

# #TimeToTackleRHD

## Background Information

### What is RHD?

RHD stands for **rheumatic heart disease**, a preventable disease that currently affects over 33 million people worldwide. RHD is found all over the world, but most commonly affects women, children and adolescents living in conditions of poverty and overcrowding.

RHD kills 320,000 people every year, even though it is a preventable disease. A few rich countries (including the USA and UK) have managed to reduce their burden of RHD, but other countries continue to struggle with the disease. RHD is a lifelong condition, which is often fatal if not treated properly.

**RHD is a global problem that needs a global solution.** All countries must unite to end this preventable disease. You can learn more about RHD at: [www.rhdaction.org](http://www.rhdaction.org)

### What is #TimeToTackleRHD?

**RHD Action** launched the **#TimeToTackleRHD** campaign as we believe that RHD has been ignored by global decision-makers for too long.

We are fighting to **give hearts a voice** by calling on governments and decision-makers to support a **global RHD Resolution** at the World Health Organization. Everybody has a role to play - visit the RHD Action website or contact [resolution@rhdaction.org](mailto:resolution@rhdaction.org) to get involved.

### What is a Resolution?

A Resolution is a **piece of written policy** agreed by all of the countries (or 'Member States') that make up the World Health Organization. A Resolution contains clear commitments and action, and **needs to be passed by consensus at a World Health Assembly**.

Once passed, this Resolution will effectively **put RHD on the official workplan of the World Health Organization**. This means that decision-makers (including governments and the WHO) will need to recognize that RHD is a global priority and **address and fund it appropriately**.

### How can I help?

The process of achieving a Resolution can take years, but we have already made progress – On 01 June 2017, the Executive Board of the World Health Organization recommended a Resolution on 'Rheumatic Fever and Rheumatic Heart Disease' for adoption at the World Health Assembly in May 2018.

**We need you to contact your national decision-makers (e.g. Ministers of Health and health diplomats) to ask them to support the RHD Resolution process!** Email [resolution@rhdaction.org](mailto:resolution@rhdaction.org) for more information

