Sri Lanka
NCD Joint programming mission, 5-9 October 2015

Key mission findings

1. Strong political commitment exists in support of NCDs actions.

2. NCDs are included in the National Health Development Plan (2012-2017) and the Health Master Plan (2007-2016).

3. A draft Multi-Sectoral NCD Action Plan has been prepared, but actions have not yet been prioritized and costed.

4. Different ministries are implementing NCD prevention actions (e.g. The Ministry of Women and Child Affairs is working to promote healthy diets among teachers, parents and children in the primary education sector.)

5. There have been a number of successes in tobacco control since Sri Lanka ratified the WHO FCTC in September 2003.

6. A national policy on controlling the harmful use of alcohol is being finalized.

7. Progress has been made in scaling up NCDs in primary care across the country.

8. NCDs are included in the 2013-2017 UNDAF.

9. A 5-year US $200 million World Bank loan focuses on enabling the health system to better respond to the challenges of NCDs.

“My Government as well as the cabinet of ministers are fully committed to take this agenda forward. WHO in addition to Ministry of Health should work with other ministries and other UN agencies to support the Government.”

Maithripala Sirisena, President of Sri Lanka

“The United Nations is committed to support the Government of Sri Lanka to scale up action to tackle NCDs. The levels of NCDs are now a grave concern and we recognise that the government is taking this issue seriously at the very highest level.”

Subinay Nandy, UN Resident Coordinator and UNDP Resident Representative

Key adult NCD mortality and risk factors*: NCDs are the principle cause of death in Sri Lanka

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Risk Factor</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>18% probability of premature mortality from NCDs</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16% smoke tobacco</td>
<td>16%</td>
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<tr>
<td>24% are insufficiently physically active</td>
<td>24%</td>
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<tr>
<td>10% have diabetes</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drink 3.7 litres of pure alcohol per person per year</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>73% eat insufficient amounts of fruit and vegetables</td>
<td>73%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7% are obese</td>
<td>7%</td>
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</tbody>
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Key recommendations

1. A high-level coordination mechanism between the government, the UN System and development partners needs to be put into place to ensure that the Multi-Sectoral Action Plan is delivered.

2. A Sri Lankan NCD Alliance should be established to promote NCD activities among non-state actors.

3. Urgent analysis needs to be carried out on the 2014 STEP survey.

4. A greater focus on costing, implementing and monitoring progress is needed by the government, UN System and development partners, particularly on a small number of internationally accepted cost-effective and feasible interventions (best-buys).

5. A 2-year costed plan needs to be developed and implemented to raise public awareness on NCDs.

6. A capacity building programme on the Multi-Sectoral NCDs Action Plan needs to be developed.

7. The investment case for NCDs needs to be made.

Next steps

1. Finalization of the prioritized Multi-Sectoral Action Plan following the mission of the Joint UN Task Force.

2. A follow-up Joint UN Task Force mission is needed to cost the action plan.

3. Final analysis of STEPS survey will need to be carried out.

Adding value: actions taken following the mission

1. Public demonstration of support from the President of Sri Lanka and the Ministry of Health for the NCD agenda.

2. Establishment of the ‘NCD Alliance of Sri Lanka’.

3. Multi-Sectoral Action Plan priorities were prepared and submitted to the government in December 2015.

4. Enhanced coordination across sectors and accompanying responsibility and accountability mechanisms.

5. Establishment of a National NCD Steering Committee and National Advisory Body for NCDs.

6. Actions by the WHO Representative and UN Resident Coordinator have facilitated the commitment of the UN Country Team to work in a collaborative manner.

7. The Ministry of Sports has coordinated a new physical activity programme.

8. The Joint UN Task Force successfully encouraged Sri Lanka to be smoke free by 2020.

“I thank the Joint UN Task Force for accepting our invitation and visiting Sri Lanka to promote multi-sectoral processes. I assure you of my Ministry’s continued commitment in supporting actions needed to implement its recommendations.”

Dr. Rajitha Senarathne, Minister of Health, Nutrition and Indigenous Medicine

“The Joint UN Task Force mission has made a tremendous impact in Sri Lanka. It has galvanised action across the UN System, government and society.”

Dr. Jacob Kumaresan, WHO Representative, Sri Lanka

Additional information on the status of NCDs in Sri Lanka can be found on the WHO NCD DataFinder app.