Governments’ recognition and meaningful involvement of civil society – including people living with NCDs, organisations and communities – in the NCD response has been too slow and suboptimal.

As change agents, civil society plays a critical role in accelerating progress on NCDs – as demand creators, campaigners, drivers of innovation, in monitoring and surveilling, and holding governments to account.
THE COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT GAP

Proposed actions for NCD civil society to help close the gap

TEAM UP WITH LEGAL EXPERTS to explore how a rights angle could accelerate NCD action
Explore how binding legal instruments and treaties can advance the NCD agenda, including legal measures against governments for failure to meet commitments to rights and equity.

JOIN FORCES WITH SOCIAL MOVEMENTS representing people left behind, including environment and equity advocates, youth movements, indigenous communities and others, to advocate systemic reform
In addition to the strong links already forged with child rights, women’s health and HIV/AIDS movements, NCD civil society can make a common cause with campaigners for environment, climate, and others who campaign for wellbeing to be put ahead of short-term economic indicators in decision making. Ensure that social and environmental policies are also understood as health and wellbeing policies.

CELEBRATE AND SHARE SUCCESSES
‘Yes We Can’ is a legendary political slogan that inspired a movement to believe that unprecedented change was possible, becoming a self-fulfilling prophecy. Showcasing successful and courageous NCD actions and leaders who implement effective measures can encourage and inspire others to emulate these successes for their own countries and people.

COORDINATE CIVIL SOCIETY ACTION ACROSS ALL SDGs
It is essential that CSOs across different sectors work more closely together, to ensure that there are no trade-offs between the different aspects of sustainable development.

ESTABLISH INCLUSIVE NCD GOVERNANCE MECHANISMS, institutionalising the role of PLWNCDs and civil society in health decision-making at national, regional and international level
Learn from the AIDS response as a pioneer in establishing inclusive governance mechanisms. For example, NGOs are represented on the boards of the Global Fund, and civil society and PLWHIV are specifically included in the governance structure of UNAIDS.

COORDINATE CIVIL SOCIETY ACTION ACROSS ALL SDGs
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COMMUNICATE EFFECTIVELY BY LEVERAGING OUTRAGE, rebuking injustice, translating evidence, sharing personal stories, celebrating successes, and campaigning collaboratively
Mobilise for the annual Global Week for Action on NCDs and other milestone days, weeks and political campaigns to use diverse communication strategies. Use traditional and social media to make noise, demand change, and put issues, insights and solutions in front of policy makers.