

NCD Alliance Advocacy Briefing **136th WHO Executive Board, January 2015**

This briefing note provides background and key advocacy messages on the NCD Alliance's main priorities for the 136th WHO Executive Board (EB), including accountability for commitments made in the 2011 UN Political Declaration and 2014 Outcome Document, the Global Coordination Mechanism for NCDs, the 2nd International Conference on Nutrition (ICN2), and WHO Framework of engagement with non-state actors.

Agenda Item 6: Noncommunicable Diseases (NCDs)

Agenda item 6.4: Follow up to the UN High-Level Review on NCDs

We welcome the report on the follow-up from the 2014 UN NCD Review and Assessment, with a clear outline of follow-up actions in 2015. The UN Review signalled an important shift from a global dialogue to national action and implementation. The EB is an opportunity to promote commitments made at the UN Review, encourage Member States to accelerate progress, and ensure that WHO and other international partners step up support country-level work.

Key messages

- **Implementing commitments:** We look forward to Member States fully implementing the commitments made in the 2014 UN NCD Review Outcome Document, including by 2015 establish national NCD targets, national multisectoral NCD plans, and national NCD commissions;
- **Process indicators:** We support the efforts spearheaded by WHO EMRO to develop a set of process indicators to measure progress on the implementation of the 2011 UN Political Declaration for NCDs and the 2014 Outcome Document. While a clear accountability framework is in place for commitments made at the World Health Assembly, no such framework is in place for reporting on commitments made at the UN General Assembly. We urge Member States to agree a comprehensive set of indicators to ensure the 2017 Director-General's report delivers clear data on country-level progress for NCDs;
- **Global Coordination Mechanism on NCDs (GCM/NCD):** Following the establishment of the GCM last year, aimed at facilitating and enhancing multisectoral engagement and action, work is now progressing with two working groups on financing and the role of the private sector. We look forward to the working group outcomes to be concrete, actionable recommendations capable of affecting change at the country-level. In addition, we encourage the modalities of working group meetings to allow for input from external stakeholders;
- **Registry of commitments:** The secretariat will develop, before the end of 2015, an approach to register and publish contributions made by the private sector, philanthropic entities, and civil society toward the achievement of the global NCD targets. We welcome this endeavor, and encourage the development of a framework that both incentivizes stakeholders and is based on rigorous selection and regular reporting of commitments.

Agenda Item 6.1: Second International Conference on Nutrition:

In November 2014, WHO and FAO convened the Second International Conference on Nutrition (ICN2). The aim of the conference was to assess progress made since ICN1 (1992); and to address global nutrition challenges by identifying policy options ahead of next year's adoption of a new global development agenda. Member States adopted the Rome Declaration on Nutrition and a Framework for Action. NCD Alliance successfully advocated for malnutrition in all its forms, including diet-related NCDs, to be included in ICN2 outcomes.

Key messages

- **Endorsement of the Rome Declaration:** We urge the EB to recommend endorsement of the Rome Declaration and the ICN2 Framework for Action by the 68th World Health Assembly;

- **Governance:** We note that the EB report makes no reference to governance for nutrition post-ICN2. The December FAO Council report contains a clear proposal for the Committee on Food Security (CFS) to become the mechanism for ICN2 follow-up. We request the EB to position itself vis-à-vis the FAO proposal and elaborate on how WHO envisions global nutrition governance post-ICN2.
- **Accountability:** We support the EB papers recommendation for reporting on follow-up to the ICN2 at WHA and Regional Committees on a biennial basis. However, we are concerned about the absence of clear indicators for how to monitor progress on ICN2 outcomes and if/how these indicators will be harmonised with existing WHA monitoring frameworks. We therefore urge Member States to work with the WHO Secretariat to translate ICN2 commitments into targets and indicators and harmonise with existing monitoring frameworks and integrate them into national monitoring frameworks for nutrition.
- **Post-2015:** The Rome Declaration commits Member States to integrate the ICN2 vision and commitments into the post-2015 development agenda. The current nutrition goal lacks reference to obesity, which is crucial to addressing malnutrition in all its forms, and is especially weak on affecting changes in the food system. We are concerned that the language of the Rome Declaration will turn into empty rhetoric unless WHO and FAO Member States quickly and actively demand amending the current post-2015 nutrition and food security targets. We therefore call on the EB to provide guidance to the Secretariat on how to help achieve this commitment.

Agenda Item 5.1: Framework of engagement with non-State actors

A central element of WHO's governance reform is to develop a framework for engagement with non-state actors (NSAs) in health. NSA's include nongovernmental organizations, private sector entities, philanthropic foundations and academic institutions. The framework was discussed at the 67th WHA, put forward to the WHO Regional Committee Meetings in 2014 for further deliberations, and expected to be adopted at the 68th WHA in 2015.

The NCD Alliance welcomes the proposed framework of engagement with non-State actors (NSAs). The new proposal is much improved from previous iterations, and reflects many of the principles NCD Alliance has advocated for: flexibility, transparency, clear guidelines for due diligence, risk assessment, and clarity on conflict-of-interest (COI). Outlined below are some remaining concerns with regards to the following areas:

- **Due diligence:** Paragraph 14 of the proposed framework describes WHO's due diligence process to determine the influence of the private sector on a non-State actor receiving funding from the private sector. According to the framework, the WHO may apply relevant provisions of the private sector policy, even if the decision-making process of the organization remains independent of the private sector. We are concerned that the framework does not, however, provide clear criteria for how such assessments will be made.
- **Secondments:** WHO is notoriously under-resourced, particularly for NCD prevention and control, which remains one of the largest funding gaps in the WHO programme budget 2014-2015. NSAs, particularly NGOs and academia, have a wealth of expertise that could be effectively leveraged by WHO through secondments. We therefore urge the Executive Board to consider adding provisions to the proposed framework allowing for secondments from non-private sector entities.

Agenda Item 7: Promoting health through the life course

NCDs in the Post-2015 Development Agenda

With the end date of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) quickly approaching, discussions on the post-2015 framework to replace the MDGs are at a critical stage at the UN in New York. Recommendations by the Open Working Group (OWG) on Sustainable Development Goals were agreed in July 2014, and include a standalone target to reduce premature deaths from NCDs by one third by 2030 (target 3.4). The OWG recommendations are forming the basis for the intergovernmental post-2015 negotiations.

Although there is not a specific agenda item on post-2015, the EB still provides an important platform to promote the importance of health and NCDs to Member States.

Key Messages:

- **Ambitious, outcome-focused health goal:** A final sustainable development goal (SDG) for health must be ambitious, inclusive, and outcome-focused. The proposed SDG for health is sufficient in this regard.
- **Standalone NCD target:** Agree an ambitious, technically sound target for reducing NCD mortality in the post-2015 framework, based on the agreed “25 by 25” mortality goal in the NCD Global Monitoring Framework. We support the current NCD target 4.3, but recognise there is scope for increased ambition in the percentage increase, and additional technical clarity required on language on mental and neurological disorders.
- **NCD and health-sensitive indicators:** Building on the work already undertaken by WHO to develop core indicators for health in post-2015, and taking into account the agreed WHO Global Monitoring Framework for NCDs, we encourage the promotion of health- and NCD-sensitive indicators across all dimensions of the post-2015 agenda.
- **Means of implementation (Moi):** We encourage Member States to retain the inclusion of the health Moi target on implementing the WHO Framework Convention for Tobacco Control (FCTC). With a view towards the Third International Conference on Financing for Development in July 2015, we urge Member States to promote health financing and financing for NCDs as central to discussions on international cooperation and development assistance. Adequate, predictable, and sustained international and domestic resources for health are indispensable for the successful implementation of the post-2015 development agenda.

WHO Ministerial Conference on Global Action Against Dementia

Following on from the UK hosted G8 Dementia Summit on 11 December 2013, which concluded with the publication of a declaration and communiqué, the G7 countries have been coordinating a series of legacy events to maintain the momentum on dementia. In response to this, WHO has announced the first Ministerial Conference on Global Action Against Dementia to be held at WHO headquarters in Geneva on 16-17 March 2015. This Conference will form the basis of increased awareness of the public health challenge of dementia, its connection to existing NCD and mental health streams of work, and better understanding of governments’ role and responsibility in responding to the challenge.

Although there is not a specific agenda item on this WHO Conference, the EB provides an important platform to promote the following points with Member States.

Key messages

- Given the importance of this WHO Conference, we urge Member States to participate at the ministerial level. National focal points for dementia care and research are encouraged to accompany their Ministers;
- Health ministers will discuss how to build a global road map to support national efforts. WHO as a platform is essential to move initiatives on dementia beyond the G7 nations.