed strategy focused on resource mobilisation and a busy year ahead to capitalise on opportunities for new partnerships and unlocking sustainable financing for NTDs.

As of April 2024, 50 countries have eliminated at least one NTD, meaning we are halfway there to reaching the global target as outlined in the WHO NTD road map of 100 countries eliminating an NTD by 2030 – a great milestone for our community.

However, we have a long way to go to reach the SDG and WHO NTD road map goals. Looking ahead to 2024, we see a 'year of elections' with more voters than ever in history heading to the polls as at least 64 countries are due to hold elections. This means that there are new administrations, new Ministers, and new stakeholders to engage in the fight against NTDs. 2024 is also the 'year of replenishments' with big players like the Asian Development Bank, Gavi, WHO, IDA, the Pandemic Fund, and the Global Fund all building investment cases or holding investment rounds this year or in 2025.

These factors, when coupled with GDP falling in many donor countries and endemic countries continuing to be impacted by significant debt burdens, demonstrates the difficult landscape we are operating in. It shows that we need to continue building the momentum, celebrate and recognise the good news story of NTD elimination successes as much as possible, and present a strong case to potential donors to unlock new sustainable financing for NTDs.

I'd like to say a big thank you to all the countries and dedicated partners working in NTDs. It is a fantastic community of passionate advocates, and I'm thrilled to be working with you all. Let's unite, act, and eliminate NTDs once and for all.

Sincerely,  
Dr Winnie Mpanju-Shumbusho  
Chair of Uniting to Combat NTDs

## Message from the Executive Director



Dear partners,

Last year was a big year for Uniting as we conducted a mid-term review of our strategy, considering its continued relevance in light of the substantial global challenges that have emerged since its inception in 2020.

Whilst the strategy's continued importance was reaffirmed, we recognised the imperative of intensifying our efforts in resource mobilisation, persistent funding gaps, the absence of predictable, long-term funding for global NTD programmes, and significant changes to the global health architecture.

With this clear direction, in the latter half of 2023, we were delighted to rally around the Reaching the Last Mile Forum on COP28's first ever dedicated health day. I was filled with pride as African Heads of State and their representatives, including African philanthropists, took centre stage alongside donors, NGOs, and other players in global health. Their collective announcement of \$777 million including \$340 million in new commitments towards the elimination of river blindness and lymphatic filariasis was a historic moment, and we hope to build on this momentum throughout the coming year.

Another reason to celebrate last year was some truly ground-breaking NTD elimination successes, including a world-first as Bangladesh became the first country globally to be validated by WHO for eliminating visceral leishmaniasis as a public health problem. Visceral leishmaniasis is a disease of poverty, transmitted by the bite of a female sandfly and, if left untreated, is almost always fatal. Poverty, poor housing conditions, malnutrition and lack of sanitation are all major risk factors for the disease. Eliminating visceral leishmaniasis requires a multifaceted, strategic approach addressing these root causes so congratulations to Bangladesh on this remarkable success, offering a beacon of hope that the suffering caused by this and other NTDs can be ended once and for all.

As our Chair Winnie outlines above, we are entering an unprecedented year, with lots of demand on limited pots of money and much competition for resources. We are also less than half-way to the 2030 goals, with only 15% of the SDGs on track. This presents a unique opportunity for NTDs, with its established history of achieving impact for some of the poorest people on the planet and at scale, to refocus the limited resources towards the elimination and eradication vision.

Thank you for your unwavering support and commitment to our shared mission. I am very proud to be a part of this partnership and I look forward to continuing our efforts together.

Sincerely,  
Thoko Elphick-Pooley  
Executive Director, Uniting to Combat NTDs

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# Uniting to Combat Neglected Tropical Diseases Strategy

The first half of 2023 was focused on the development and launch of our revised strategy, reflecting our focus on a singular aim of mobilising resources for the NTD road map. This important update to Uniting's ten-year strategy includes a deeper emphasis on addressing the critical funding needs that threaten global progress, shaped by insights from the NTDs Indaba held in January 2023. The updated strategy includes critical inputs from leaders and experts from endemic and donor countries, multilateral and philanthropic organizations, civil society, and industry partners. This strategy also draws from a comprehensive donor landscape analysis conducted by the secretariat, combined with valuable insights shared by our Board and partners.

Our mission remains unchanged - to create political will and an enabling environment for countries to achieve the WHO NTD road map targets and deliver the SDG NTD goal to end NTDs by 2030.

Our aim is to mobilise international and national resources for NTDs. We will achieve this by sustaining and increasing the volume of funding available from major sources, set out in the strategy visual below including multi-lateral development banks (IMDBs) and global funds, endemic countries, industry partners, and international donors.



Marcus Perkins / Uniting to Combat NTDs

# Uniting to Combat Neglected Tropical Diseases Strategy

## Mission

To create political will and an enabling environment for countries to achieve the WHO NTD road map targets and deliver the SDG goal\* to end NTDs by 2030

## Aim

Mobilise resources for neglected tropical diseases (NTDs)

## Outcomes

<b>Multilaterals and global funds</b> deploy funding	<b>Endemic countries</b> increase resources	<b>Industry partners</b> meet / expand commitments	<b>Donor countries</b> increase funding
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## Intermediary Outcomes

NTDs are adopted in global, regional and national agendas

Countries call for funding for NTDs and celebrate successes (demand-generation)

## Enabler

Partners collectively and coherently champion investment in NTDs

## Accountability

Commitment Tracker is used as an accountability mechanism for commitments and peer influence

\* SDG Goal 3.3.5 Indicator - Reduce by 90% the number of people requiring interventions against NTDs

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## Key achievements in 2023

- Following comprehensive insight gathering and donor landscape analysis, we are pleased to have **successfully launched our new strategy** and restructured our team towards its delivery. Feedback from partners is that the strategy is clear and easy to communicate.
- Our resource mobilisation efforts were greatly enhanced by a number of critical ingredients:
  - the availability of an ambitious, compelling, specific, and costed ask for the ‘Africa Free Initiative’ (Reaching the Last Mile Forum / RLMF 2.0)
  - good data and country-by-country costings that enabled us to tailor pitches
  - a high-level moment for commitments
  - the involvement and financial commitments of key principals, a powerful lever for bringing others on board.
  - support of African leaders including Heads of States
- These key ingredients allowed us to go to donors and countries with tailored and specific asks, something that has been a barrier to resource mobilisation for NTDs in the past.
- We were able to see the results of this clarity of ask, through our work with **Tanzania and Sierra Leone** standing shoulder-to-shoulder amongst donors to announce domestic commitments at the **Reaching the Last Mile Forum** (RLMF). This is the first time that Heads of State from affected countries have taken to the stage to announce specific financial commitments for NTDs.
- Uniting facilitated US\$112m worth of stage announcements at RLMF, including commitments Uniting led in securing as well as those via our support to national level coalitions. In addition, we promoted and amplified the asks for others, providing additional information that enabled these partners to come on board. We also worked with AUDA-NEPAD on a **US\$20m bid to the African Development Bank (AfDB)** for DRC, Burundi, and São Tomé and Príncipe.
- We launched the Kigali Declaration Commitment Tracker at World NTD Day 2023 and we invite partners to help us keep it updated.
- We celebrated all the **disease elimination successes** as they were announced by WHO. Of note was the elimination of visceral leishmaniasis (VL) in Bangladesh, the first country in the world to be validated by WHO for eliminating VL. Uniting was pleased with the opportunity to join WHO in recognising Bangladesh at the SEARO Regional Meeting to which Uniting was invited. We also celebrated the elimination of countries in the ECOWAS region with an awards ceremony at a Heads of State Meeting where three Heads of State participated in the awards, alongside the President of ECOWAS.



## Spotlight on:

### **Uniting to Combat NTDs gathered ministers in Botswana to discuss unlocking financing for neglected tropical diseases**

On 29 August 2023, Uniting to Combat NTDs worked with the Ministers of Health of Comoros, Ethiopia, Senegal, South Sudan, and Zambia, in collaboration with the World Health Organization (WHO) to host a special dinner alongside the 73rd WHO Regional Committee for Africa in Botswana, calling on countries to prioritise NTDs and help unlock new and less considered methods of financing.

For some time, a lack of sustainable financing has been a significant barrier to the control, elimination, and eradication of NTDs, hindering countries' efforts to eliminate these diseases and contribute to the SDG target of a 90% reduction in the numbers of people requiring an intervention against NTDs by 2030.

Therefore, the opportunity to bring Ministers of Health and country leaders together in a room was vital for our resource mobilisation aims, as it allowed us to continue to make a compelling case for protecting and promoting investments in NTDs and discuss how countries impacted by these devastating diseases can unlock financing for NTDs from innovative sources that they may not have considered before.

The event looked to understand the status of domestic investments to NTDs by countries before exploring four key methods of international financing. Speakers were from the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, TB and Malaria, Pandemic Action Network, Global Financing Facility (GFF), and Potomac Group. They shared an overview of their institution, the opportunity for NTDs within the financing mechanism, and one recommendation to a Minister of Health to unlock the opportunity.

~170 people attended in a packed room with much rich discussion and interventions from the floor. These attendees included Ministers of Health from Comoros, Malawi, Senegal, Zambia, Ghana, Gambia,

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Spotlight on: Uniting to Combat NTDs gathered ministers in Botswana to discuss unlocking financing for neglected tropical diseases

Angola, Mauritania, Benin, Liberia, South Sudan, and Ethiopia were also represented by the head of delegation. In addition, the event was attended by the DG WAHO, AUDA NEPAD, and Brazil.

We were able to call on countries to prioritise NTD interventions in their health financing by allocating a specific budget line for NTD programmes, ask countries to include NTDs in applications and discussions with key financing institutions, and encourage countries to announce financial commitments towards tackling NTDs at the Reaching the Last Mile Forum at COP28.

A full write-up of the event can be found here: <https://unitingtocombatntds.org/en/news-and-views/ministers-gather-in-botswana-to-discuss-unlocking-financing-for-ntds/>



**The 73rd WHO Regional Committee for Africa in Botswana**



## A historic moment at COP28 as a groundbreaking \$777m is announced to tackle neglected tropical diseases at the Reaching the Last Mile Forum

On 3 December 2023 for the very first time at the Conference of the Parties to the Convention (COP), COP28 in Dubai, UAE held a dedicated Health Day to emphasise the link between health and climate change and recognise that the climate crisis is a health crisis.

To coincide with this, the 2023 Reaching the Last Mile Forum was held, an anchor event held under the patronage of His Highness Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, President of the UAE, and in collaboration with the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation.

This was a brilliant, galvanising opportunity to spotlight NTDs and their connection to climate change, featuring a dedicated moment to celebrate the remarkable progress made against NTDs and announce commitments towards disease elimination goals, totalling a groundbreaking \$777 million!

Uniting to Combat NTDs were delighted to support Reaching the Last Mile throughout this process, promoting the event and actively engaging partners, particularly around the milestone expansion of the Reaching the Last Mile Fund from \$100m to \$500m. The expansion will increase the reach of the fund from seven countries to 39 across Africa and Yemen, with the goal of eliminating two NTDs, lymphatic filariasis and onchocerciasis (or river blindness), from the continent of Africa.

It was particularly brilliant to see African Heads of States and their representatives up on stage and sharing their commitments towards this fund, including the President of Tanzania, H.E. Samia Suluhu Hassan, and Honourable Minister Austin Demby, representing H.E. Maada Bio, President of Sierra Leone. Uniting continues to engage with countries on contributing to the Africa-free of river blindness and lymphatic filariasis initiative into 2024 so that this ambitious vision can become a reality.

We'd like to thank Reaching the Last Mile and the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation for a fantastic event, and a huge thank you to all the partners who made commitments and stood 100% committed to beat NTDs.

A full write-up of the event can be found here: <https://unitingtocombatntds.org/en/news-and-views/a-groundbreaking-777m-is-committed-to-tackle-ntds-at-rlmf/>

## Progress against our priorities and aims

2023 priorities were agreed by the Board in September 2022, in line with the Results Framework at that time. Overall, the intention was to pivot more towards resource mobilisation (aim 2 in our previous strategy) following prior years' progress on policy (aim 1 in our previous strategy). This section summarises progress against the 2023 priorities.

2023 priority area	2023	2023 progress
Strategic review	Review of strategy	<p><b>Outcome: A new strategy developed, approved by the Board and shared with partners.</b></p> <p>In February 2023, the Board conducted a mid-term review of Uniting's strategy, given multiple changes in the external landscape. While the strategy's continued importance was reaffirmed, the importance of intensifying efforts in resource mobilisation was recognised to address persistent funding gaps and significant changes to the global health architecture.</p> <p>The update to Uniting's strategy included a deeper emphasis on resource mobilisation. The updated strategy was shaped by insights from the NTDs Indaba held in February 2023, and subsequent meetings with endemic and donor countries, multilateral and philanthropic organizations, civil society, and industry partners.</p> <p>From the Indaba and insight process, Uniting identified the barriers/challenges and most promising opportunities for unlocking funding for NTDs.</p> <p>A key insight was that new, large envelopes for NTD specific programmes will not be available in the short-term as donors prioritize existing commitments to global health, and whilst the sustainability of vertical funds is under review. The strategy also draws from a comprehensive donor landscaping analysis.</p> <p>As a result, the Secretariat proposed a strategy focusing on four sources of financing with the most promise over the next few years, supported by two intermediate outcomes and two enablers.</p> <p>For more detail, visit: <a href="https://unitingtocombatntds.org/en/news-and-views/a-new-vision-for-sustainable-ntd-resource-mobilisation/">https://unitingtocombatntds.org/en/news-and-views/a-new-vision-for-sustainable-ntd-resource-mobilisation/</a></p>
Kigali Declaration: endorsed and resourced	<p><b>Endorsed:</b> Increase endorsements to the Kigali Declaration</p> <p><b>Resourced:</b> Increase resources allocated to NTDs</p>	<p><b>Outcome: In this reporting period, a further 12 partners endorsed the Kigali Declaration, including six NGOs, two academic and research organisations, one foundation, and three countries: Guinea-Bissau, Ghana, and Malawi.</b></p> <p>With regards to resourcing the Kigali Declaration, and in line with the shift in strategy towards resource mobilisation, major efforts were made to increase funding for NTDs more generally, with Uniting playing either a leading, supporting or amplifier, role in either securing or locking in resources.</p> <p>As an example, we continued our support to national level coalitions e.g. US roundtable, Canada, Germany and Japan enabling them to engage directly with decision makers and build the case for continued support for NTDs.</p>

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		<p>We engaged directly with key officials in the UK, Japan and Germany for NTD support.</p> <p>In other cases, we reinforced existing asks by our partners and provided additional briefings and information sessions for prospective donors, and in others, we amplified the platform for funding announcements as a catalyst for locking in the commitments or expediting them.</p> <p><b>2023 saw several new commitments to NTDs from endemic countries, donors, and private sector partners including USAID, Ghana, Anesvad Foundation, GSK, Canada, Germany, Belgium, EDCTP, Tanzania, Sierra Leone, and NALA.</b></p>																																	
		<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th data-bbox="621 1035 1054 1077">Country/org</th> <th data-bbox="1062 1035 1495 1077">Commitment</th> <th data-bbox="1503 1035 1915 1077">Info</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td data-bbox="621 1089 1054 1249">USAID</td> <td data-bbox="1062 1089 1495 1249">\$114.5m</td> <td data-bbox="1503 1089 1915 1249">2023 funding announced at WHO/Uniting World NTD Day 2023 webinar</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="621 1261 1054 1546">Ghana</td> <td data-bbox="1062 1261 1495 1546">Endorsed the Kigali Declaration and commitment to NTD elimination</td> <td data-bbox="1503 1261 1915 1546">Announced at WHO/Uniting World NTD webinar through a video message from the President of Ghana on World NTD Day</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="621 1558 1054 1665">Anesvad</td> <td data-bbox="1062 1558 1495 1665">\$36m (34m euros) for skin NTDs</td> <td data-bbox="1503 1558 1915 1665">Announced at WHO/Uniting World NTD Day webinar</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="621 1676 1054 1926">GSK</td> <td data-bbox="1062 1676 1495 1926">Extending donation for soil-transmitted helminthiasis (STH) to 2030 (up to 100m doses per year from 2026 to 2030)</td> <td data-bbox="1503 1676 1915 1926">Announced at WHO/Uniting World NTD Day webinar</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="621 1938 1054 1997">Canada</td> <td data-bbox="1062 1938 1495 1997">\$11m to PAHO (\$15m CAN)</td> <td data-bbox="1503 1938 1915 1997">Announced at UNGA</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="621 2009 1054 2151">Germany</td> <td data-bbox="1062 2009 1495 2151">\$21.5m (20m euros)</td> <td data-bbox="1503 2009 1915 2151">Announced at Reaching the Last Mile Forum</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="621 2163 1054 2306">Belgium</td> <td data-bbox="1062 2163 1495 2306">\$31.6m (29m euros)</td> <td data-bbox="1503 2163 1915 2306">Announced at Reaching the Last Mile Forum</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="621 2318 1054 2460">EDCTP</td> <td data-bbox="1062 2318 1495 2460">\$50.4m (46.4m euros)</td> <td data-bbox="1503 2318 1915 2460">Announced at Reaching the Last Mile Forum</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="621 2472 1054 2579">Tanzania</td> <td data-bbox="1062 2472 1495 2579">\$3m</td> <td data-bbox="1503 2472 1915 2579">Announced at Reaching the Last Mile Forum</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="621 2591 1054 2706">Sierra Leone</td> <td data-bbox="1062 2591 1495 2706">\$0.5m</td> <td data-bbox="1503 2591 1915 2706">Announced at Reaching the Last Mile Forum</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Country/org	Commitment	Info	USAID	\$114.5m	2023 funding announced at WHO/Uniting World NTD Day 2023 webinar	Ghana	Endorsed the Kigali Declaration and commitment to NTD elimination	Announced at WHO/Uniting World NTD webinar through a video message from the President of Ghana on World NTD Day	Anesvad	\$36m (34m euros) for skin NTDs	Announced at WHO/Uniting World NTD Day webinar	GSK	Extending donation for soil-transmitted helminthiasis (STH) to 2030 (up to 100m doses per year from 2026 to 2030)	Announced at WHO/Uniting World NTD Day webinar	Canada	\$11m to PAHO (\$15m CAN)	Announced at UNGA	Germany	\$21.5m (20m euros)	Announced at Reaching the Last Mile Forum	Belgium	\$31.6m (29m euros)	Announced at Reaching the Last Mile Forum	EDCTP	\$50.4m (46.4m euros)	Announced at Reaching the Last Mile Forum	Tanzania	\$3m	Announced at Reaching the Last Mile Forum	Sierra Leone	\$0.5m	Announced at Reaching the Last Mile Forum
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2023 priority area	2023	2023 progress		
		<b>Country/org</b>	<b>Commitment</b>	<b>Info</b>
	NALA	\$5m	Announced at Reaching the Last Mile Forum	
Kigali Declaration Commitment Tracker	Resource mobilisation is not done in isolation. We want to thank all those who made commitments, as well as collaborating partners and national coalitions from the Indaba			<p>We launched the Kigali Declaration Commitment Tracker to ensure those making pledges were accountable for their commitments.</p> <p>The Government of Rwanda was the second endemic country to enter their commitment on the Commitment Tracker (Vanuatu was the first country). Work with other endemic countries is ongoing and we are expecting a number of these to update their commitments by July 2024.</p> <p><b>Other notable highlights:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• At the 73<sup>rd</sup> WHO Regional Committee for Africa (WHO AFRO) we brought together leaders from across the African continent to discuss key national health priorities. We took that opportunity to run a side event shining a spotlight on NTDs, calling on countries to prioritise NTDs and help unlock new funding for NTDs. This included speakers from the Global Fund to Fight TB, AIDS and Malaria, Pandemic Action Network, Global Financing Facility, and Potomac presenting on different financing opportunities, followed by an open discussion with Ministers of Health on their financing challenges and opportunities. A full write-up can be found <a href="#">on our website</a>.</li> <li>• Uniting was invited to the 76<sup>th</sup> WHO Regional Committee meeting for South-East Asia (WHO SEARO). During the meeting, we presented the Minister of Health and Family Welfare for Bangladesh, Zahid Maleque, with a ‘world-first’ award for the elimination of visceral leishmaniasis. A full write-up can be found <a href="#">on our website</a>.</li> <li>• As a consequence of Uniting’s advocacy and that of its collaborating partners, NTDs were once again prioritised in a range of international fora. This included mentions of NTDs in the G7 Hiroshima Leaders Communique which stated, “reaffirm the essential role of universal health coverage (UHC) in addressing various health challenges significantly set back by the pandemic, including ... neglected tropical diseases”. Uniting also coordinated the signatories of 40 parliamentarians from 24 countries (including influential Japanese parliamentarians) to an open letter urging G7 Leaders to prioritise action and investment towards ending NTDs, in order to achieve the G7 priorities of Universal Health Coverage and pandemic preparedness. This served to amplify a major ask of one of our partners which was successful with the Prime Minister of Japan announcing new funding to GHIT in his key G7 statement (where Prime Minister Fumio Kishida announced the Government of Japan's pledge to contribute US\$200 million to the Global Health Innovative Technology Fund (GHIT Fund) which includes significant NTD funding (roughly 45% of GHIT Fund).</li> </ul>

2023 priority area	2023	2023 progress
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We curated an awards ceremony during the meeting of Heads of State at the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) to recognise their leadership in eliminating NTDs in Africa and <u>presented awards</u> at the Bloc’s Heads of State meeting. This award ceremony had an impact and opened up the way for Sierra Leone to take on a leadership role at RLMF and commit domestic resources.</li> <li>• Uniting worked with AUDA-NEPAD on a proposal for financing NTDs at the African Development Bank Group (AfDB) and joined world leaders at the Paris Summit for a new financing pact to ensure NTDs are being included in these global financing discussions.</li> <li>• Uniting supported WHO in advocating with countries and GAVI board members on the inclusion of the Rabies post exposure prophylaxis within the GAVI portfolio.</li> </ul>
<p>African Union Continental Framework and the Common African Position : Embed in member states</p>	<p>Africa Union wide advocacy for the domestication of the Continental Framework into national programmes and implementation of the Common African Position recommendations</p>	<p>Uniting continues to support work to embed the Continental Framework and Common Africa Position including through an ‘AU project’ to engage in high-level advocacy at Heads of State and Ministerial levels to spur political commitment and interest in addressing NTDs.</p>
	<p>Support Africa Union to plan and undertake regional meetings to support both the above and endorsement of the Kigali Declaration</p>	<p>Three regional meetings have been convened by the Africa Union in collaboration with the regional economic communities (RECs) to socialise the Common Africa Position and Continental Framework amongst technocrats. The meeting outcomes are recommendations for mobilising domestic resources and strengthening programmes to combat NTDs which the RECs will implement in collaboration with partners.</p> <p>Using its convening power, the Africa Union issued Member States with a Note Verbal requesting them to report on their domestic allocation towards NTD programmes. Uniting continues to work with the Africa Union on the analysis of the baseline data submitted which is a key building block for the Commitment Tracker.</p> <p>Uniting and the Africa Union continued efforts to get countries to input their domestic resource allocations to NTDs on the Kigali Declaration Commitment Tracker.</p>

2023 priority area	2023	2023 progress
	Establishing domestic resources for NTDs	<p>The Government of Rwanda was the first African country to do so in June 2023, leading to endemic country commitments featuring on the ‘donut’ visual of the total commitments by stakeholder groups on the tracker on the Uniting website. Senegal is finalising their domestic contributions towards NTDs for the period 2021 to 2023. There is ongoing engagement with many countries.</p> <p>The Africa Union has developed the M&amp;E reporting framework for the Continental Framework. This framework will enable countries to report regularly on their domestic allocations for NTDs, opening up the way to mobilise additional resources.</p>
NTDs prioritised in multilateral fora	Climate and NTDs: engage more fully in this conversation	<p>Uniting produced work to elevate NTDs in the climate/health debate, as part of our work for Reaching the Last Mile Forum (RLMF). This included a media partnership with Devex to produce a <a href="#">visual story</a>, <a href="#">videos and photography</a>, social shorts on <a href="#">climate change and NTDs</a> and <a href="#">dengue and NTDs</a>, and op-ed with Burkina Faso and Gambia, plus nine pieces of coverage on the climate and NTDs link for RLMF.</p>
	G7, TICAD 8 and CHOGM: follow up with commitments to NTDs in their last communiqués	<p>At the G7 Summit 2023, Prime Minister Fumio Kishida announced the Government of Japan's pledge to contribute US\$200 million to the Global Health Innovative Technology Fund (GHIT Fund) which includes significant NTD funding (roughly 45% of GHIT Fund).</p> <p>In addition, following further advocacy which included briefing papers and mark-ups being forwarded to relevant ministries and missions, two political declarations were adopted by member states relevant to NTDs at UNGA (held in September in New York). Whilst both Political Declarations were subject to the usual politics of multilateral fora, NTDs made it into the final two documents. The first Political Declaration related to Pandemic Preparedness, Prevention and Response (PPR) and included the following language “<i>address the particular needs and vulnerabilities of, inter alia, women, children, youth, persons with disabilities, people living with HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis, malaria and neglected tropical diseases ...</i>” (OP5). Similarly, the Political Declaration on Universal Health Coverage included two mentions of NTDs, the first recognising that “<i>1.65 billion people still requiring treatment and care for neglected tropical diseases;</i>” and the second, which recognises the need to “<i>strengthen efforts to address the specific physical and mental health needs of all people as part of universal health coverage..., by advancing comprehensive approaches and integrated service delivery and striving to ensure that challenges are addressed and the achievements are sustained and expanded, including for: (a) HIV/AIDS, sexually transmitted infections, tuberculosis, malaria, polio, hepatitis, neglected tropical diseases including dengue, cholera, and other emerging and re-emerging infectious diseases.</i>”</p>

2023 priority area	2023	2023 progress
Core communications	Support policy and resource mobilisation interventions with strategic and impactful communications activities.	<p>Specific examples include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Collaborating with partners on <b>World NTD Day</b> (30 January 2023), which focused on a call-to-action for increased resources for NTDs. It was great to see several new commitments from endemic countries, donors, and private sector partners including USAID, Ghana, GSK, and Anesvad Foundation. There was brilliant support from Heads of State with the Presidents of Ghana and Malawi recording powerful messages for us about why we need to ‘Act Now and Act Together’ to end NTDs.</li> <li>• Supporting goals around endemic leadership voice, securing a video message from the President of Malawi, who shared <u>his vision</u> for a world free of NTDs and his op-ed: <u>Malawi: I Was Blind, But Now I See – Celebrating Malawi’s Progress on World NTD Day</u></li> <li>• <b>G7</b>: Coordinating 40 parliamentarians from 24 countries <u>signing an open letter</u> urging G7 Leaders to prioritise action and investment towards ending NTDs, in order to achieve the G7 priorities of Universal Health Coverage and pandemic preparedness (securing over 400 media articles / coverage).</li> <li>• Recognising the leadership of the <b>Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS)</b> in eliminating NTDs in Africa through <u>presenting them with a leadership award</u> as part of the bloc’s Heads of State meeting and securing 19 pieces of media coverage.</li> <li>• Significant media and comms work in lead up to Reaching the Last Mile Forum, including in this reporting period (Aug 2023 to Oct 2023) where we secured 10 media articles.</li> </ul>
	Improve Uniting’s channels	<p>We conducted an audit and assessment of <b>Uniting’s website</b>, considered partner feedback, and conducted an overhaul which went live in May 2023. The new website is more accessible and easier to use. It allows us to spotlight partners, credit partners (see news and resources sections), and make the case for NTD investment. It has been built to allow for seamless translation of content to deliver against our resource mobilisation aims with multiple country targets (e.g. translation of key articles into Japanese, French, German, Italian etc). We also rolled out a <b>new and more accessible design for our newsletters</b> and developed a systematic approach to content development, including transparency/corporate comms (producing write ups after each intervention/event) and commissioning first-person stories about people with lived experience of NTDs, and the impact that funding NTDs can have on their</p>
	Celebrate elimination success, among other NTD successes	<p>A core part of our communications strategy is to <b>celebrate elimination successes</b> to show that ‘progress is possible’ and ‘investment in NTDs works.’ This has fed into all comms e.g. messaging for World NTD Day and other campaigns, briefings for parliamentarians and debates, presentations Uniting has delivered at key events throughout the year, and providing updates to the Comms Coordination Group each time there is a new elimination. This also</p>

2023 priority area	2023	2023 progress
		included celebrating ECOWAS success (through <u>presenting them with a leadership award</u> as part of the bloc’s Heads of State meeting, and securing media coverage) and <u>recognising Bangladesh</u> for their ‘world first’ elimination visceral leishmaniasis (or kala-azar) as a public health problem.

## Year 3 (2023) Partners Survey Summary Report

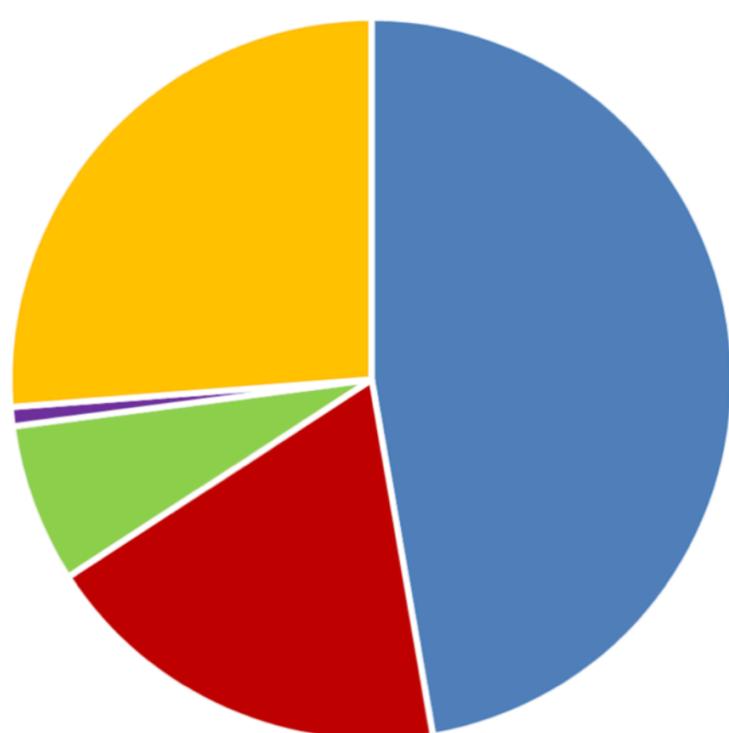
Thank you to all of our partners who completed the 2023 Annual Partner Survey, as part of the ongoing monitoring and evaluation of Uniting’s strategy. We are committed to continuous improvements and your feedback really helps us with considering how we engage with our partner network.

The survey ran at the beginning of 2024, and the full report is available here:

<https://unitingtocombatntds.org/en/neglected-tropical-diseases/resources/annual-partners-survey-results-2023>

## Financial summary

The Year 3 (2023) full year expenditure is \$3.51 million. Year 3 (2023) spend for the 14 months to December 2023 was slightly lower than the approved budget of \$3.62 million.



14 months spend \$3.51m  
(reporting year Oct 2022 - Dec 2023)

- BMGF
- Sightsavers
- CIFF
- IFPMA
- RLM

## Meet the Board



**Dr Helge Braun**

Member of the Bundestag (National Parliament in Germany)



**Dr Katey Einterz Owen**

Director for Neglected Tropical Diseases, The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation



**Thoko Elphick-Pooley**

Executive Director at Uniting to Combat NTDs and Ex officio non-voting Director



**Faustina Fynn-Nyame**

Executive Director for Africa and Child Health and Development, CIFF



**Dr Silvia Gold**

President, Mundo Sano Foundation



**Dr Winnie Mpanju-Shumbusho**

Chair of the Board and WHO Assistant Director General for HIV/AIDS, Tuberculosis, Malaria and NTDs (retired)



**Professor Francisca Mutapi**

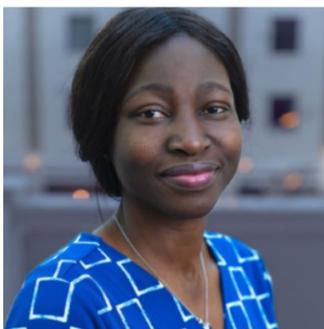
Vice Chair of the Board, Deputy Director at TIBA, and co-Director, Global Health Academy, University of Edinburgh



**Michael Schöttler**

VP and Global Head Pharma Public Affairs (retired)

## Meet the team



**Opeyemi Alabi-Hundeyin**

Africa Insight Analyst



**Steve Cox**

Head of Finance and Grants



**Thoko Elphick-Pooley**

Executive Director



**Dirk Engels**

Senior Advisor



**Emily Fiddy**

Communications Manager



**Talia French**

Communications Manager



**Stuart Halford**

Director of Advocacy and Resource Mobilisation



**Rita Jones**

Project Assistant



**Jordi Knight**

Donor Insight Analyst



**Sheila Shawa-Musonda**

Senior Partnerships Specialist (seconded to the Africa Union)



**Victoria Sykes**

Accountability and MEL Manager



**Louisa Tribe**

Director of Communications & Partnerships



**Matt Turney**

Director of Operations



**Marc Wormald**

Senior Policy Advisor, Global and Donor Countries

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# Thank you

Thank you to our generous funders, whose partnership makes our work possible.

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GATES *foundation*



**IFPMA**

**CIFF** CHILDREN'S  
INVESTMENT FUND  
FOUNDATION

**REACHING** *the*  
**LAST MILE** The logo for Reaching the Last Mile features a stylized triangle on the right side, composed of a black outline and a teal-colored interior.

The logo for Sightsavers is a stylized yellow circular emblem consisting of two overlapping circles that form a central white space.  
**Sightsavers**

