

Statement at 70th World Health Assembly

Agenda item 13.7: Promoting the health of refugees and migrants

Thank you for the opportunity to deliver this statement on behalf of The International Union Against Tuberculosis and Lung Disease and supported by the NCD Alliance. Delivering quality, timely health care to migrants and refugees is essential to the 2030 Agenda mandate to 'leave no-one behind'. NCDs and mental and neurological health problems pose an acute threat to health in emergency settings: most NCDs require regular treatment over a prolonged period, while failure to provide such treatment in the short term can be fatal. We commend the secretariat for developing the draft framework.

When expanding on this framework to develop the action plan, we urge WHO and Member States to include actions to:

- **Ensure availability of NCD medicines and care alongside those for infectious diseases:** In addition to the clear and urgent need to provide NCD medications listed in the WHO PEN package, including provision for palliative care, we further urge attention to address mental health disorders, especially depression and post-traumatic stress.
- **Implement measure to minimise exposure to NCD risk factors:** In refugee camps high availability and consumption of tobacco products; poor ventilation and limited access to clean fuel for cooking, heating and lighting; poor opportunity for physical activity; and unhealthy diets are pervasive, exacerbating the high NCD and ID risk faced by migrant and refugee populations.
- **Strengthen health systems:** Health systems in low resource settings are typically overstretched even before arrival of migrants and refugees in host communities. This necessitates an overarching approach to building resilient health systems oriented towards achieving UHC. A focus is needed on coordination of care provision and follow-up across various providers in a context where continuity of care is especially challenging.

Thank you for your attention.