WHO SIDS High-level technical meeting on NCDs and mental health  
(17-18 January 2023)  
in preparation for the  
WHO SIDS ministerial conference on NCDs and mental health  
(14-15 June 2023)

The long-term ambition

1. Barbados is co-hosting a Ministerial conference of SIDS on the prevention and control of NCDs and mental health in June 2023. This represents a critical step towards building and pursuing a collective vision and course of action for accelerating progress towards SDG target 3.4 on NCDs and mental health and SDG target 3.8 on universal health coverage (UHC) in preparation for the second High-level meeting of the United Nations General Assembly on Universal Health Coverage in 2023 and the fourth high-level meeting on NCDs in 2025.

2. The ministerial conference in 2023 will be organized in response to paragraph 75(e) of resolution A/RES/69/15 (SIDS Accelerated Modalities of Action [SAMOA] Pathway), which includes a commitment to “enable cooperation among Small Island Developing States (SIDS) on diseases by using existing international and regional forums to convene joint biennial meetings of ministers of health and other relevant sectors to respond in particular to NCDs”.

3. The ministerial conference in 2023 will build on the outcomes of the virtual WHO SIDS summit for health convened in July 2021, as well as the evaluation of the NCD global action plan, the proposed pathways to transformation presented in the WHO World mental health report and the progress reports towards achieving the SDGs. The conference will set out an ambitious agenda to transform the capability of SIDS countries to proactively respond and effectively deliver health outcomes in relation to NCDs and mental health, and so become a vital partner for reaching SDG target 3.4. The outcome document of the conference in 2023 will serve as an input into the preparatory process leading to the fourth High-level meeting of the United Nations General Assembly on NCDs in 2025 and to future global summits on mental health.

4. At the 2021 Summit, WHO’s Director-General established a SIDS Voices for Health Leaders Group comprised of several SIDS Heads of State and Government to champion SIDS and global health concerns that helped steward the preparation and conduct of the 2021 Summit. The same constellation will be assembled to guide the preparation of the ministerial conference in 2023.

The immediate opportunity

5. To build political momentum for the ministerial conference in 2023, and to advance domestic action on NCDs and mental health in SIDS, in particular by learning from achievements and challenges in SIDS since the CARICOM Summit on NCDs (Port-of-Spain, 15 September 2007), Barbados is co-hosting a SIDS High-level technical meeting on NCDs and mental health prior to the ministerial conference. The hybrid meeting (virtual and in-person) will take place...
on 17–18 January 2023 and will enable a report of the meeting to serve as an input into the ministerial conference on 14–15 June 2023, including the outcome document to be adopted at the ministerial conference.

6. The **aims** of the hybrid high-level technical meeting will be to share experiences from senior representatives of SIDS ministries of health on tackling premature mortality and disability associated with NCDs and mental health conditions, and to present the feasibility of adapting and applying these experiences in other countries. The meeting will offer high-level panel discussions and technical plenary sessions, as well as interactive working groups to discuss concrete additional actions to achieve more together by 2030. The meeting will result in a report (to be prepared by WHO).

**The modalities**

7. The **participants** for the high-level technical meeting on NCDs and mental health will include senior technical representatives from ministries of health and other government sectors responsible for national NCD and mental health responses, key regional/subregional bodies and partner countries, UN and other international organizations involved in health and development in SIDS, civil society representatives, eminent persons from within and beyond the SIDS, as well as people living with NCDs and mental health conditions. The SIDS ministers of health will be participants to the ministerial conference including partner governments and dignitaries.

**WHO Member State SIDS:**

- **AFRO:** Cabo Verde, Comoros, Guinea-Bissau, Mauritius, Sao Tome and Principe, Seychelles
- **AMRO:** Antigua and Barbuda, Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Cuba, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Grenada, Guyana, Haiti, Jamaica, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago
- **EMRO:** Bahrain
- **SEARO:** Maldives, Timor Leste
- **WPRO:** Cook Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Nauru, Niue, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu, Vanuatu, Singapore

**Partners:**

- People with lived experience of NCDs
- AOSIS
- CARICOM
- Pacific Islands Forum
- ACP
- CARPHA
- Asian Development Bank
- Inter-American Development Bank
- European Union
- World Bank
- Australia
- France
- Japan
- New Zealand
- United Kingdom
- United States
- Eminent persons
- Associated countries
- Civil society
- NGOs
- Associated UN agencies
- Academia
- Philanthropic organizations
- Private sector
The programme and logistics:

8. The programme will be jointly developed by the Ministry of Health and Wellness of Barbados and WHO under the auspices of the following conference committees:

- High-level steering committee
- Programme committee, including:
  - Technical and scientific programme committee
  - National organizing committee
- High-level policy expert group

9. The **High-level steering committee** is co-chaired by the Minister of Health of Barbados and the Deputy Director-General of WHO. It serves to provide political and strategic direction and advice for the preparation and conduct of the conference and the technical meeting. The NCD Department Director will provide the secretariat function for the steering committee joined by Director NMH, PAHO/WHO, WHO/HQ, Director HEP, WHO/HQ, Director WUN External Relations, Director MSD, WHO/HQ as well as the chair of the programme committee, Ministry of Health and Wellness, Barbados. Meetings are convened two to three times a year on strategic areas of planning and coordination.

10. The **Programme committee** is co-chaired by the Minister of State, Ministry of Health and Wellness of Barbados and WHO/PAHO Country Office director. The terms of reference include overall strategic and operational planning of the conference and technical meeting. The committee receives advice from and provides updates to the High-level steering committee on planning progress. Meetings are to be convened monthly, and more frequently as required. The committee’s remit will include the review and approval of inputs provided by two subcommittees: the technical and scientific programme committee and the national organizing committee.

11. An invitation will be extended by the Government of Barbados and WHO/PAHO to SIDS Member States to nominate one high-level technical representative to attend the SIDS High-Level technical meeting on NCDs and mental health in January 2023, and to all ministers of health for the SIDS ministerial conference on NCDs and mental health in June 2023.