Lilly and UNICEF collaborate to give millions of children a healthier start

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Six-year initiative to improve non-communicable disease prevention and care for children in low- and middle-income countries

NEW YORK and INDIANAPOLIS, May 14, 2026 /PRNewswire/ -- Eli Lilly and Company (NYSE: LLY) and UNICEF USA announced today a collaboration aiming to improve non-communicable disease (NCD) prevention and care for children, reaching over 30 million young people and caregivers across 21 low- and middle-income countries.

Marking its 150th anniversary, Lilly is committing $50 million to UNICEF USA, supporting UNICEF's efforts to strengthen primary healthcare systems to better prevent, detect and manage NCDs such as diabetes, congenital heart disease, sickle cell disease and respiratory illness in children and adolescents. It will also strengthen prevention, care and support for children living with overweight and obesity, helping reduce long-term health risks for children, their families and communities.

UNICEF will support governments to make prevention and care part of routine health services, expanding access to quality care in communities, training and supporting health workers and improving early diagnosis and long-term care for children and adolescents. This approach will help countries deliver more coordinated, sustainable care, ultimately expanding access closer to home and supporting children throughout their lives.

This six-year commitment (2026–2032) builds on a UNICEF model that has evolved from pilot programs into a sustainable, multi-country approach embedded within national health systems.

"Millions of children are deprived of the building blocks necessary for lifelong health due to Non-communicable disease risk factors established early in life," said Kitty van der Heijden, Deputy Executive Director, Partnerships, UNICEF. "Our collaboration with Lilly is leading the way to ensure children get a healthy future in life and demonstrates the impact of the private sector to drive results at scale."

NCDs are rising rapidly among children and adolescents worldwide, with the greatest impact in low- and middle-income countries, which account for 82 percent[1] of premature deaths linked to these conditions.

Weak health systems and limited access to nutritious food and safe environments make it harder for children to stay healthy and thrive. Without timely disease prevention and management, these conditions can lead to lifelong health challenges, yet access to early detection, care and long-term support remains limited.

"Every child, everywhere, deserves a healthy future. That begins with working to strengthen healthcare systems in resource-limited settings to halt the rise of NCDs," said Patrik Jonsson, Executive Vice President and President of Lilly International. "Throughout our 150-year history, we've stayed focused on the disease areas that could have the biggest impact on humanity, including diabetes, and our impact extends beyond our medicines. Through our collaboration with UNICEF, we aim to improve global health through NCD prevention and care, helping change the health trajectory for millions of children and adolescents from their earliest years."

Lilly's support aligns with its 30x30 initiative to improve access to quality healthcare for 30 million people in resource-limited settings annually by 2030. Lilly surpassed that milestone in 2025, reaching more than 30 million people five years ahead of schedule. This collaboration extends that momentum by expanding NCD prevention and care into the health systems that children and families depend on most.

Since 2022, through support from Lilly to UNICEF USA, UNICEF has reached nearly 16 million children and caregivers by delivering essential health services and care for childhood NCDs, while also advancing NCD awareness and strengthening health systems in resource-limited settings.

About UNICEF
UNICEF works in some of the world's toughest places to reach the world's most disadvantaged children. Across more than 190 countries and territories, we work for every child, everywhere, to build a better world for everyone. Follow UNICEF on Twitter and Facebook. UNICEF does not endorse any company brand, product or service.

About Lilly
Lilly is a medicine company turning science into healing to make life better for people around the world. We've been pioneering life-changing discoveries for 150 years, and today our medicines help tens of millions of people across the globe. Harnessing the power of biotechnology, chemistry and genetic medicine, our scientists are urgently advancing new discoveries to solve some of the world's most significant health challenges: redefining diabetes care; treating obesity and curtailing its most devastating long-term effects; advancing the fight against Alzheimer's disease; providing solutions to some of the most debilitating immune system disorders; and transforming the most difficult-to-treat cancers into manageable diseases. With each step toward a healthier world, we're motivated by one thing: making life better for millions more people. That includes delivering innovative clinical trials that reflect the diversity of our world and working to ensure our medicines are accessible and affordable. To learn more, visit Lilly.com and Lilly.com/news, or follow us on Facebook, Instagram, and LinkedIn. I-LLY

[1] https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/noncommunicable-diseases

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