



First Meeting of UN Funds, Programmes and Agencies on the Implementation of the Political Declaration of the High-level Meeting of the United Nations General Assembly on the Prevention and Control of NCDs (New York, 8 December 2011)



INFORMAL SUMMARY OF THE MEETING

SCOPE AND PURPOSE OF THE MEETING

1. WHO convened the 'First Meeting of UN Funds, Programmes and Agencies on the Implementation of the Political Declaration of the High-level Meeting of the General Assembly on the Prevention and Control of NCDs' in New York on 8 December 2011. The meeting was held at the WHO Office at the United Nations in New York, and was attended by the Office of the President of the General Assembly, the Office of the Secretary-General, FAO, IAEA, ITU, UNAIDS, UNDESA, UNDP, UNFPA, UN-HABITAT, UNICEF, UNRWA, WFP, the UN Regional Commissions and WHO. The President of the 66th Session of the General Assembly, His Excellency Nassir Abdulaziz Al-Nasser, shared a message on the occasion of the meeting, which was delivered by Ambassador Anwarul Chowdhury, Senior Special Advisor to the President. The message from the President of the General Assembly is attached as Annex I. A list of participants is attached as Annex II.

2. The objectives of the meeting were as follows:

- To promote a common understanding among the UN System of the burden of NCDs in developing countries and its socio-economic impact
- To exchange information on efforts already underway and those planned across the UN System to strengthen national capacities to address NCDs
- To identify opportunities for UN funds, programmes and agencies to strengthen national capacities for the prevention and control of NCDs
- To agree on a list of recommended actions that could be included in a coordinated common UN System-wide agenda on NCDs, including actions related to integrating NCDs into UNDAF processes and roll outs, developing joint programmes and meeting the mandate given by the Political declaration of the UN General Assembly (resolution 66/2).

3. The meeting took place in response to the 'Political Declaration of the General Assembly of the High-level Meeting on the Prevention and Control of Non-communicable Diseases'¹. In this regard, the Political Declaration urges relevant UN funds, programmes and agencies to provide technical assistance and capacity-building to developing countries, especially the least developed countries, in the areas of NCD prevention and control (paragraph 62 of the Political Declaration).

4. The Political Declaration calls on WHO to lead and exercise a coordinating role in relation to the work of other United Nations funds, programmes and agencies,

¹ Available at www.un.org/en/ga/66/resolutions and www.who.int/ncd



development banks, and other regional and international organizations in addressing NCDs in a coordinated manner (paragraphs 13 and 51). WHO is also requested, in collaboration with UN agencies, to develop a comprehensive global monitoring framework to monitor trends and to assess progress made in the implementation of national strategies and plans on NCDs (paragraph 61) and to prepare recommendations for a set of global targets for the prevention and control of NCDs (paragraph 62) for consideration by Member States (through the Governing Bodies of WHO) before the end of 2012, building on the work already under way. WHO is also requested to collaborate closely with the Secretary-General, and in consultations with UN agencies, in articulating options for strengthening and facilitating multisectoral action for the prevention and control of NCDs through effective partnership (paragraph 64), for consideration by Member States (through the United Nations General Assembly) before the end of 2012.

5. The meeting was chaired by Dr Ala Alwan, Assistant Director-General, World Health Organization.

6. This informal summary of the meeting provides an overview of the proposals put forward by the participants aimed at building an unified vision and a roadmap for concerted and coordinated UN System-wide action on NCDs. This summary does not represent an official position of the Office of the President of the General Assembly, the Office of the Secretary-General, FAO, IAEA, ITU, UNAIDS, UNDESA, UNDP, UNICEF, UNFPA, UN-HABITAT, UNRWA, WFP, the UN Regional Commissions and/or WHO. It is a tool to explore the views of interested parties on the subject matter.

URGENT NEED TO MOBILIZE A RESPONSE ACROSS THE UN SYSTEM TO ADDRESS NCDs

7. UN funds, programmes and agencies recognize that the adoption of the Political Declaration on NCDs by the General Assembly in September 2011 is as an opportunity to start responding to the requests for technical assistance from developing countries to address NCDs, especially in the least developed countries. However, there was a need for better understanding across the UN System of NCDs as a development issue and for a coordinated approach in identifying opportunities to support developing countries in addressing NCDs. Roles and responsibilities across the UN System to scale up work on NCDs also need to be defined.

8. Participants agreed that an UN-wide vision and roadmap for NCDs is needed to realize the commitments included in the Political Declaration and move from advocacy to action.

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9. A real sense of urgency was expressed by the participants to mobilize a system-wide response swiftly in order for the UN to maintain its leadership on NCDs and to ensure that the implementation of the Political Declaration is:
- guided by core UN norms and standards, values and commitments
 - informed and shaped by the critical challenges of our time, including equity, poverty, inclusive economic growth, and gender equality
 - builds on the momentum and lessons learned from the health-related MDGs, and
 - builds on the existing global strategies endorsed by the WHO World Health Assembly.
10. Building on the Political Declaration, and taking into account the above-mentioned gaps and sense of urgency, participants identified the following priorities for UN funds, programmes and agencies to:
- Integrating NCDs into UNDAF processes and roll outs
 - Develop joint programmes
 - Include NCDs in discussion on the post-2015 development agenda
 - Contribute to policy options for strengthening multisectoral action for the prevention and control of NCDs through effective partnership
 - Contribute to the development of an updated/follow-up 'Action Plan of the Global Strategy for the Prevention and Control of NCDs' (2013-2018), based on the Political Declaration on NCDs
 - Contribute to the development of a comprehensive global monitoring framework and targets for NCDs, building on the work under way at WHO

MAIN RECOMMENDATIONS

Integrate NCDs into UN Development Assistance Frameworks (UNDAF) processes

11. There was agreement that to meet these expectations, UN Country Teams need to strengthen their current capacity mix and the following recommendations were proposed by the participants:
- As a first step, the UN System should focus at this juncture on the 20+ countries where UNDAF roll outs scheduled to take place in 2012-2013
 - WHO to invite the WHO Country Representative to work closely with national health and development planners to ensure that NCDs are included in the national dialogues concerning health-planning processes and the national development agenda
 - WHO Director-General to write formally to the Chair of the undg to formalize the joint initiative and to establish it as a priority within undg and undp
 - WHO to invite respective UN Country Teams for training on the developmental aspects of NCDs. The training curriculum would be developed by WHO in close collaboration with UN agencies



- UNDP and WHO to explore the possibilities of positioning dedicated Junior Professional Officers/Associate Experts/National Programme Officers at office of the UNDP Resident Representatives in the 20+ countries to ensure that efforts to address NCDs are undertaken in a coordinated manner
- WHO Network of Experienced NCD Professionals made available to UN Country Teams.

Create synergies across ongoing programmes

12. Participants described the following efforts which are ongoing at their agencies, funds, and programmes that support developing countries in building sustainable institutional capacity to address NCDs:

UN Agency	Ongoing efforts
UNDP	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Discussion paper and guidance note on the social determinants of maternal health• Platform on social determinants of health (being launched)• Thought piece on social determinants of NCDs and the role of development actors (under development)
UNDESA	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Contemplating to develop a simulation model to measure the impact of cause-specific mortality (including NCDs) on overall mortality levels -- this could eventually be used as a policy tool
UNFPA	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Guidance note addressed to UNFPA Representatives on integrating NCDs into reproductive health programmes is under development• Upcoming UNFPA Executive Committee will discuss how to realize the commitments included in the Political Declaration• Country projects underway which include NCD components (e.g. youth, gender, cancer)
UN-HABITAT	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• NCDs included on ongoing dialogue on unplanned urbanization
UNICEF	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• To be discussed further
UNRWA	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ongoing programmes aimed at early detection and management of high blood pressure and diabetes for Palestine refugees• Youth is focus at upcoming donor conference in Brussels
WFP	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Mother and child health and nutrition (MCHN) programmes• REACH inter-agency initiative• Safety nets in support of national governments' priorities (school-feeding, food for assets, food for training which include health and nutrition education programmes)• SAFE high-efficiency cooking stoves (Safe Access to Firewood and Alternative Energy in Humanitarian Settings initiative)• Local food purchase programs (P4P) as a way to support local



	agriculture and help achieve food and nutrition security
World Bank	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ongoing programmes to support developing countries in scaling up action to prevent and control NCDs
UNAIDS	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• High-level advocacy• Support to health systems strengthening• Country programmes on treatment and chronic care• Programmes to address social issues such as stigma and equitable access to health services• Initiatives to promote HIV/NCDs synergies, such as the Pink Ribbon-Red Ribbon Coalition, a public-private partnership for leveraging HIV platforms for women's cancers
UN Regional Commissions	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ongoing programmes to strengthen capacities of national statistics offices (include components on NCDs)• Ongoing advocacy to call on governments to increase investments in health• Studies undertaken by some Regional Commissions to calculate the impact of ill-health on poverty and cost of inaction on health-related issues, including NCDs
IAEA	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ongoing Programme Action for Cancer Therapy (PACT) aimed at building partnerships in developing countries to fight the cancer epidemic• Ongoing joint programme with WHO• Model demonstration projects in countries
ILO	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• To be discussed further
ITU	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• mHealth Summit• mEnabling Summit
FAO	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Documents on the outcomes of the Political Declaration being prepared for the upcoming FAO Committee on Food Security
WTO	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Joint WHO/WIPO/WTO study on promoting access and medical innovation: intersections between public health, intellectual property and trade that will include NCDs, as well as other relevant issues such as tariffs on insulin

Develop joint programmes at the global level

13. The Political Declaration on NCDs reaffirms the leadership and coordination role of WHO in promoting global action against NCDs in relation to the work of other UN agencies, development banks, and other international organizations in addressing NCDs in a coordinated manner (paragraph 13). It calls on UN agencies to work together in a coordinated manner to support national efforts to prevent and control NCDs and mitigate their impacts (51), and urges UN agencies to provide technical assistance and



capacity-building to developing countries, especially the least developed countries, in the areas of NCD prevention and control (52).

14. To scale up technical assistance and capacity-building to developing countries, participants suggested to explore the possibilities of developing joint programmes (i.e. two or more UN agencies working for the same results) as a next step in areas where there are clear gains in effectiveness and efficiency from combining efforts in a common work plan and budget. The participants recommended to appraise the following opportunities during the next months and explore the potential of development joint projects (using the UN Revised Standard Joint Programme Document) accordingly:

UN Agency	Proposed areas of collaboration
UNDP	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Including NCDs in poverty reduction strategies• Including NCDs in UNDAF programming and roll-outs• Including NCDs in discussions on the post-2015 UN development agenda• Linking NCDs to ongoing global agendas/discussions on (i) inclusive growth; (ii) governance; (iii) trade; (iv) social protection; (v) social inclusion; (vi) multi-sectoral coordination• Policy advisory services on TRIPS flexibilities• Including NCDs in discussions at Rio+20
UNDESA	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Including NCDs in discussions in the post-2015 UN development agenda• Participation of UNDESA's Population Division and Statistics Division in the development of the global monitoring framework and targets
UNFPA	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Strengthen national capacities to include NCDs in reproductive health programmes and prevention of breast and cervical cancers• Joint UNFPA/WHO Guidance Note to UNFPA/WHO Representatives in least developed countries on integrating NCDs into (i) youth, (ii) gender and (iii) cervical cancer programmes• ICPD+20
UN-HABITAT	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Rapid unplanned urbanization as an underlying driver to the rapidly increasing NCD epidemic
UNICEF	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Strengthen national capacities to reduce risk factors among children and adolescents• Strengthen national capacities to address malnutrition
UNRWA	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Strengthen health services for Palestine refugees• Partnerships with pharmaceutical companies• eHealth systems
WFP	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Preventive role of nutrition for NCDs, including in crises situations
World Bank	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Include NCDs in discussions on health, nutrition and population



	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Increase the support given to NCDs in World Bank's project portfolio, including health systems strengthening
UNAIDS	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Strengthen chronic care for NCDs and HIV as part of health systems strengthening• Learning from experiences in access to medicines• Exchange of experience in mobilizing communities• Integration of health system services to address HIV and NCDs, with a particular focus on primary care
UN Regional Commissions	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Include NCDs in statistical reports• Integrating NCDs within the broader framework of policies and discussions on social protection• Conduct regional studies on the socio-economic determinants and impact of NCDs• Build stronger inter-linkages with frameworks pertaining to population dynamics, older persons, persons with disability and youth, including through the ICPD+20 process, the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing, as well as the UN programme on Youth
IAEA	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Scale up technical assistance to strengthen national cancer control strategies in developing countries• Increase model demonstration projects in selected countries
ILO	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Including NCDs in labour standards and wellness in the workplace
ITU	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Incorporate NCDs in the Broadband Commission's working group on health• Include NCDs in 'ICT and girls and women' initiative (to be launched in 2012)• WHO/ITU toolkit for Ministers of Health and Telecommunications for dissemination at a workshop in April 2012• Promote the use of ICTs to improve programme implementation in the field of NCDs
FAO	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Align agricultural, trade and health policies• Strengthen national capacities to address obesity and malnutrition• Standing Committee on Nutrition as a channel to mobilize stakeholders• Strengthen the role of Codex Alimentarius
WTO	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Trade policies and NCDs (building on the outcomes of the WHO/WIPO/WTO study mentioned above)



Include NCDs in the post-2015 UN development agenda

15. The Secretary-General has initiated steps within the UN system to launch the substantive process that will lead to the definition of a UN development agenda post-2015. Participants recommended liaising directly with the UN Task Team on the post-2015 agenda, which will be established in January 2012 and will be composed partly by staff members from UNDP and UNDESA. The Secretary-General's Office will also wish to explore the possibilities of including NCDs in the UN Global Pulse initiative (www.unglobalpulse.org). What is needed at this stage are a number of advocacy products that clearly reaffirm NCDs as a development issue.

Articulate policy options on strengthening multisectoral action through partnership

16. The Political Declaration on NCDs request the Secretary-General, in close collaboration with the Director-General of WHO, and in consultations with Member States, United Nations funds and programmes and other relevant international organizations, to submit by the end of 2012 to the General Assembly, at its sixty-seventh session, for consideration by Member States, options for strengthening and facilitating multisectoral action for the prevention and control of NCDs through effective partnership (paragraph 64). In planning to implement this operative paragraph, it is important to review and analyse the experience of UN agencies in relation to:

- Effective approaches for strengthening multisectoral action for NCDs
- Lessons learned from existing multisectoral partnerships at all levels.

17. Participants reaffirmed to engage actively in upcoming consultations which WHO will organize during the first half of 2012.

Develop an updated 2013-2018 Action Plan to realize the commitments of the Political Declaration (with sets of actions for Member States, UN Agencies, international partners, and WHO)

18. In May 2011, the World Health Assembly requested the Secretariat to develop, together with Member States and UN funds, programmes and agencies, an implementation and follow-up plan for the outcomes of the HLM, including its financial implications, for submission to the Executive Board in January 2012.

19. Participants reaffirmed to engage actively in upcoming consultations which WHO will organize during the first half of 2012.

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Finalize a comprehensive global monitoring framework and targets for NCDs

20. In regard to possible contributions from UN agencies to the development of a comprehensive global monitoring framework and targets for NCDs, building on the work under way at WHO, participants reaffirmed to engage actively in upcoming consultations which WHO will organize during the first half of 2012.

Explore the need to establish an UN Ad-Hoc Coordination Mechanism on NCDs

21. Participants felt that, at this juncture, an informal network should be established to coordinate activities among UN agencies. It would be appropriate if WHO could send a letter to UN agencies outlining the voluntary collaborative arrangements (time-limited, e.g. to cover the next six months). Following an initial period of voluntary arrangements, it may be opportune to formalize arrangements in the establishment of an UN Ad-Hoc Coordination Mechanism on NCDs, taking into account that such a mechanism already exists for tobacco control.

Next steps

22. The following next steps were agreed among the participants:
- WHO will develop an early draft summarizing the outcomes of the meeting, for feedback by the participants
 - A follow-up meeting will be scheduled in March 2012
 - The Executive Director at the WHO Office to the United Nations will be the main focal point for further action.

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ANNEX I

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT ON THE OCCASION OF THE FIRST MEETING OF UN FUNDS, PROGRAMMES AND AGENCIES ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE POLITICAL DECLARATION OF THE HIGH-LEVEL MEETING OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY ON THE PREVENTION AND CONTROL OF NON-COMMUNICABLE DISEASES

(DELIVERED BY AMBASSADOR ANWARUL CHOWDHURY,
SENIOR SPECIAL ADVISOR TO THE PRESIDENT)

New York, 8 December 2011

Distinguished colleagues,
Ladies and gentlemen,

As the Senior Special Advisor to the President of the General Assembly, I am pleased to deliver this message from the President, His Excellency Nassir Abdulaziz Al-Nasser.

At the outset, let me thank the World Health Organisation (WHO) for organizing this first meeting of UN Funds, Programmes and Agencies on implementing the Political Declaration of the first-ever General Assembly High-level Meeting on the Prevention and Control of Non-communicable Diseases (NCDs), which I had the honour of convening on 19 September.

The political will expressed at the September Meeting on NCDs was a major breakthrough achieved by the international community in protecting the world's most vulnerable populations.

Thanks to the engagement of Member States, the UN system, in particular WHO, and civil society, NCDs were given the well-deserved priority on the global development agenda. A mandate was established, and clear responsibilities were afforded.

Heads of State and Government committed to developing national capacity for addressing NCDs, and to strengthening their national NCD policies and plans.

The Secretary-General was requested to submit options to the General Assembly for strengthening and facilitating multisectoral action for the prevention and control of NCDs through effective partnership.



And you, the UN Funds, Programmes and Agencies, were urged to provide technical assistance and capacity-development in NCD prevention and control to developing countries, especially the Least Developed Countries (LDCs).

The political declaration is a comprehensive document. It lays concrete foundations for forward movement. But the true value of our work lies in its effective implementation.

Thrust of my message to you here is - let us work together to ensure that the commitments made on 19 September become a reality. This is our shared responsibility.

On your part, concerted and coordinated action across the UN-system is central to ensure that the UN is effective in delivering as one.

The outcome of the High-Level Meeting reaffirmed a vision that goes beyond health and recognized the impact non-communicable diseases have on our development efforts and our economies in general.

While we continue to remain targeted and vigilant in our approach as outlined in our political declaration, as we move forward, I believe the definition of “NCDs” should be broadened. Today our attention is focused on just a few diseases, thereby denying attention and help to tackling no less fatal diseases of the body and mind.

Mental health, including depression, is one such under-addressed disease and remains a threat to health and well-being worldwide. As operational experts, your understanding, perspective and efforts would contribute to advancing this issue.

My Presidency of the General Assembly stands ready to support all your purposeful efforts in every way possible.

I wish you a successful meeting.

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ANNEX II

List of participants

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