Introduction


The agenda was as follows:

- To present the proposed strategies and methods of work of the NCDnet and its International Advisory Council (IAC).
- To discuss the proposed plan for NCDnet in 2010/2011.
- To discuss the creation of a representative group of stakeholders to evaluate progress in implementing the NCD Global Strategy Action Plan.
- To propose a date for the next meeting of the International Advisory Council.

The original impetus for NCDnet and its International Advisory Council came from the endorsement by 193 Member States of the 2008-2013 Action Plan for the Global Strategy for the Prevention and Control of Noncommunicable Diseases (Resolution WHA61.14) at the Sixty-first World Health Assembly in May 2008. This Action Plan defines six objectives for achievement between 2008 and 2013. Objective 5 of the Action Plan specifically calls upon international partners, Member States and WHO to promote partnerships for the prevention and control of noncommunicable diseases (NCDs). Since the major determinants of noncommunicable diseases lie outside the health sector, collaborative efforts and partnerships must be intersectoral and multidisciplinary. The creation of the Global NCDnet and its International Advisory Council are proposed in direct support of Objective 5.

WHO convened an International Advisory Council to provide strategic guidance and advice on:

- The strategy for implementing NCDnet's goals and objectives.
- The elaboration of NCDnet's method of work.
- Refining the needs assessment and prioritizing possible responses at global, regional and national levels.
- Ways to encourage the active involvement of existing regional and global development and health initiatives in implementing and monitoring the Action Plan.

This Council brought together members and their representatives from Member States, nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), United Nations (UN) agencies, the World Bank, and WHO Collaborating Centres as well as Directors and Advisers of Noncommunicable Disease Departments in WHO Regional Offices (Annex 1 includes Members of the IAC or their representatives).
In her role as Honorary Chair of the first NCDnet International Advisory Council meeting, Her Royal Highness Princess Haya Al Hussein of Jordan called upon IAC members and representatives to forge collaborative efforts and discuss the role of international partners in raising awareness about the need to address NCDs in low- and middle-income countries, in raising resources to support the implementation of intervention projects, and in identifying ways in which the international community can catalyse better health outcomes from NCDs in low- and middle-income countries. The Chair stated that her aim is to assist WHO in shaping an NCDnet that is relevant, focused and credible.


Dr Ala Alwan, Assistant Director-General explained that the 2008-2013 Action Plan for the Global Strategy for the Prevention and Control of Noncommunicable Diseases is a unique plan for three reasons: 1) it was developed in close collaboration with Member States, 2) it translates into concrete action the sound vision and strategic directions of the Global Strategy, endorsed by the World Health Assembly in 2000, and 3) it provides a road map for six years, not only for WHO but also for Member States and international partners.

Dr Alwan reviewed the progress WHO is making in implementing the Action Plan. The review was based on the attached progress report, which has been submitted to the Sixty-third World Health Assembly. Members of the Council expressed their views and reflected on ways Member States and international partners can better link their own agendas to the NCD Action Plan.

IAC members and representatives expressed their appreciation of the progress made to date and provided the following recommendations:

- To link the NCD Action Plan to other agendas such as the climate change and agriculture agendas, which define the short term evolution of food consumption in any given country.
- To engage the private sector in implementing effective approaches to promote a healthy diet, and in contributing more effectively to the implementation of the Action Plan.
- To scale up work on strengthening the evidence-base on the cost-effectiveness of diet and physical activity interventions and on integrating NCDs in health system strengthening efforts in low- and middle-income countries.
- To give priority to capacity building at country-level.
- To create citizen demand, reach out to the public and create a social movement for healthy lifestyles and NCD care.
- To give priority to the issue of access to and pricing of medicines in the work of the IAC.

The discussion on the implementation of Objective one of the Action Plan focused on ways and means of contributing to WHO's efforts to integrate the prevention of NCDs into the global development agenda. In this respect, Members recommended steps to support and follow up the initiative led by a group of Member States to submit a resolution to the current session of the UN General Assembly. As a follow up, WHO is organizing a Member States Consultation in New York in September, with involvement of members of the International Advisory Council.

Despite this strong support, some words of caution were expressed by some members regarding the integration of NCD indicators into the existing Millenium Development Goals (MDGs). It was evoked that some countries are reluctant to consider this issue. It was also pointed out that the September agenda may be
too crowded and that including NCD indicators could be viewed by some as distracting attention from attempts to accelerate progress towards achievement of MDGs 4 and 5.

Proposed strategies and methods of work of the NCDnet and its International Advisory Council

Participants expressed support of the strategy, methods of work, as well as the NCDnet mission and three goals of advocacy, resource mobilization and country-level action. The following advice was offered:

- Advocacy requires a country-by-country, Head of State by Head of State approach such as that demonstrated by Caricom and the 1st Heads of State Summit.
- Focus to be placed on the MDG issue and on intensifying diplomatic efforts.
- Harness the necessary efforts in working towards the September meeting, including insertion of NCDs in the agenda and elaboration of clear, expected outcomes.
- Accord priority to following up on the draft resolution that will be submitted to the UN General Assembly. In this respect, Members of the IAC can be actively supportive of this political agenda.
- Begin brainstorming on establishing an effective funding mechanism for NCDnet.
- Consider access to affordable medicines as part of the work on innovative resourcing options.
- Give messages that speak to the head, heart and pocket of the NCD issue.
- Begin implementing the Action Plan in specific countries and work on resourcing appropriate to each country's needs.
- Creating a social movement at national level will be essential to success.

The Chair expressed concern that the issue of sport and physical activity require far more attention and that in many regions, children, young people and women alike, are faced with limited opportunities to be physically active. In order to help change this situation, the Chair proposed more serious engagement with the sports community, most notably the International Olympic Committee, of which she is a member.

Proposed plan for NCDnet in 2010/2011

The proposed plan was presented and modified as follows. A suggestion was received to consider prioritizing action items/events so as to facilitate optimal attendance of Members.

- **23 February 2010:** The first NCDnet International Advisory Council convened to review strategies and methods of work in Geneva, Switzerland.

- **24 February 2010:** The first NCDnet Global Forum as a vehicle for ongoing information exchange and the sharing of good practices by Member States, international partners and the WHO secretariat was launched in Geneva, Switzerland.

- **17-31 May 2010:** Sixty-third World Health Assembly, Geneva, Switzerland will include a review of progress in implementing the 2008-2013 Action Plan for the Global Strategy for the Prevention and Control of Noncommunicable Diseases.

- **June/July, 2010:** First NCDnet donor conference (location to be confirmed).
• **20-22 September 2010**: MDG Review Summit: New York, 65th Session of the UN General Assembly. NCDnet An International Advisory Council meeting may be organized should NCDs be included in the agenda.

• **December 2010**: Pan-American Health Organization Partners Forum (location to be confirmed).

• **March 2011**: First International Ministerial Meeting on NCDs and Healthy Lifestyles, Moscow, will also include a meeting of the NCDnet International Advisory Council, the Global Forum and Working Groups.

• **September 2011**: UN General Assembly Special Session, New York (if the NCD resolution is passed by the General Assembly). Selected NCDnet meetings will be planned as appropriate.

• **2011**: Assembly of the African Union, and first regional meeting of the African (AFRO) NCDnet (in the planning stage).

• **2011**: ASEAN Summit and first regional meeting of the Asian (WPRO) NCDnet (to be confirmed).

Creation of a representative group of stakeholders to evaluate progress in implementing the NCD Global Strategy Action Plan

The following representative group of stakeholders is proposed for further consultation with IAC members:

- Some IAC members.
- Member States
- WHO Collaborating Centres
- Other members with relevant expertise, interest and commitment to ensure the appropriate balance of stakeholder representation and skills
- WHO Regional Offices

Proposed date for the next meeting of the International Advisory Council

While no fixed date was agreed for the next meeting in 2010, there appeared to be consensus on March 2011 as being opportune for the next NCDnet Global Forum. The date and venue for the next International Advisory Council will therefore be discussed electronically with a tentative proposal for a meeting to be convened during the 2010 September MDG Review Summit.

Closing Remarks by the Chair, HRH Princess Haya Al Hussein of Jordan

The Chair concluded by thanking Council members for the high quality of discussion and advice provided during the meeting and emphasized the need to work together to make a measurable difference to the lives of people in low- and middle-income countries. The Chair also underscored the pressing need to overcome the fragmentation of efforts and initiatives in the area of NCD prevention and to actively participate in NCDnet.
Acknowledgements

This background paper for discussion was compiled with the input, support and assistance from staff across WHO. This paper does not represent an official position of the World Health Organization. It is a tool to explore the views of interested parties on the subject matter. References to international partners are suggestions only and do not constitute or imply any endorsement whatsoever of this paper.

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