

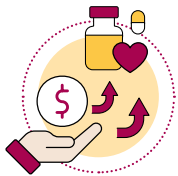
Rev.2 Weakens the Political Declaration: Falling Short of the **CALL TO LEAD** on NCDs

A newly revised version of the Political Declaration (Rev.2) is now in circulation among Member States in New York, following multiple rounds of informal consultations and bilateral meetings. Rev.2 shows that while some priorities from The Call to Lead on NCDs have been retained, critical areas have been weakened or removed altogether. According to the latest intelligence, critical, evidence-based measures such as health taxes are under serious threat. Targets remain vulnerable, with some Member States opposing their inclusion and others still holding reservations.

THIS IS A PIVOTAL MOMENT:

A watered-down declaration will fail to protect lives or deliver on health equity. Civil society must act now—to defend what remains strong, resist further dilution, and demand a bold, action-oriented declaration that delivers measurable progress on the world’s leading cause of death.

WEAKENED AND AT RISK



MOBILISE INVESTMENT

The sub-section title changed from *"mobilize and increase"* to *"mobilize and strengthen sustainable financing"* in Rev.2, shifting focus away from the urgent need to scale up investment. Language and targets related to fiscal measures like health taxes and financial protection policies have been weakened. Rev.2 still fails to call for global financing targets for NCDs.



by increasing sustainable funding for health that includes

Insufficiently reflected



specific and measurable financing targets for NCDs strategies and;

- ▶ No overall financing target developed for NCDs.
- ▶ Tracer target for financial protection policies weakened, reducing ambition from 80% to just 60% of countries having policies in place.



maximises the win-win from health taxes and other fiscal measures.

- ▶ Only asks countries to "consider" taxes and only for tobacco and alcohol. Rev.2 deleted call for taxes on sugar-sweetened beverages and foods high in fat, sugar and salt.
- ▶ Tracer target only on increasing taxes on tobacco and alcohol. Rev.2 deleted taxes on sugar-sweetened beverages.

○ Not Reflected in Rev.2 ◐ Partially reflected in Rev.2 ● Reflected in Rev.2

**REV.2 WEAKENS THE POLITICAL DECLARATION:
Falling Short of the CALL TO LEAD on NCDs**

- ▶ **We need a clear commitment to develop an inclusive investment target for NCDs, mental health, and neurological conditions**—to support national plans and ensure a coordinated, equitable response across conditions. To date, Member States have failed to introduce language committing to this critical step.
- ▶ **The 2030 financial protection target must be restored to 80%**—reducing it to 60% of countries weakens global ambition and undermines progress toward equity and universal health coverage.
- ▶ **The 2030 target for 80% of countries to implement or increase excise taxes must be defended, and taxes on sugar-sweetened beverages must be reinstated.** Increasing taxes on tobacco, alcohol, and sugar-sweetened beverages delivers impact across prevention, financing, and equity—and must stay in the final declaration.

SOUNDBITE



No investment equals no progress. A shared, inclusive financing target and strong fiscal measures are essential to deliver on NCDs and mental health.

**WEAKENED
AND AT RISK**



ACCELERATE IMPLEMENTATION

Rev.2 shows signs of industry influence, taking a weaker stance on implementing proven, cost-effective policies—with **alcohol control measures eliminated, tobacco policies falling short of full alignment with the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control, and references to processed foods and sugar-sweetened beverages removed.** Rev.2 retains an emphasis on strengthening primary health care, but language expanding access to medicines and technologies diluted.



delivering the proven, cost-effective policies to reduce NCD risk factor exposure

Weakened commitments to WHO 'Best Buys,' including:

- ▶ removed all specific alcohol control policies
- ▶ watered down tobacco measures
- ▶ downgraded front-of-package labelling language
- ▶ deleted references to processed foods and sugar-sweetened beverages
- ▶ Tracer target on increasing taxes on tobacco and alcohol only. Rev.2 deleted taxes on sugar-sweetened beverages.



integrating quality NCD interventions into person-centred care and universal health coverage benefit packages

- ▶ References to strengthening PHC to achieve UHC retained.
- ▶ Tracer target for financial protection policies weakened, reducing ambition from 80% to just 60% of countries having policies in place.



expanding access to essential NCD medicines, technologies, and resources

- ▶ Downgrades ambition by calling only to "support" affordable access, rather than to "advance and support"
- ▶ Tracer target on essential medicines and technologies weakened, no longer specifying "at affordable prices"

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**REV.2 WEAKENS THE POLITICAL DECLARATION:
Falling Short of the CALL TO LEAD on NCDs**

- ▶ **Rev.2 includes global targets and tracer targets, but signs of backsliding are evident**—with reduced ambition, weakened language on proven interventions and the removal of key policy commitments, raising concerns about the ability to truly fast-track implementation over the next five years.
- ▶ The health-promoting environments section has been significantly weakened, with **many of the cost-effective ‘best buy’ prevention policies/measures entirely removed or diluted**. The current draft of the declaration aligns more with the interests of the health-harming industries than public health, as reference to commercial determinants of health was also removed.
- ▶ Most references to climate change and climate-resilient health systems have been removed. Climate action and NCD prevention must go hand in hand to protect health and build system resilience.



Rev.2 deletes the tools that work, stripping out proven policies and serving health-harming industries, not people. This is not acceleration, it is rollback.



ACCOUNTABILITY

All global targets in the draft declaration are now at risk, with all five tracer targets significantly weakened. Ambition has been lowered—calling for only 60% of countries to implement critical measures on financial protection, preparedness, and surveillance.



by regularly monitoring and reporting to citizens and the global community on an updated set of NCD targets extended to 2030 and beyond; and

Rev.2 includes three fast-track global targets and five tracer targets. However, **all 5 tracer targets were weakened** in this draft.

- ▶ Tracer target on increasing taxes on tobacco and alcohol only. Rev.2 deleted taxes on sugar-sweetened beverages.
- ▶ Tracer target on PHC no longer calls for medicines and technologies “at affordable prices”
- ▶ Tracer targets on financial protection policies, preparedness plans, and surveillance and monitoring weakened, reducing ambition from 80% to just 60% of countries having policies or plans in place.



by integrating NCD commitments into the post-SDG agenda.

- ▶ The draft calls for the next high-level meeting in 2031 and does not include reference to NCDs beyond the 2030 agenda.

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**REV.2 WEAKENS THE POLITICAL DECLARATION:
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- ▶ All global and tracer targets must be retained and strengthened to ensure progress is tracked, measured, and delivered equitably across countries.
 - **Sugar-sweetened beverages must be reinstated in health tax commitments**—these are WHO-recommended, cost-effective measures with proven public health impact.
 - **Affordable access and mental health must be explicitly included in primary health care language** to ensure equity, achieve UHC, and protect people from catastrophic health costs.
 - **Lowering target ambition from 80% to 60% across key tracer targets weakens global accountability** on financial protection, preparedness, and surveillance—this rollback must be reversed.

SOUNDBITE



Weakening targets weakens accountability. Lowering ambition and removing key measures sends the wrong message—now is the time to raise the bar, not lower it.

**WEAKENED
AND AT RISK**



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The Call to Lead on NCDs is rooted in civil society—including people living with and affected by NCDs and mental health conditions. We are pleased the text continues to recognise that people living with NCDs and mental health conditions, their families and caregivers, can provide unique expertise and should be engaged.

- ▶ However, **Rev.2 continues to have the same major gaps** on community engagement from Rev.1, such as:
 - Just one single mention of civil society completely overlooking the powerful role civil society plays in mobilising communities, holding governments accountable, and driving change on the ground.
 - Missing language that formalises inclusive engagement across the policy cycle—by civil society, communities, and those living with and affected by NCDs.
 - No mention of children and young people’s meaningful participation in any processes.



SOUNDBITE



Just one mention of civil society in Rev.2 is not enough. It’s time for governments to move beyond symbolism and commit to real inclusion—at every stage of the NCD response.

NEXT STEPS

Rev.2 weakens ambition, strips out proven policies, and retreats from earlier commitments—placing global progress on NCDs and mental health at serious risk. The Call to Lead on NCDs sets a clear path forward. Governments must go further and:

- ▶ Secure and embed meaningful social participation and fully recognise the role of civil society
- ▶ Reinstate strong language on fiscal measures, including taxes on alcohol, tobacco, and sugar-sweetened beverages
- ▶ Reinstate strong, specific language on WHO-recommended ‘Best Buys’—proven, cost-effective policies that are essential to reducing NCD risk factors and saving lives
- ▶ Commit to a broader, inclusive investment target for NCDs, mental health, and neurological conditions
- ▶ Include safeguards to protect policymaking from conflicts of interest and industry interference
- ▶ Reinstate and strengthen all five tracer targets—restoring ambition to at least 80% of countries and ensure they drive measurable progress on NCD prevention, financing, and care.

**Please see NCD Alliance's
HLM4 supporting**

Documents here



**TIME
TO  LEAD**

GLOBAL WEEK FOR ACTION ON NCDs

18-25 SEPTEMBER 2025

SHARE WITH US

Let us know what you're doing.
Write to gsanchez@ncdalliance.org



Visit actonncds.org and get involved in the Global Week for Action on NCDs taking place from 18-25 September 2025