

The NCD Alliance

Putting non-communicable diseases
on the global agenda

NCD Alliance Statement – UN Foundation, World Bank and WHO Civil Society Consultation on Universal Health Coverage (UHC), 21 January 2014

The NCD Alliance welcomes the opportunity to share our views on the discussion paper and the collaboration by WHO and the World Bank to develop a framework for monitoring progress towards universal health coverage (UHC) at the global and country level. For the purpose of this CSO consultation, we provide four main recommendations on the draft monitoring framework:

1. Firstly, we strongly recommend revisiting the **terminology** used in the paper. The term non-communicable diseases, or NCDs, is recognised and widely used by WHO and the UN, and was the focus of the UN Political Declaration in 2011. Therefore we strongly recommend using the term NCDs in this UHC paper, rather than Chronic Conditions and Injuries (CCI's).
2. We support the three identified domains for monitoring progress - access to essential, quality services, financial protection, and populations covered. However we recommend adding a **fourth dimension on "health security"**. This is a measure of the extent to which the population is secure in the knowledge that there are services available, when needed.
3. In terms of **service coverage**, we wish to make two general points:
 - The paper defines everything that gets done in relation to health as "services", yet includes population health measures such as tobacco taxation. Obviously population health measures and policy interventions are critical for NCD prevention, but it is not clear from the paper if both services and policy interventions will be reflected in the monitoring framework. This needs to be clarified in the next iteration.
 - There is a lack of detail on what is included within the service coverage areas. This is a tremendous task, which is glossed over in the paper. The entire monitoring exercise will depend on these indicators. The NCD Alliance is consulting with our network and experts to develop specific recommendations on this for NCDs, which we will submit to the online consultation.
4. Finally, we wish to make a point about the positioning of **UHC within the post-2015 development agenda**. While we applaud efforts to move towards UHC, we remain convinced that UHC is not suitable as the overarching health goal in post-2015. First, this tool measures the performance of the health system and it is clear that systems and services do not equal health. As the UNICEF/WHO global thematic health consultation on post-2015 clearly stated, UHC is important, but is *instrumental* in achieving specific health goals and outcomes. Adoption of UHC as the overarching goal would undermine whole-of-government and whole-of-society approaches, as well as a focus on the social determinants of health, which are cornerstones of the UN Political Declaration on NCDs. Therefore the NCD Alliance is supportive of "maximising healthy lives at all stages of life" as the health goal, with UHC and SDoH as key enablers.