



**UN INTERAGENCY
TASK FORCE ON NCDs**



Working with Member States to deliver the NCD-related SDG targets during and beyond COVID -19

UNGA “Friends of the Task Force” meeting

24 September 2020

1. Where we are...

Annual ECOSOC Resolutions



2. The Task Force's 2020 report to ECOSOC

...highlights progress made over the last year, including:

- i. Joint missions
- ii. Joint programmes and initiatives
- iii. Action to support the SDG3+ GAP
- iv. Multi-partner Trust Fund

... and the linkages between NCDs and COVID-19 pandemic

A world map showing the distribution of the genus Euphorbia. The distribution is indicated by green shading across various continents, including North America, South America, Europe, Africa, Asia, and Australia.

Joint UN-Government high-level mission,¹ 24-28 February 2020

-  Hundreds of preventable deaths from NCDs¹ and TB every day in Nigeria.
-  Cost of inaction grows by the day and impedes Nigeria's social and economic development.
-  Action is critical for meeting universal health coverage (UHC), and commitments made at the highest level at UN high-level meetings on TB and NCDs – to end TB and dramatically reduce NCDs.

1. Political leadership is crucial and needs to be strengthened at the sub-national level. The mission was received by the Vice President, TB advocate - the First Lady, a number of Cabinet Ministers and the Senate President. The mission also met with state leadership of Kano and Lagos. Their examples should be used to bring in more champions.

2. Financing is key to an effective public health and health system response – for NCDs and TB, but also for other health issues, including emerging infectious disease threats, such as COVID-19. However, health financing is inadequate and health expenditure in 2017 as a percentage of GDP is 3.75%, well below the Abuja Declaration commitment.³

4. A coordinated multi-sectoral response is crucial. Significant co-benefits from aligning TB and NCD responses were identified, and recommendations included strengthening multi-sectoral coordination and accountability through mechanisms such as the CCM and NCD coordination mechanisms and the establishment of a Presidential Initiative to end TB.



¹⁵ UN and international aid agencies joined forces with the Government of Nigeria.

³ The 2001 Abuja Declaration commits African Union countries to allocate at least 15% of their annual budget to improve the health sector.

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ii) Global Joint Programmes and thematic groups: country action

Examples of Joint Programmes, initiatives and action across Task Force members to support Member States highlighted in the 2020 Task Force report to ECOSOC

- NCD2030: WHO-UNDP joint programme to catalyse multisectoral action on NCDs and mental health
- Tobacco: Alternative livelihoods (WHO, FCTC Secretariat, FAO, UNDP, ILO, UNEP) and WHO
- Tobacco FCTC2030: WHO FCTC Secretariat
- Access Initiative for Quitting Tobacco (AIQT)
- SAFER - alcohol-related harms: WHO-UNDP
- Eliminating cervical cancer: WHO, IAEA, IARC, UNAIDS, UNFPA, UNICEF and UNWomen
- Supporting countries in providing evidence-based digital health programmes: WHO and ITU
- Nutrition, including ending childhood obesity
- NCDs and humanitarian emergencies



26 NCD investment cases conducted

Mental health ICs now being done

Responding to recommendations in the first instance through scaling up support on health taxes

Sample actions in countries following investment cases

- i. **Armenia** cited investment case findings in advancing a new **tobacco control bill** in 2019.
- ii. **Barbados** implemented an **excise tax** on sugar-sweetened beverages.
- iii. **Belarus** implemented smoke-free legislation and, together with Ethiopia and the Philippines, increased **excise taxes** on tobacco.
- iv. **Cabo Verde**'s cabinet approved a new **tobacco control bill**, which will go to parliament in 2020.
- v. **Cambodia**'s MOF accepted the recommendation to increase **tobacco taxes** to 75% of retail price.
- vi. **Cambodia, Kyrgyzstan, and Uzbekistan** included NCD action in national strategic plans and documents and strengthened multisectoral cooperation and coordination on NCDs.
- vii. **Georgia** passed a strong, landmark **tobacco control law** after launch of the FCTC investment case.
- viii. **Jordan**'s Prime Minister directed cabinet to implement plain packaging and sign the protocol on illicit trade in tobacco products.
- ix. **Mongolia** initiated a 2-year campaign to reduce sodium in local food production.
- x. The **Philippines** **raised taxes** on alcohol and e-cigarettes, including to finance UHC.
- xi. **Samoa**'s Prime Minister directed the Minister of Finance to immediately **raise tobacco taxes**.
- xii. **Sri Lanka** accepted the investment case recommendation to implement plain packaging.
- xiii. **Turkey** released a new **tobacco control programme** and plan of action.
- xiv. **Uzbekistan** launched an awareness raising campaign to promote physical activity.
- xv. National tobacco control coordination mechanisms and/or national strategies strengthened in **Chad, El Salvador, Jordan, Madagascar, Nepal, Sierra Leone** and **Zambia**.
- xvi. Parliamentarians engaged in **tobacco control** in **Sierra Leone** and **Zambia**.
- xvii. **Ethiopia** passed a landmark **tobacco tax bill**, nearly doubling the excise tax rate and instituting a 30% tax on cigarette production.

Agency briefs

United Nations Agency Briefs

**RESPONDING TO THE CHALLENGE OF
NON-COMMUNICABLE DISEASES**



**UN INTERAGENCY
TASK FORCE ON NCDs**

**Responding to the Challenge of
Non-communicable Diseases**

International Atomic Energy Agency

**I. Nuclear techniques assist in
the prevention, early detection,
diagnosis and treatment of NCDs¹**

Nuclear techniques play an integral role in the management of non-communicable diseases (NCDs) such as cancer, cardiovascular diseases, and neurological conditions, and can be used to design and evaluate interventions to address malnutrition in all its forms.

Cancer. Cancer causes 9 million deaths each year.² Medical imaging, including X-rays, and nuclear medicine techniques are critical in cancer care, in terms of: early and accurate diagnosis, including assessment of the location and spread of the disease (staging); follow-up of the patient to detect relapses; prognostic evaluation; and appropriate therapeutic decisions and follow-up of the response to treatment.³ Radiotherapy is a key element of cancer treatment for every second cancer patient worldwide. Modern radiotherapy allows automated delivery of a precise dose to the tumour and avoids the surrounding critical structures, giving the patient a chance to recover with minimal side-effects.

United Nations high-level meetings have highlighted the need for UN agencies, including IAEA, to scale up their work on NCDs as part of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

NCDs contribute to ill health, poverty and inequities and slow the development of countries. Every year 15 million people die before age 70 from NCDs, with 86% of these premature deaths occurring in low- and middle-income countries.

Major progress on NCDs is possible. Premature deaths from NCDs are largely caused by modifiable behavioural risk factors, such as unhealthy diet, tobacco use, physical inactivity and harmful use of alcohol. Environmental risks (e.g. air pollution) and constrained access to basic services also contribute significantly to NCDs.

Addressing NCDs requires coordinated action from all UN agencies within a broader whole-of-society response.



¹ This UNAIFY brief draws from the IAEA Brief for policymakers, "Prevention, Early Diagnosis and Treatment of Non-communicable Diseases: The Role of Nuclear Techniques". Available at: <https://www.iaea.org/sites/default/files/16102/governance-early-diagnosis-and-treatment-of-non-communicable-diseases.pdf>
² WHO, Key facts, NCDs. <https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/noncommunicable-diseases>
³ For more information, see: <https://www.iaea.org/topics/cancer-diagnosis>

At last years' Friends of the Task Force meeting agency briefs were launched for:

- FAO
- FCTC Secretariat
- IAEA
- IOM
- UNAIDS
- UNDP
- UNFPA
- World Bank
- WFP

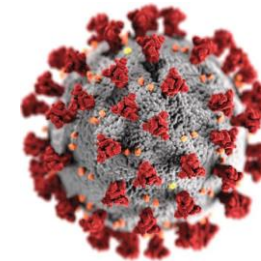
This year additional briefs have been developed by:

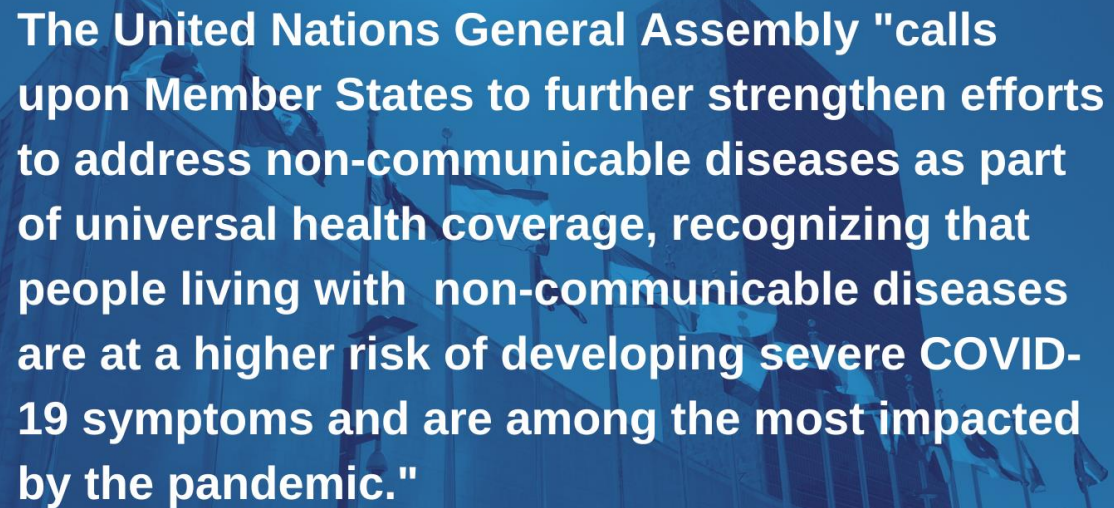
- UNHCR
- ILO
- OECD

And more are on the way...

3. Task Force response to support Member States during and beyond COVID-19

- i. Guidance: Responding to NCDs during and beyond COVID-19
- ii. Programming
- iii. Aligning the MPTF with COVID-19
- iv. Exchange of best practice across the UN system through weekly conference calls

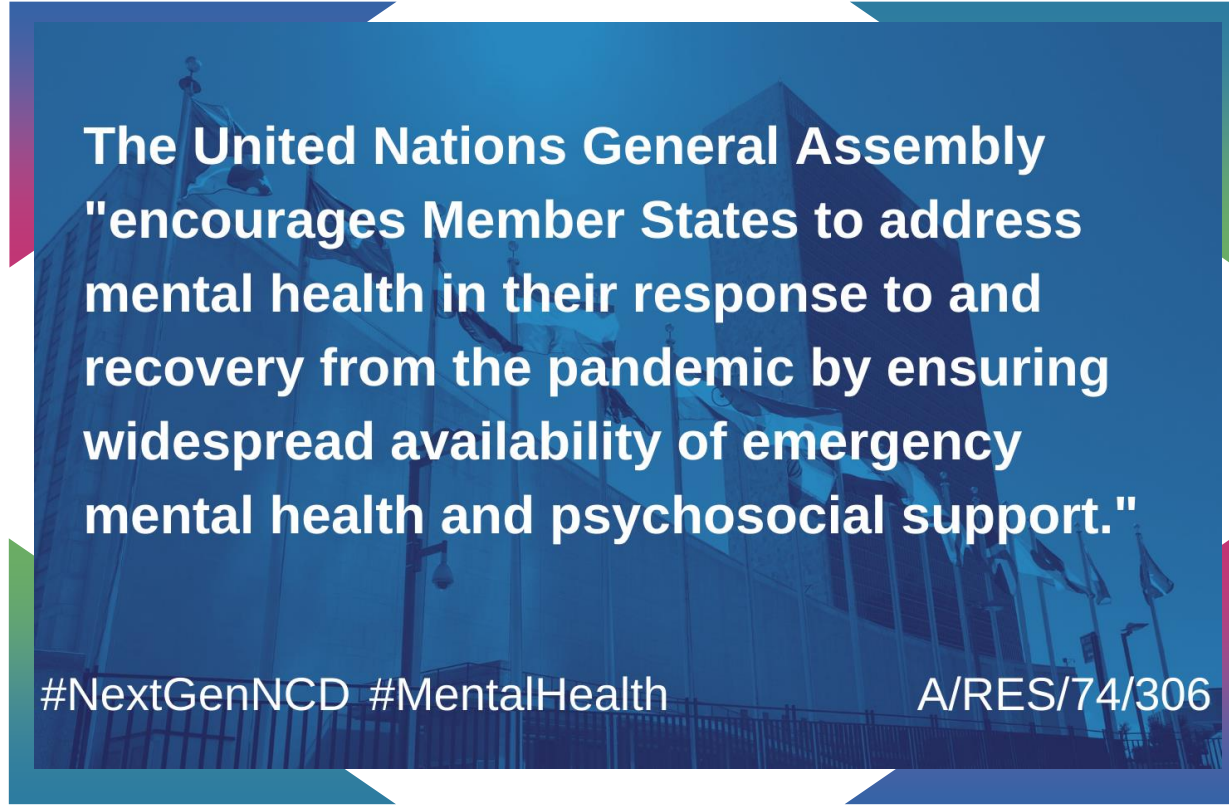




The United Nations General Assembly "calls upon Member States to further strengthen efforts to address non-communicable diseases as part of universal health coverage, recognizing that people living with non-communicable diseases are at a higher risk of developing severe COVID-19 symptoms and are among the most impacted by the pandemic."

#NextGenNCD

A/RES/74/306

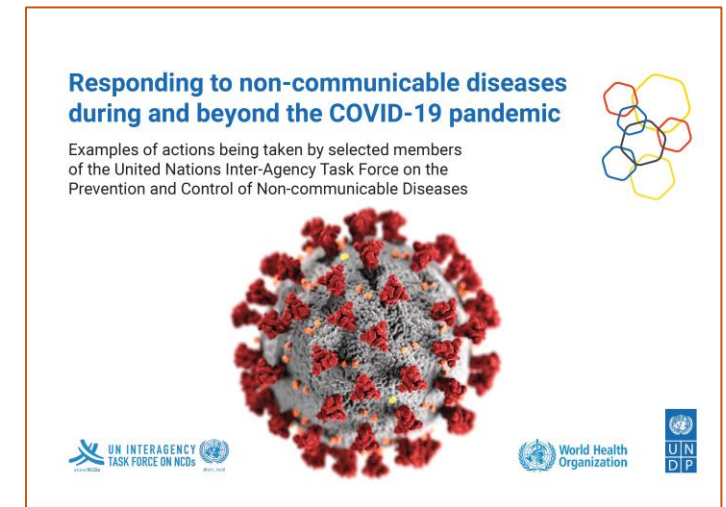
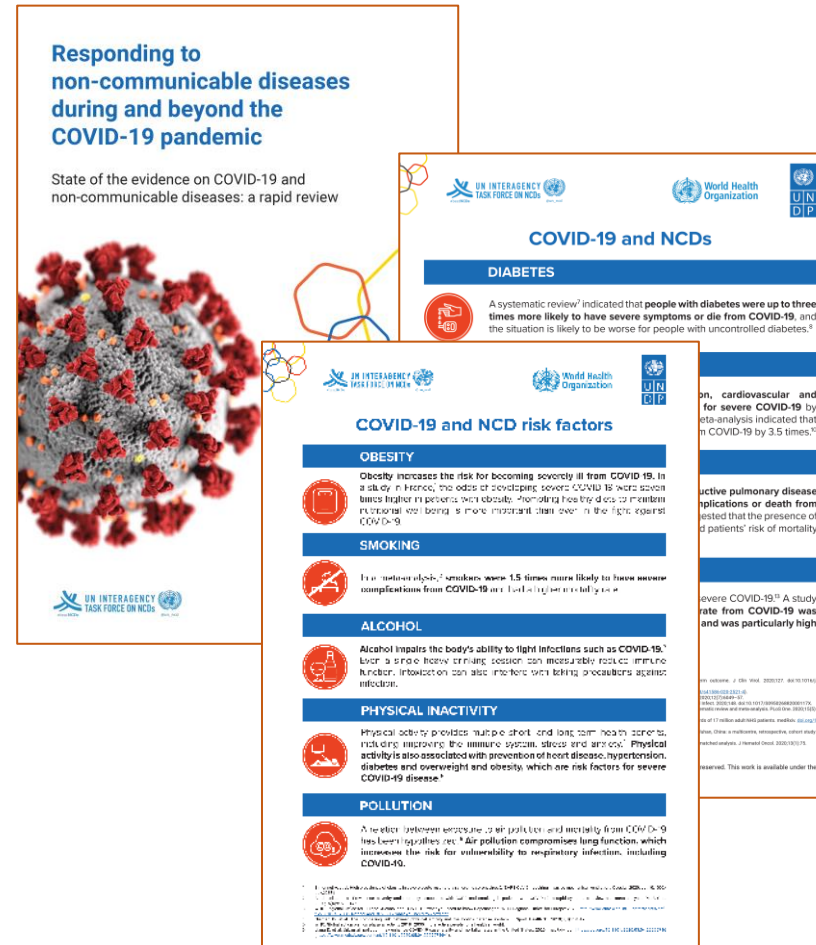
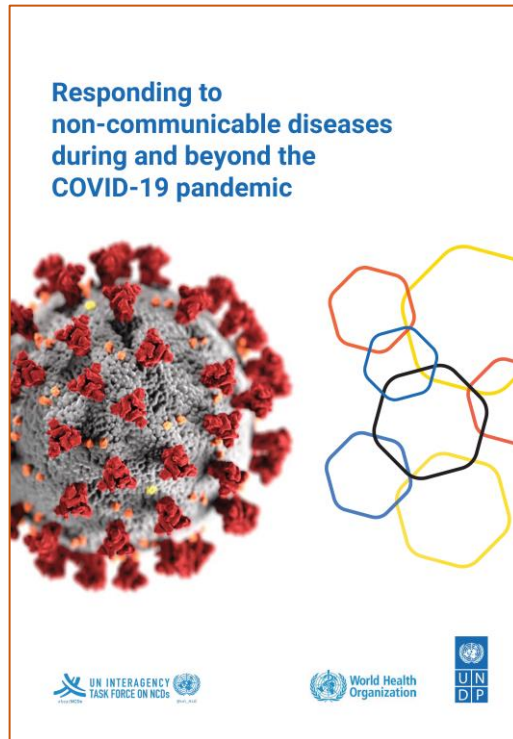


The United Nations General Assembly "encourages Member States to address mental health in their response to and recovery from the pandemic by ensuring widespread availability of emergency mental health and psychosocial support."

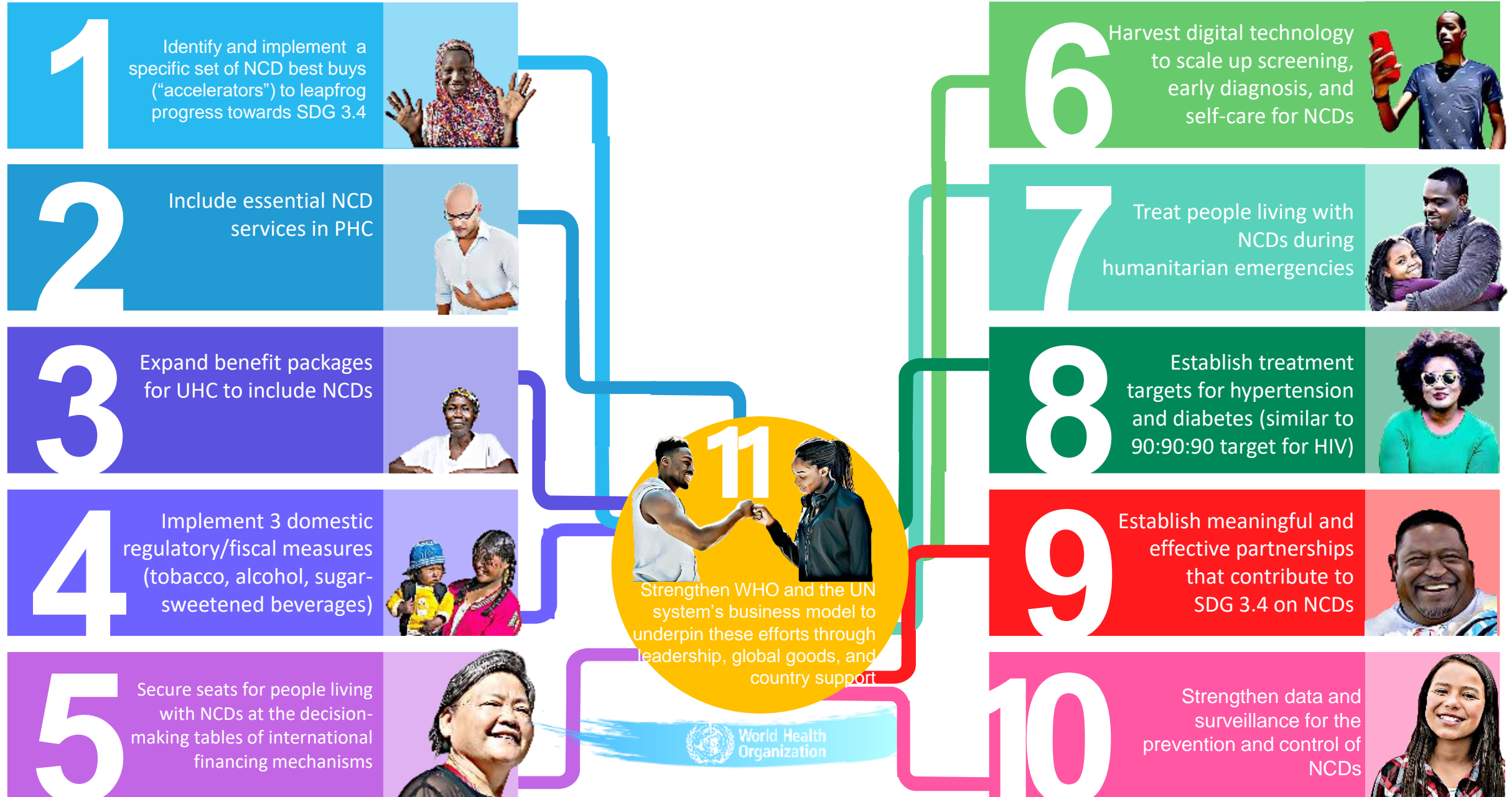
#NextGenNCD #MentalHealth

A/RES/74/306

i) Responding to NCDs during and beyond COVID-19



Building back the NCD agenda differently, but better: The voice of national NCD Directors and Programme Managers

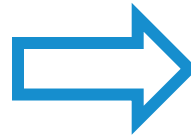


Responding to NCDs during and beyond COVID-19

Aligning with the UN comprehensive response...

Agencies, funds and programmes should ensure that their support for NCDs is aligned with the UN comprehensive response to COVID-19:

1. WHO-led Strategic preparedness and response plan
2. OCHA-led global humanitarian response plan
3. UNDP-led UN framework for the immediate socio-economic response



Task Force members are responding, for example:

Through WHO Working Group on COVID-19 and NCD.

By raising national awareness on RoI for NCD prevention and treatment to secure domestic budgetary allocations and FFD discussions.

Helping countries to include NCDs into the socio-economic response plans.

And through the accelerators of the SDG 3 Global action plan for healthy lives and well-being.

ii) Programming

Aligning existing programmes to COVID-19 response

The new Access Initiative to Quit Tobacco (AIQT)



iii) Aligning the Multi-Partner Trust Fund to Catalyze Country Action for NCDs and Mental Health with COVID-19

Called for by ECOSOC, WHA and the High-level Commission

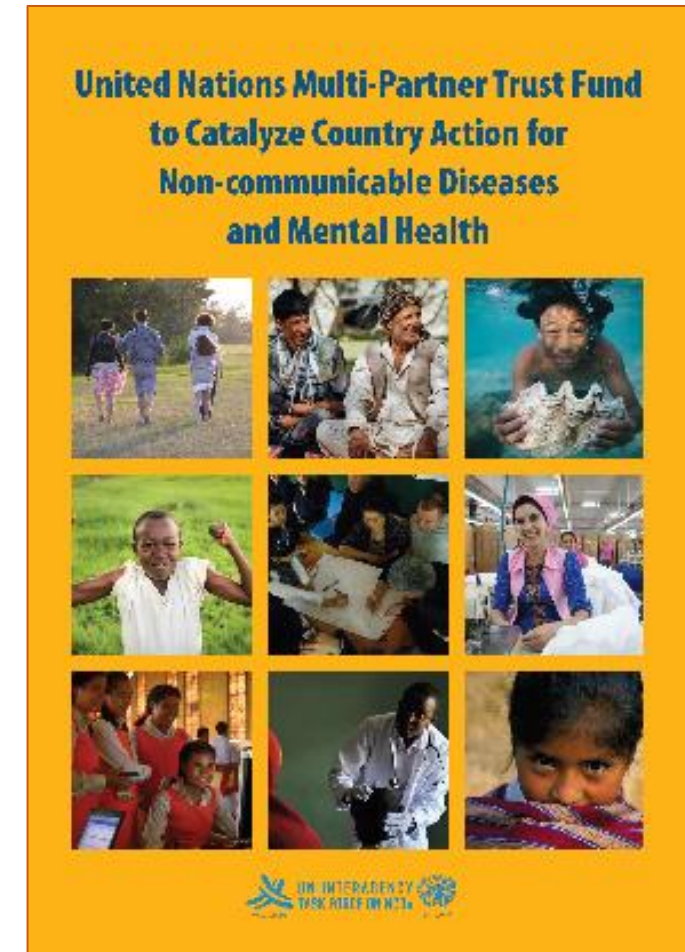
The 2020 Task Force report to ECOSOC highlights WHO's commitment to establish the Fund

The Fund aims to catalyze action in line with country demand

A USD 250 million catalytic fund is modelled by 2025 to:

- save 250,000 lives
- Avert USD 10 billion in economic losses
- Leverage USD 1.5-2 billion in health investment

In the first instance the Fund will look to support countries to address NCDs and mental health as part of their COVID-19 response and recovery



THANK YOU



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