



AN EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION CAMPAIGN: NINE YEARS OF WORLD RABIES DAY & END RABIES NOW CAMPAIGN

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BIOGRAPHY

Dr Deborah J Briggs is a global expert in the field of rabies prevention and control. She is currently Chair of the Board of Directors of the Global Alliance for Rabies Control. Dr Briggs continues to teach and serve on graduate student committees at Kansas State University where she is an Adjunct Full Professor. Dr Briggs has numerous publications focusing on rabies prevention.

SUMMARY

The Global Alliance for Rabies Control's (GARC) first major partnership initiative, with, among others, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE), World Health Organization (WHO), the United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), and the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO), was the creation of an annual World Rabies Day (WRD) in 2007 as a global day of action against rabies. The principal objective and achievement of WRD has been the generation of widespread awareness of key rabies prevention messages. WRD has now been coordinated annually for nine years on 28 September by GARC. It is observed globally by people and organisations that are involved in rabies prevention efforts, including international agencies, national and local governments, NGOs, animal and human health professionals, educators, and others. WRD has been a focal point for thousands of rabies prevention events in over 200 countries, promoting awareness of rabies prevention to potentially millions of people, through resources, events and media outreach.

The tripartite organisations (FAO/OIE/WHO) have strongly supported WRD in a unified manner, contributing meaningfully to its success. Their encouragement of member states to participate in WRD has enabled many governments to use this opportunity to launch or support rabies control improvements. Regional networks like Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and Pan-African Rabies Control Network (PARACON) have included WRD coordination in their action plans and meetings as part of their rabies elimination strategies.

As World Rabies Day moves towards its tenth anniversary, efforts will focus on supporting governments and organisations in rabies-endemic countries that are part of the regional networks, to raise in-country awareness of rabies prevention and provide support for implementation efforts.

It is the opportune moment to unite programmatic activities and the experience from WRD, drawing upon the networks developed over the past 9 years to build a comprehensive campaign, End Rabies Now, calling for global elimination of human deaths due of canine-mediated rabies by 2030.

The End Rabies Now campaign aims to significantly raise the profile of rabies as a global neglected tropical disease. Among its objectives are to support achievement of a target set by Sustainable Development Goal 3 that aims to end the epidemics of NTDs by 2030; put rabies control on the agenda of foundations, donor governments and international institutions; increase financial resources for rabies-endemic countries; and gain the commitment of politicians to advocate for and support rabies elimination in endemic countries.

By highlighting the progress made towards rabies elimination across the world, the campaign aims to show policy makers and decision makers that rabies is an urgent priority that must be tackled today.