

UN High-level Panel Final Report on the Post-2015 Development Agenda
NCD Alliance Analysis
June 2013

After nine months of inclusive consultations, the UN High-level Panel of Eminent Persons (HLP) released their final report on the post-2015 development agenda on 30 May 2013. [A New Global Partnership: Eradicate Poverty and Transform Economies Through Sustainable Development](#) outlines universal priorities to deliver sustainable development in the post-2015 era and suggests an illustrative framework of 12 universal goals and 54 national targets. The report will serve as a key input into the global deliberations on the future development agenda. See Annex 1 for a summary of the report and proposed goals and targets.

The NCD Alliance and our global network have been engaged throughout these post-2015 consultations. Our common objective has been to ensure a post-2015 framework with health at the centre, and goals and targets that fully account for the global burden of non-communicable diseases (NCDs) – namely cancer, cardiovascular disease, chronic respiratory diseases, and diabetes - their shared risk factors, drivers, and solutions.

Many of the recommendations made by the HLP report align with [our vision for health and NCDs in the post-2015 agenda](#). But, there are some notable weaknesses and omissions that the health and NCD community should rally behind as the global conversations and processes on defining a post-2015 development framework continue. Below is a short analysis of the HLP report from an NCD perspective.

Strengths

- **Recommends a universal agenda that is relevant for all countries:** As the NCD epidemic affects all countries, a universal agenda will encourage all countries to take action and accept responsibility.
- **Sustainable development at the core:** The HLP report outlines a “*people-centred, planet-sensitive*” development approach, integrating the social, economic, and environmental dimensions of sustainability. Health, NCDs and the major NCD risk factors are interlinked with all three dimensions of sustainable development, and are the product of unsustainable consumption and production.
- **Emphasis on reaching the poorest and most vulnerable populations:** The report advocates for a focus on “*leaving no one behind*”, particularly addressing vulnerable groups such as women, children, indigenous populations, and people with disabilities. Many of these groups experience disproportionate exposure to NCD risk factors, prevalence of NCDs and poor health outcomes. There is significant attention to the barriers faced by people with disabilities and reaching those with impairments.
- **Recognition of health as a key dimension of poverty and a contributor to development:** Health and specifically access to quality healthcare, is recognised as a basic human entitlement and a wise investment for governments. The report recognises that good health outcomes can only be achieved by equitable sustainable development across the dimensions, and through steady progress in achieving universal health coverage (UHC).
- **A focused framework of goals and targets:** The report proposes an illustrative framework, with 12 universal goals and 54 national targets. The framework is focused in number of goals, and the targets are quantitative and appropriately ambitious.
- **An outcome-focused health goal:** Goal 4 in the framework is to “*ensure healthy lives,*” and has five national targets attached. This universal health goal is focused on improving overall health outcomes, drawing upon

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the success of the health-related MDGs. This goal avoids a disease-specific and siloed approach to health, and with disaggregation of data, would ensure progress across the life course.

- **Target to “reduce the burden of disease from HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis, malaria, neglected tropical diseases and priority non-communicable diseases”:** With this target, NCDs are placed alongside other priority health issues within the post-2015 framework. The target provides a welcome shift away from a focus on mortality to disability and morbidity, which are critical for NCDs.
- **Targets on the unfinished business of the current MDGs:** Under the health goal there are also targets that address child and maternal death, infectious diseases, and sexual reproductive health rights – all of which share co-morbidities with NCDs.
- **Focus on gender equity:** The HLP report integrates gender equity throughout the framework, plus there is a standalone goal on gender equality and women and girls’ empowerment. This goal (along with others on poverty, education, and employment) will tackle the key social determinants of health and the NCD epidemic.
- **Role of civil society:** Recognises the crucial role civil society can play in a new global partnership for the post-2015 era, as implementers and drivers of development, particularly at the local level.

Areas for Improvement

- **Lack of focus on human development:** Too often the word sustainability is linked to environmental concerns in the report. This results in a dilution of *human development*, which was at the core of the MDGs. The report could be strengthened by advocating for *sustainable human development*.
- **Health not recognised as a fundamental human right, only as a “basic need”:** Recognising it as a fundamental human right promotes the highest attainable standard for well-being.
- **Weak definition of NCDs:** Chronic respiratory disease is currently omitted as a major NCD. The definition of NCDs needs strengthening to align with the World Health Organization (WHO) definition of NCDs.
- **NCDs are framed as an issue for high-income countries only:** NCDs are a universal issue, but disproportionately impact upon low- and middle-income countries (LMICs) and vulnerable populations.
- **Weak on prevention and omission of major NCD risk factors:** The narrative for the health goal pays little attention to prevention, early diagnosis, health promotion, and the social determinants. On NCD risk factors, tobacco use – the most preventable cause of death - alcohol consumption, and physical inactivity are entirely omitted from the report. This is a huge oversight, particularly considering tobacco is the only health issue which is subject to an international health treaty – the WHO FCTC.
- **Obesity absent from the nutrition goal:** Although the report focuses on unsustainable consumption and production, goal 6 on food security and nutrition completely ignores obesity and over-nutrition. This is a missed opportunity, as the evidence is clear that both stunting and obesity/overweight have to be tackled in parallel to improve nutrition and health.
- **Mental health and neurological disorders overlooked:** Mental health and neurological disorders are completely absent from the HLP report, despite being global health concerns and closely connected to the NCD epidemic – dementia, Alzheimer’s disease, depression, and stress.
- **Demographic changes, including ageing, not fully reflected:** The report does not adequately acknowledge the anticipated rapid demographic changes to occur in the post-2015 era, including ageing populations and an increasing number of youth. Both are populations particularly vulnerable to the impact of the NCD epidemic. A sharper focus on the social protection floors approach, which will minimise the impact of poverty and inequality for people of all ages, is necessary.

Next Steps and Key Advocacy Messages

The UN High-Level Panel Report will serve as one input into the UN Secretary-General's recommendations on post-2015, to be presented at the UN MDG Review in September 2013. It will also serve as the basis for the work of the Open Working Group (OWG) on Sustainable Development Goals. The OWG, comprised of Member States, is expected to present recommendations in 2014.

To inform NCD community advocacy in response to the HLP report and in these next phases of the post-2015 process, the NCD Alliance has drafted the following key advocacy messages. These can be tailored and adapted for your own purposes:

- Health must be recognised as *“a precondition for, an outcome of, and indicator of all three dimensions of sustainable development.”* **NCD prevention, control, treatment, and care must be prioritised within this, in order to drive overall sustainable human development.**
- **NCDs are a universal issue, impacting upon rich and poor countries alike.** This epidemic has been recognised by world leaders in the UN Political Declaration on NCDs as *“one of the greatest challenges for development in the 21st century”* – it is crippling national economies, overwhelming health systems, and pitching poor households and vulnerable populations into vicious cycles of poverty.
- The **definition of NCDs in post-2015 should be aligned** with the World Health Organization's (WHO) definition to ensure all major diseases are accounted for, including chronic respiratory diseases.
- The **main risk factors for NCDs must be included within the post-2015 framework as indicators** (including tobacco use, harmful use of alcohol, unhealthy diets, and physical inactivity). If we are to ensure no one is left behind in the post-2015 era, we cannot afford to ignore these preventable risk factors and the affordable solutions – including the WHO FCTC.
- **Goal 5 on ensuring food security and good nutrition must focus on both sides of malnutrition – under-nutrition *and* obesity/over-nutrition.** It is a mistake and a missed opportunity to ignore the global obesity epidemic. The evidence clearly demonstrates that both stunting and overweight/obesity need to be tackled together.
- The post-2015 development framework must include **health-sensitive indicators across all dimensions** of sustainable development. This will ensure a health-in-all policies (HiAP) approach, and promote action on the social determinants of health.
- The recently-adopted global monitoring framework for NCDs, including the **target to reduce preventable deaths from NCDs by 25% by the year 2025**, should serve as the technical basis for target and indicator development on NCDs.¹
- **Universal health coverage and access (UHC + A) and social determinants of health should be positioned as enablers** to achieving the overarching, outcome-focused health goal, and supporting the achievement of health-related targets across the framework.

¹ 66th World Health Assembly. A66/A/CONF./1.Rev.1. 25 May 2013. http://ncdalliance.org/sites/default/files/rfiles/A66_WHA%20Final%20Resolution.pdf

Annex 1: Overview of the HLP report

Five Transformative Shifts

The final report of the UN High-level Panel suggests a post-2015 development framework based on five transformative shifts that create the enabling environment to drive sustainable development worldwide:

1. **Leave No One Behind.** *We must ensure that no person – regardless of ethnicity, gender, geography, disability, race or other status – is denied basic economic opportunities and human rights.*
2. **Put Sustainable Development at the Core.** *We must make a rapid shift to sustainable patterns of production and consumption, with developed countries in the lead. We must act now to slow the alarming pace of climate change and environmental degradation, which pose unprecedented threats to humanity.*
3. **Transform Economies for Jobs and Inclusive Growth.** *A profound economic transformation can end extreme poverty and promote sustainable development, improving livelihoods, by harnessing innovation, technology, and the potential of business. More diversified economies, with equal opportunities for all, can drive social inclusion, especially for young people, and foster respect for the environment.*
4. **Build Peace and Effective, Open and Accountable Institutions for All.** *Freedom from violence, conflict, and oppression is essential to human existence, and the foundation for building peaceful and prosperous societies. We are calling for a fundamental shift – to recognize peace and good governance as a core element of wellbeing, not an optional extra.*
5. **Forge a New Global Partnership.** *A new spirit of solidarity, cooperation, and mutual accountability must underpin the post-2015 agenda. This new partnership should be built on our shared humanity, and based on mutual respect and mutual benefit.*

Illustrative Framework – 12 Goals and 54 Targets

The panel report also suggests an illustrative framework with 12 universal goals and 54 targets. The goals and targets suggested are outlined in the table below.

1	End Poverty	1a. Bring the number of people living on less than \$1.25 a day to zero and reduce by x% the share of people living below their country's 2015 national poverty line 1b. Increase by x% the share of women and men, communities, and businesses with secure rights to land, property, and other assets 1c. Cover x% of people who are poor and vulnerable with social protection systems 1d. Build resilience and reduce deaths from natural disasters by x%
2	Empower Girls and Women and Achieve Gender Equality	2a. Prevent and eliminate all forms of violence against girls and women 2b. End child marriage 2c. Ensure equal right of women to own and inherit property, sign a contract, register a business and open a bank account 2d. Eliminate discrimination against women in political, economic, and public life
3	Provide Quality Education and Lifelong Learning	3a. Increase by x% the proportion of children able to access and complete pre-primary education 3b. Ensure every child, regardless of circumstance, completes primary education able to read, write and count well enough to meet minimum learning standards 3c. Ensure every child, regardless of circumstance, has access to lower secondary education and increase the proportion of adolescents who achieve recognized and measurable

		<p>learning outcomes to x%</p> <p>3d. Increase the number of young and adult women and men with the skills, including technical and vocational, needed for work by x%</p>
4	Ensure Healthy Lives	<p>4a. End preventable infant and under-5 deaths</p> <p>4b. Increase by x% the proportion of children, adolescents, at-risk adults and older people that are fully vaccinated</p> <p>4c. Decrease the maternal mortality ratio to no more than x per 100,000</p> <p>4d. Ensure universal sexual and reproductive health and rights</p> <p>4e. Reduce the burden of disease from HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis, malaria, neglected tropical diseases and priority non-communicable diseases</p>
5	Ensure Food Security and Good Nutrition	<p>5a. End hunger and protect the right of everyone to have access to sufficient, safe, affordable, and nutritious food</p> <p>5b. Reduce stunting by x%, wasting by y%, and anaemia by z% for all children under five</p> <p>5c. Increase agricultural productivity by x%, with a focus on sustainably increasing smallholder yields and access to irrigation</p> <p>5d. Adopt sustainable agricultural, ocean and freshwater fishery practices and rebuild designated fish stocks to sustainable levels</p> <p>5e. Reduce postharvest loss and food waste by x%</p>
6	Achieve Universal Access to Water and Sanitation	<p>6a. Provide universal access to safe drinking water at home, and in schools, health centres, and refugee camps</p> <p>6b. End open defecation and ensure universal access to sanitation at school and work, and increase access to sanitation at home by x%</p> <p>6c. Bring freshwater withdrawals in line with supply and increase water efficiency in agriculture by x%, industry by y% and urban areas by z%</p> <p>6d. Recycle or treat all municipal and industrial wastewater prior to discharge</p>
7	Secure Sustainable Energy	<p>7a. Double the share of renewable energy in the global energy mix</p> <p>7b. Ensure universal access to modern energy services</p> <p>7c. Double the global rate of improvement in energy efficiency in buildings, industry, agriculture and transport</p> <p>7d. Phase out inefficient fossil fuel subsidies that encourage wasteful consumption</p>
8	Create Jobs, Sustainable Livelihoods, and Equitable Growth	<p>8a. Increase the number of good and decent jobs and livelihoods by x</p> <p>8b. Decrease the number of young people not in education, employment or training by x%</p> <p>8c. Strengthen productive capacity by providing universal access to financial services and infrastructure such as transportation and ICT</p> <p>8d. Increase new start-ups by x and value added from new products by y through creating an enabling business environment and boosting entrepreneurship</p>
9	Manage Natural Resource Assets Sustainably	<p>9a. Publish and use economic, social and environmental accounts in all governments and major companies</p> <p>9b. Increase consideration of sustainability in x% of government procurements</p> <p>9c. Safeguard ecosystems, species and genetic diversity</p> <p>9d. Reduce deforestation by x% and increase reforestation by y%</p> <p>9e. Improve soil quality, reduce soil erosion by x tonnes and combat desertification</p>
10	Ensure Good Governance and Effective Institutions	<p>10a. Provide free and universal legal identity, such as birth registrations</p> <p>10b. Ensure people enjoy freedom of speech, association, peaceful protest and access to independent media and information</p> <p>10c. Increase public participation in political processes and civic engagement at all levels</p> <p>10d. Guarantee the public's right to information and access to government data</p> <p>10e. Reduce bribery and corruption and ensure officials can be held accountable</p>
11	Ensure Stable	<p>11a. Reduce violent deaths per 100,000 by x and eliminate all forms of violence against children</p>

	<p>and Peaceful Societies</p>	<p>11b. Ensure justice institutions are accessible, independent, well-resourced and respect due-process rights</p> <p>11c. Stem the external stressors that lead to conflict, including those related to organised crime</p> <p>11d. Enhance the capacity, professionalism and accountability of the security forces, police and judiciary</p>
<p>12</p>	<p>Create a Global Enabling Environment and Catalyse Long-Term Finance</p>	<p>12a. Support an open, fair and development-friendly trading system, substantially reducing trade-distorting measures, including agricultural subsidies, while improving market access of developing country products</p> <p>12b. Implement reforms to ensure stability of the global financial system and encourage stable, long-term private foreign investment</p> <p>12c. Hold the increase in global average temperature below 20 C above pre-industrial levels, in line with international agreements</p> <p>12d. Developed countries that have not done so to make concrete efforts towards the target of 0.7% of gross national product (GNP) as official development assistance to developing countries and 0.15 to 0.20% of GNP of developed countries to least developed countries; other countries should move toward voluntary targets for complementary financial assistance</p> <p>12e. Reduce illicit flows and tax evasion and increase stolen-asset recovery by \$x</p> <p>12f. Promote collaboration on and access to science, technology, innovation, and development data</p>