
Ghana NCD Alliance Launches Civil Society Status Report on NCD Response

Ghana NCD Alliance

On January 12, 2023, Ghana NCD Alliance launched the [Civil Society Status Report \(CSSR\)](#) [1] on the National NCD response and landscape in Ghana.

Representatives from the Ministry of Health, the Ghana Health Service, the National Health Program, the Mental Health Authority, the National Development Planning Commission, academic and research institutions, professional associations, civil society organisations, people living with NCDs, youth groups and the media attended the launch event

The CSSR assessed the national response to NCDs, from a civil society perspective. It is intended to complement and support government's efforts to improve the response to the growing burden of NCDs in Ghana.

“NCD Civil Society Status Reports (CSSR) are a benchmarking exercise developed by the NCD Alliance to support civil society in their accountability role. They are meant to support and promote national action on NCDs, highlighting progress and noting what needs to be done. They also provide information on the civil society landscape, as we know that having a vibrant and active NCD civil society is a key enabler of a strong NCD response” Cristina Parsons Perez, Capacity Development Director, NCD Alliance.

The Ghana CSSR findings show that the Government has prioritised NCDs and increased their importance through international alliances and the inclusion of NCDs in important national and international development objectives. The Government has also improved its capabilities, expanded partnerships with stakeholders, and recognized the role of CSOs and people living with NCDs and the private sector in its activities and NCD response which the Ghana NCD Alliance notes is a positive step towards inclusivity.

The Ghana CSSR acknowledges the Government's leadership to develop and improve Ghana's healthcare system to address NCDs, but underpins the need to provide crucial resources to assist people living with NCDs in accessing care.

The National Health Insurance Scheme (NHIS) still does not fully cover the majority of essential and basic medications and NCD-related services, which makes it more difficult for people living with NCDs to manage their conditions. While the lack of vital NCD (including mental health) services on the NHIS has resulted in people paying for these services out-of-pocket, which imposes financial burdens and discourages people from seeking health facilities for NCD screenings and early detection.

The major challenges and gaps identified in the CSSR which need significant attention to win the fight against NCDs

and achieve SDG targets by 2030 are:

- Challenges with accurately estimating the burden of NCDs in Ghana;
- Limited health benefit packages for essential NCDs services by the National Health Insurance;
- Scheme Inadequate preventive/promotional health services for NCDs;
- Lack of national budgetary allocation for NCD prevention and control;
- Lack of effective tax mechanism on unhealthy products;
- Inadequate screening and effective diagnostics systems for NCDs in the country, especially in Primary Health Care facilities;
- Lack of efficient and coordinated integration of the NCD within the primary health care system;
- Low level of prioritization of NCD-related research and interventions.

Based on its findings, the CSSR recommends a set of actions be taken to collectively to help reduce the growing burden of NCDs in Ghana:

- Establishment of a comprehensive package of NCD services as a part of Universal Health Coverage;
- Leverage domestic innovative financing mechanisms for NCD health services;
- Meaningfully involve CSOs and people living with NCDs in decision-making ,policy development, programme implementation, monitoring and evaluation;
- Increase coverage and patronage of the wellness clinics services;
- Increase health prevention and promotional health;
- Implement and enforce regulation of advertisement of alcohol, emerging tobacco products and unhealthy commodities to young people;
- Monitoring systems on exposure of youth and minors to tobacco and alcohol use;
- Inclusion of basic and vital NCD services including mental health in the NHIS;
- Re-prioritize and focus on the Community-based Health Planning Services system and improve it.

"The Civil Society Status Report on National NCD Response and landscape in Ghana has reinforced the call for multisectoral approach, recognising that the achievement of Ghana's global and national NCD commitments is dependent on Government's political will as well as a proven testament to successful civil society advocacy," says Mr Labram Musah, National coordinator, Ghana NCD Alliance.

The Ghana CSSR was developed by the Ghana NCD Alliance through support of the NCD Alliance's Advocacy Institute NCDs and UHC Accelerator Programme as part of the NCD Alliance's partnership with the Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation.

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