

# Event Highlights

## **Sustainable Financing for NCDs: Paving a way forward by learning from progress at country level**

A roundtable co-hosted by:  
Access Accelerated, NCD Alliance, and World Diabetes Foundation

27 May 2024 | 18.00-19.30 CET  
NCD Alliance Offices, Geneva, CH



## Context

The Fourth UN High-Level Meeting on the Prevention and Control of NCDs in 2025 (HLM4) is a critical moment for governments to commit to action that will keep alive the ambition of achieving the Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 2030 target 3.4 to reduce premature mortality from NCDs by 30% and promote mental health and well-being. A significant contribution to the preparation for HLM4 will be the “International Dialogue on Sustainable Financing for NCDs and Mental Health”, to be co-hosted by the World Bank and WHO in Washington DC, 20-21 June 2024 (the Financing Dialogue).

The roundtable Sustainable Financing for NCDs: Paving a way forward by learning from progress at country level, co-hosted by Access Accelerated, NCD Alliance, and World Diabetes Foundation on the sidelines of the 77th Session of the World Health Assembly (WHA77) was positioned to engage key stakeholders and promote cross-sectoral discussion three weeks ahead of the Financing Dialogue.

This invitation-only event brought together governments, multilateral organizations, civil society, the private sector, and other stakeholders to learn about experiences on NCD financing and country level NCD response programmes from a wide range of experts. It highlighted the political and policy aspirations for NCD financing through interventions outlining concrete progress by national governments and discussing ideas for transferring or scaling these successful initiatives. By focusing on the technical execution and rationale behind national decisions to invest in NCDs, the roundtable presented stakeholders with an opportunity to dig deeper into investment cases to understand the interplay of policy recommendations available to scale financing for health and NCDs.

The roundtable built upon the “[Integrating Health Financing to achieve UHC and NCD SDG Targets](#)” roundtable, co-hosted by Access Accelerated, NCD Alliance (NCDA), the World Bank, and World Diabetes Foundation (WDF) at [UNGA78](#) on the side-lines of the High-Level Meeting on Universal Health Coverage in September 2023, NCDA’s “[Financing Solutions](#)” policy priorities briefing paper for the Financing Dialogue, the renewed Access Accelerated-World Bank partnership focused on improving financing for NCDs, and WDF’s ongoing and expanding work to improve financing and care for NCDs in LMICs.

### The organizers held the meeting with the aim to:

- Consider what the Financing Dialogue should deliver to **set up significant financing outcomes in the lead-up to and at the Fourth UN High-Level Meeting on the Prevention and Control of NCDs** in 2025.
- **Highlight key pathways for investment in NCDs** based on successful national examples in low- and middle-income countries (LMICs), with a particular focus on concrete implementation at scale and the underlying financing mechanisms (domestic, international), national insurance schemes and basic health benefits packages for universal health coverage, budget planning, and various financing mechanisms (fiscal policies, blended finance, ODA, DAH) to sustainably, predictably, and adequately resource action on NCDs and mental health across the care pathway.
- **Encouraging technical discussions and exchange** of best practices for implementing effective NCD programmes and various financial and resourcing strategies, such as technical assistance for NCD resource mobilisation, based upon the successful experiences of national policymakers.
- Discuss advocacy and government collaboration strategies to **bolster political will** for investing in NCDs.



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## Key take-aways

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### 1. An investment with people at the centre

Prevention and control of NCDs is an investment rather than a cost and there is a shift happening among governments towards this perception. The lack of financing is the biggest gap in the NCD agenda: among global health and development priorities, many international programs and funding streams that developed in the Millennium Development Goal era continue to dominate. Increasing financing for NCDs needs to be **strategic and comprehensive** in terms of its use and allocation. One of the most immediate needs is increasing the affordability of care – adding NCDs to basic health benefits packages, strengthening social and **financial protection**, and primary health services that are person-centered.

### 2. Country cases

As the roundtable sought to highlight concrete, tangible positive examples of country progress on NCD investment, both participants and featured speakers brought these stories into the meeting. The **Philippines** was highlighted for its implementation of excise taxes on tobacco and alcohol and its emphasis on health promotion. **Scotland**, vis-à-vis its joining the Health4Life Fund as an anchor donor in September 2023 was flagged as an example of how ODA can support sustainable and catalytic domestic resource mobilization. **Kenya** financing its health benefits package and Social Health Insurance Fund is an example of domestic resource mobilization, and finally **Tanzania's** investment in the health workforce as well as its efforts to improve the equipment and drug supply chain to bring care to the PHC level nationwide was also noted as making strides to ensure that services were responding to local needs.

### 3. International collaboration

The roundtable discussed “**one goal, one plan, one budget,**” echoing the Lusaka Agenda, which participants were encouraged to embrace. The World Bank’s announcement at the Spring Meetings in April 2024 of its plan to expand healthcare services to 1.5 billion people by 2030, was highlighted as an additional opportunity to continue advancing the NCD and mental health agenda after the financing dialogue. There was also discussion on the utility of **sharing examples across countries** and the role the Financing Dialogue could play in facilitating this. The use and creation of platforms for this was highlighted, where governments can share with peers their expertise in disease control, integration, and financing.



### 4. Communication is key

Numbers alone are not enough: talks about return on investment need to be accompanied by **stories of improved patient health** - as one participant noted, “storytelling brings hope and change.” More needs to be done to get good examples of country-level work out into the world to reach actors outside the NCD space and increase understanding and demand for greater financing. The media and journalists are instrumental for this – but reaching out to **additional ministries and sectors** is critical to advance the NCD agenda.

### 5. What we need on financing from the HLM in 2025

In past UN Political Declarations on NCDs, financing has been a minor focus, rarely being addressed in more than one or two paragraphs. There was a call for more ambitious, actionable language, including the **development of global financing targets**, as well as an agreement that the NCD and financing community should coalesce under a few key priorities.