

## Getting to 2018: Preparing for the third High-level Meeting on NCDs

1. Over 14 million people die each year from noncommunicable diseases (NCDs) between the ages of 30 and 70, of which 85 per cent are in developing countries. It is estimated that up to two thirds of these premature deaths from NCDs are linked to exposure to risk factors - namely, tobacco use, unhealthy diet and physical inactivity, and the harmful use of alcohol – and up to half of all such deaths are linked to weak health systems that do not respond effectively and equitably to the health-care needs of people with NCDs – principally cardiovascular diseases, cancers, chronic respiratory diseases and diabetes. Most of these premature deaths from NCDs can be prevented by governments taking a leading role and responsibility in implementing an agreed package of very cost-effective and affordable interventions for all countries (so-called “best buys” for NCDs).
2. The social, economic and physical environments in developing countries afford their populations much lower levels of protection from the risks and consequences of NCDs than in developed countries. In developed countries the population often benefits from governments’ multisectoral national policies and plans that (a) map the epidemics of NCDs, (b) reduce the exposure of populations and individuals to risk factors for NCDs, and (c) enable health systems to respond to the needs of people with NCDs. Premature deaths from NCDs reduce productivity, curtail economic growth and trap the populations in the lowest income quintiles in chronic poverty.
3. A study conducted in 2011 by the Harvard School of Public Health and the World Economic Forum demonstrated that over the period 2011-2025, the cumulative lost output in developing countries associated with the four major NCDs is projected to be more than US\$ 7 trillion<sup>1</sup>. The annual loss of \$500 billion amounted to 4 per cent of gross domestic product for developing countries in 2010. A WHO study on implementing an agreed package of “best buy” interventions for the prevention and control of NCDs for the period 2011-2025 in all developing countries estimated the cost of action at US\$11 billion<sup>2</sup>.
4. In September 2011, Heads of State and Government adopted the Political Declaration of the High-level Meeting of the United Nations General Assembly on the Prevention and Control of Noncommunicable Diseases<sup>3</sup>, which included a roadmap of concrete commitments, including a time-bound commitment to promote, establish or support and strengthen, by 2013, multisectoral national policies and plans for the prevention and control of NCDs. At the same time, the WHO Secretariat was requested to complete a number of global assignments that translate the vision rooted in the landmark 2000 WHO Global Strategy for the Prevention and Control of NCDs<sup>4</sup> and of the road map of commitments contained in the 2011 Political Declaration into practical guidelines and actions to support Member States in their national efforts.
5. In May 2013, in response to global assignments for WHO included in the 2011 Political Declaration, the World Health Assembly endorsed 9 concrete global NCD targets for 2025, organized around the WHO Global NCD Action Plan 2013-2020<sup>5</sup>. The Global Action Plan comprises a set of actions which, when performed collectively by Member States, international

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<sup>1</sup> A joint WHO/WEF publication on the outcomes of the study is available at [http://www.who.int/nmh/publications/best\\_buys\\_summary/en/](http://www.who.int/nmh/publications/best_buys_summary/en/)

<sup>2</sup> The WHO study is available at [http://www.who.int/nmh/publications/cost\\_of\\_inaction/en/](http://www.who.int/nmh/publications/cost_of_inaction/en/)

<sup>3</sup> United Nations General Assembly resolution A/RES/66/2

<sup>4</sup> World Health Assembly resolution WHA56.17

<sup>5</sup> World Health Assembly resolution WHA66.10. The Global Action Plan is available at <http://www.who.int/nmh/publications/ncd-action-plan/en/>

partners and WHO, will achieve a global target of a 25% reduction in premature mortality from NCDs by 2025 and achieve the commitments made by world leaders in September 2011.

6. Demand from developing countries for technical assistance to establish national policies and plans to address NCDs is very high. An analysis of 144 WHO country cooperation strategies that are jointly agreed with national authorities found that 136 strategies included requests for support to address NCDs. To meet this demand, the United Nations Secretary-General established the United Nations Interagency Task Force on NCDs in June 2013<sup>6</sup>. Placed under the leadership of WHO, the Task Force is coordinating the activities of UN organizations and other intergovernmental organizations to support the realization of the roadmap of commitments made by Heads of State and Government in the 2011 Political Declaration on NCDs.

7. In July 2014, the Outcome Document adopted at the High-level Meeting of the United Nations General Assembly on the Comprehensive Review and Assessment of the Progress Achieved in the Prevention and Control of NCDs<sup>7</sup> recognized the remarkable progress achieved at the national level since September 2011, including an increase in the number of countries which have an operational national noncommunicable disease policy with a budget for implementation, from 32% of countries in 2010 to 50% of countries in 2013. Recognizing also that progress in implementing the roadmap of commitments included in the 2011 Political Declaration has been insufficient and highly uneven, and that continued and increased efforts are essential, Ministers committed to prioritize a set of 19 measures which they will take in four priority areas: governance, prevention and reduction of risk factors, health care and surveillance.

8. In September 2014, WHO established the WHO Global Coordination Mechanism on NCDs<sup>8</sup> to facilitate and enhance coordination of activities, multi-stakeholder engagement and action across sectors to contribute to the implementation of the WHO Global NCD Action Plan 2013-2020. Guided by its work plan 2014-2015 noted by the World Health Assembly in May 2014, the Coordination Mechanism plans to, inter alia, hold a first dialogue in April 2015 on how to encourage the continued inclusion of NCDs in development cooperation agendas and initiatives and a second dialogue in November 2015 on how to strengthen international cooperation on the prevention and control of NCDs within the framework of North-South, South-South and triangular cooperation.

9. In September 2014, the United Nations General Assembly decided that the Report of the Open Working Group of the United Nations General Assembly on Sustainable Development Goals shall be the main basis for integrating sustainable development goals into the post-2015 development agenda. The proposal includes the following relevant targets for NCDs<sup>9</sup>, which will be submitted for endorsement by world leaders at the forthcoming UN Summit for the Adoption of the Post-2015 Development Agenda (New York, 25-27 September 2015)::

- Target 3.4: By 2030, reduce by one third premature mortality from NCDs
- Target 3.a: Strengthen the implementation of the WHO FCTC in all countries
- Target 3.b: Support research and development of vaccines and medicines for NCDs (and communicable diseases) that primarily affect developing countries
- Target 3.8: Achieve universal health coverage (UHC)..

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<sup>6</sup> More information is available at <http://www.who.int/nmh/ncd-task-force/en/>

<sup>7</sup> United Nations General Assembly resolution A/RES/68/300

<sup>8</sup> More information is available at <http://www.who.int/nmh/ncd-coordination-mechanism/en/>

<sup>9</sup> United Nations General Assembly document A/68/970 and resolution A/RES/68/309

10. In preparation for a comprehensive review by the United Nations General Assembly in 2018 of the progress achieved in the prevention and control of NCDs, Ministers requested the United Nations Secretary-General, in collaboration with WHO, to submit to the UN General Assembly, by the end of 2017, a report on the progress achieved in implementing the 2011 Political Declaration on NCDs and the 2014 Outcome Document on NCDs. In its decision EB136(13), the WHO Executive Board requested the WHO Director-General in January 2015 to publish a technical note on how WHO will report in 2017 to the United Nations General Assembly on the national commitments included in the 2014 Outcome Document and the 2011 Political Declaration, using existing survey tools and taking into account existing indicators at the global and regional levels. Pursuant to this decision, the WHO Secretariat published a technical note on 1 May 2015 which sets out 10 progress indicators which the WHO Director-General will use to report to the United Nations General Assembly in 2017 on the progress achieved in the implementation of commitments included in the 2011 UN Political Declaration and the 2014 UN Outcome Document on NCDs<sup>10</sup>.

11. In May 2015, the World Health Assembly reviewed a report on the follow-up to the 2014 High-level Meeting on NCDs<sup>11</sup>. Member States noted the report, including the sequencing of reports, surveys and evaluations (accountability framework) included in annex 2 of the report. In their statements, Member States welcomed the technical note published on 1 May 2015 setting out the 10 progress indicators. The WHO Secretariat explained that in September 2015, WHO will launch – for advocacy purposes – a preliminary report with data collected (between May and August 2015) on these 10 indicators at a side-event on the occasion of the UN Summit for the adoption of the post-2015 development agenda (New York, 25-27 September 2015).

12. In May 2016, the World Health Assembly will review a report on the progress made in implementing the WHO Global NCD Action Plan 2013-2020 (taking into account 9 process indicators for the Global Action Plan endorsed by the World Health Assembly in 2014) and the progress achieved in the nine global targets (taking into account 25 outcome indicators endorsed by the World Health Assembly in 2013).

### **How WHO is helping countries to transform commitments into action**

13. WHO is helping countries to build national NCD solutions, based on local insights and global perspectives, to transform their commitments on NCD into domestic action. WHO's Programme Budget includes a budget line of around US\$100 million per year to provide technical assistance to countries to ensure that countries have increased access to interventions to prevent and manage NCDs and their risk factors. WHO's technical assistance is focused on supporting countries in their efforts to strengthen their national capacities to:

- Develop and implement national multisectoral NCD policies and plans
- Enable governments to implement strategies to reduce risk factors for NCDs (tobacco use, diet, physical inactivity and harmful use of alcohol)
- Enable governments to improve health care coverage for the management of cardiovascular diseases, cancer, diabetes and chronic respiratory diseases through strengthening health systems
- Implement monitoring frameworks to report on the progress made on the commitments contained in the 2011 Political Declaration and 2014 Outcome Document.

### **Call to action**

14. The 2014 Outcome Document includes four time-bound commitments which Ministers have committed themselves to prioritize by 2015 and 2016:

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<sup>10</sup> Available at <http://www.who.int/nmh/events/2015/getting-to-2018/en/>

<sup>11</sup> Available at [http://apps.who.int/gb/ebwha/pdf\\_files/WHA68/A68\\_11-en.pdf](http://apps.who.int/gb/ebwha/pdf_files/WHA68/A68_11-en.pdf)

- by 2015, consider setting national targets for 2025 and process indicators based on national situations, taking into account the nine voluntary global targets for NCDs
- by 2015, consider developing or strengthening national multisectoral policies and plans to achieve the national targets by 2025, taking into account the WHO Global NCD Action Plan 2013–2020
- by 2016, as appropriate, reduce risk factors for NCDs and underlying social determinants through the implementation of interventions and policy options to create health-promoting environments, building on guidance set out in Appendix 3 to the WHO Global NCD Action Plan 2013–2020
- by 2016, as appropriate, strengthen and orient health systems to address the prevention and control of NCDs and underlying social determinants through people-centred primary health care and universal health coverage throughout the life cycle, building on guidance set out in Appendix 3 to the WHO Global NCD Action Plan 2013–2020.

Countries need to continue their national efforts to realize these commitments.

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