

WHO Global Status Report on NCDs, 2014

Intervention by Katie Dain, Executive Director, NCD Alliance

WHO Director General, your Excellencies, colleagues. Thank you for the opportunity to be part of this important launch event today.

In my remarks I would like to take a step back, and contextualise the WHO Global Status Report on NCDs within the broader accountability framework for NCDs. Because the Report and the launch event today is essentially about accountability. We have global NCD commitments, targets and a plan in place. Now we need to focus our attention on how governments can be held accountable for the commitments made, and what role non-state actors have in this endeavour.

Accountability is dependent upon 3 interconnected processes: monitor; review; act.

- a. **Monitor**, meaning the careful tracking of progress based on a pre-defined set of targets and indicators.
- b. **Review**, meaning a participatory and democratic process whereby all parties can analyse the data derived from monitoring to determine whether improvements have been made, and whether pledges, promises and commitments have been kept.
- c. **Act**, meaning taking action on the findings that emerge from the monitoring and review process to accelerate progress.

The GSR serves an important function within this accountability framework, particularly regarding monitoring at the global level. It provides a useful snapshot, or report card as Dr Chan said, of global progress made towards the 9 targets and 25 indicators.

But drawing upon lessons learnt of other accountability initiative in health, we will need more than that to have a fully functioning accountability framework for NCDs. I would like to propose three priority areas today to strengthen accountability for NCDs:

1. **First**, we need to ensure we are monitoring the right things. Global monitoring on NCDs cannot be limited to the WHO targets and action plan. There also needs to be monitoring of the UN commitments for NCDs, namely the 2011 Political Declaration and the 2014 Outcome Document. I therefore urge Member States to support the proposal for process indicators for NCDs to be discussed at the forthcoming EB.
2. **Secondly**, monitoring and review cannot just occur at the global level. We urgently need robust country-level monitoring on NCDs to measure results. Until we have data and in-depth analyses of progress country by country, we will be in the dark on which countries are making good progress vs. those that are off track; what interventions are working and what is not. To achieve this, it is critical that all governments set national NCD targets based on their own context, and there is regularly reporting on progress against these targets.
3. **Thirdly**, in addition to the official monitoring and review processes, we also need space for independent assessments of progress. The women and children's health movement has demonstrated the crucial role civil society and academia can play in holding governments to account on commitments made. Countdown to 2015 is a

useful example here - an initiative that is carried out by WHO in partnership with civil society and academia; and has stimulated attention and swift action on MDGs 4 and 5 via regular reporting on progress.

In recognition of this third point, over the last year the NCD Alliance has adopted the watch dog role. We have done so because we believe in the principle of collaboration and inclusiveness in accountability; and we bring important perspectives and capacities that can help stimulate action on NCDs. NCDA is a network with both global and national reach; and a network with extensive technical and practitioner expertise.

Our efforts in accountability to date have focused at two levels:

- Country-level: benchmarking progress on NCD policy and practice, in South Africa, Brazil, the Caribbean and East Africa;
- Global-level: NCDA has joined forces with the Lancet NCD Action Group on a new initiative called NCD Countdown 2025. I refer you to The Lancet paper on this from July 2014. The aim is to monitor and review progress on NCDs in some of the highest burden countries. Our purpose is to promote action and accountability. We are drawing heavily from the experiences of Countdown to 2015. We intend to produce a report regularly, together with country profiles, to highlight progress and gaps, thus providing a tool for all stakeholders to use to advocate for action on NCDs.

I would like to emphasise that both of these accountability initiatives require collaboration and support of Ministers of Health at the country-level, and WHO at the global level. NCDA has been and continues to be willing to work with WHO to carry out NCD Countdown 2025.

To conclude, accountability is a crucial force for political and programmatic change. But in order for accountability to be truly positive for NCDs accountability must be placed at the country-level, there must be active engagement of civil society, and strong ties between country level and global mechanisms.

Thank you