



World Rabies Day 2024 Brief

Breaking Rabies Boundaries

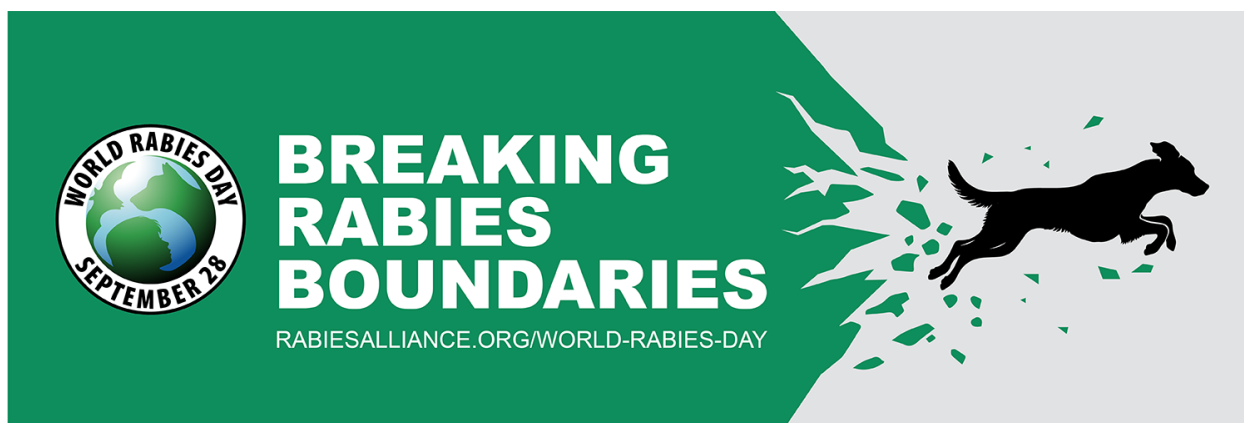
Introduction

World Rabies Day is held every year on September 28 to raise awareness and advocate for rabies elimination globally. It is an event designed to be inclusive, uniting people, organizations, and stakeholders against rabies. It is for this reason that we would like to share, in advance of the public launch, the World Rabies Day theme for 2024. In the spirit of World Rabies Day, we hope to continue to join forces, foster collaboration, and promote partnerships to assist all those involved in the fight against rabies.

Theme

Breaking Rabies Boundaries

Design



The theme banner is simple in design but powerful and optimistic. Its green hue, inspired by the UN SDG 3, signifies robust health, harmony, vitality, and rejuvenation. The concept of breaking barriers is depicted through surrounding shards, encircling the central element: a dog silhouette. This portrayal of a dog, rendered in black, is adaptable to diverse contexts. Its dynamic posture,



captured mid-leap, symbolizes proactive action and the triumph of overcoming obstacles and breaking existing boundaries that prevent progress.

Primary focus

Rabies elimination is a complex task that goes beyond simply vaccinating a dog, which is also why rabies is one of the Neglected Tropical Diseases (NTDs). There remain many boundaries that prevent the global community from eliminating the disease and achieving the goal of zero dog-mediated human rabies deaths by 2030. To make progress and achieve our goals, we need to focus on breaking those boundaries and expanding beyond the norm to ensure that we continue to progress toward elimination.

This year's theme is purposefully broad as the boundaries can be interpreted in many ways, making the theme accessible and relatable for any person or stakeholder interested in, or working towards, rabies elimination.

Rationale

The World Rabies Day theme for 2024 is “Breaking Rabies Boundaries”, which was chosen to highlight the need for progress and moving beyond the *status quo*, where achieving rabies elimination in time with the global goal remains an unlikely prospect for large parts of the world. Most stakeholders encounter many boundaries that still prevent them from significant tangible progress towards rabies elimination. Therefore, this year's theme focuses on changes required to accelerate forward momentum.

Because so many boundaries potentially exist for different contexts and challenges, the theme can be used to address any of these boundaries. In addition, there is a double meaning in the theme in that rabies itself breaks international boundaries as it is a transboundary disease.

Some examples of the boundaries that can, and must, be broken to achieve rabies elimination are listed below. The list is not exhaustive and simply provides some insight into how the theme can be interpreted and applied.

Breaking boundaries:

- **between diseases:** Breaking disease siloes in alignment with the WHO NTD Roadmap.



- **among sectors:** Continuing to highlight the importance of the One Health approach and the need for joint action among sectors.
- **of human rabies prevention:** With the pledged support of GAVI, the Vaccine Alliance, limitations and barriers to human rabies vaccine accessibility can be more feasibly overcome.
- **that prevent cooperation and collaboration:** Breaking those boundaries that prevent improved cooperation and collaboration between stakeholders whether on a local, national (inter-ministerial), regional or international level. Aligning with the UAR Forum Partnership Map
- **in approaches and technologies:** Encouraging the use of novel and progressive approaches, tools, and technologies. Aligning with the UAR Forum Toolbox among others.
- **to dog vaccination and reaching 70% coverage:** Highlighting approaches, tools, support and the will to break the 70% vaccination coverage boundary in rabies-endemic countries - aligning with the UAR Forum workstream to “Barriers to dog vaccination”.
- **in scale:** Breaking the restrictions preventing programs from scaling up beyond the “pilot” phase implementation.
- **in understanding and awareness:** Changing perceptions and stereotypes, correcting misconceptions, and myths, and encouraging a broader understanding and awareness.

The list above is not exhaustive as we hope that every person – whether a layperson with an interest in rabies or a professional working towards its elimination – can see themselves within this theme. It allows for a focus on all the key aspects important for rabies elimination and aligns with global trends, goals, and needs. This includes One Health, the GAVI, the Vaccine Alliance, support for human rabies vaccine, alignment with the United Against Rabies Forum developments and workstreams, the WHO NTD roadmap, the ‘Global Strategic Plan: Zero Dog-mediated human rabies deaths by 2030’, and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of the United Nations.

Design concept of the theme

The primary color used in the theme is green (#4c9F38), aligning with the green used in the SDGs for SDG 3 (Good Health and Well-being), under which falls the goal to eliminate rabies.





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This highlights that the Zero by 30 goal is still an important goal to work towards and the only way that success will be achieved is by breaking the *status quo* and the boundaries that currently hinder progress.

Timeline

The public announcement for the World Rabies Day 2024 theme is scheduled for **Wednesday, 24 April 2024, at 12:00 GMT.**

Joint messaging

GARC encourages the opportunity to deliver joint messaging with all its partners and encourages all stakeholders to do so with their partners. Please contact Kerenza Vlastou (kerenza.vlastou@rabiesalliance.org) and Terence Scott (terence.scott@rabiesalliance.org) to discuss joint messages for release in the build-up to or on September 28, 2024.

