



**Republic of the Gambia
Ministry of Health
The Quadrangle
Banjul**

SEVENTY-NINTH WORLD HEALTH ASSEMBLY

STATEMENT OF THE MINISTER, GENEVA 18-23 MAY, 2026

Item: 12.3	Communicable disease: Road map for neglected tropical diseases 2021–2030
Documents	Document A79/5
Requested action	Take note of the report and to provide guidance on the following questions. • How can Member States and the Secretariat collaborate to overcome the programmatic and technical challenges highlighted in the present report and facilitate the attainment of the targets set for 2030 in the road map for neglected tropical diseases? • How can Member States and the Secretariat collaborate to strengthen the financial and operational sustainability of national neglected tropical disease programmes?
Time limit	3 minute
Commission	B

Chair, Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates,

The Gambia aligns itself with the statement on WHO Road Map 2021–2030, delivered by Nigeria on behalf of WHO AFRO and reaffirms its commitment to accelerate the elimination and control of priority NTDs.

With WHO’s technical support, the Ministry of Health has strengthened surveillance, integrated NTD services into primary health care, and mobilized resources to sustain interventions. Key achievements include scaling up mass drug administration (MDA) for lymphatic filariasis, onchocerciasis, and schistosomiasis, reaching over 80% coverage in targeted communities. The country has drafted the lymphatic filariasis elimination dossier, with surveillance data showing prevalence below 1% in endemic districts, positioning The Gambia for WHO validation. School-based deworming programs have reached more than 70% of children annually, reducing schistosomiasis infection rates and improving child health outcomes.

WHO has also supported capacity building, monitoring and evaluation, and stakeholder consultations to ensure community ownership. These achievements

highlight measurable progress while emphasizing the need for sustained investment, cross-sectoral collaboration, and equity-driven approaches. With continued WHO partnership, The Gambia is on track to achieve elimination targets, contributing to improved health and wellbeing for all communities.

The Gambia can accelerate progress toward the 2030 NTD Road Map by collaborating with regional neighbors, WHO, Africa CDC, and research institutions to strengthen surveillance, harmonize cross-border interventions, and pilot innovative tools. Integrating NTD services into primary health care and engaging civil society will boost awareness and equity. To ensure sustainability,

The Gambia should embed NTD financing into the national budget, coordinate donor support, engage the private sector, and build workforce capacity, consolidating resilience and long-term programme impact.

The Gambia takes note of the report

I thank you.