

Concept Note

General Meeting of the WHO Global Coordination Mechanism on Noncommunicable diseases

5 – 6 November 2018, Geneva, Switzerland

Context

In 2014, WHO Member States reached a landmark consensus to establish the WHO Global Coordination Mechanism on Noncommunicable diseases (WHO GCM/NCD)¹ to facilitate and enhance coordination of activities, multi-stakeholder engagement and action across sectors at the local, national, regional and global levels, in order to contribute to the implementation of the WHO Global NCD Action Plan 2013–2020, while avoiding duplication of efforts, using resources in an efficient and results-oriented way, and safeguarding WHO and public health from any undue influence by any form of real, perceived or potential conflicts of interest. Pursuant to paragraph 12 of the terms of reference of the WHO Global Coordination Mechanism on NCD² and paragraph 11 of the 2016-2017 work plan³, the GCM/NCD Participants⁴ will meet face-to-face to facilitate and enhance coordination of activities, multi-stakeholder engagement and action across sectors at all levels. The General Meeting of the GCM/NCDs will take place on 5 and 6 November 2018, in Geneva, Switzerland.

The General Meeting will be hosted by the Government of Switzerland. It will provide an opportunity to promote the implementation of the WHO Global NCD Action Plan 2013-2020⁵, assess progress made so far by the GCM/NCD and highlight the successes of Member States, UN Agencies and non-State actors (NGOs, academic institutions, philanthropies and business associations) in forging collaborative partnerships that mobilize the means and resources required to implement national NCD responses with a view to achieve SDG target 3.4 (“to reduce, by 2030, premature mortality from NCDs by one third and promote mental health”).

The General Meeting will also enable GCM/NCD Participants to discuss how the GCM/NCD can continue to provide the added value and implement its mandate through forging multi-stakeholder partnerships, improving access to knowledge, disseminating and scaling-up innovations, publishing multi-stakeholder commitments and showcasing the feasibility of implementing the ‘best buys’ and other recommended interventions for the prevention and control of NCDs at country-level, considering the results of the preliminary evaluation of the GCM/NCD.

¹ WHO GCM/NCD terms of reference: http://apps.who.int/gb/ebwha/pdf_files/WHA67/A67_14Add1-en.pdf

² The WHO GCM/NCD terms of reference are contained in document A67/14 Add.1, Annex, Appendix 1 (available at: http://apps.who.int/gb/ebwha/pdf_files/WHA67/A67_14Add1-en.pdf)

³ Contained in document A68/11, Annex 3: http://apps.who.int/gb/ebwha/pdf_files/WHA68/A68_11-en.pdf

⁴ As defined in paragraph 5 of the GCM/NCD Terms of Reference – Member States, United Nations funds, programmes and organizations and other relevant intergovernmental organizations; non-State actors.

⁵ WHO Global NCD Action Plan 2013-2020 : http://apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/10665/94384/1/9789241506236_eng.pdf

The General Meeting will build on the outcomes of the 73th session of the World Health Assembly and the third High-level Meeting of the United Nations General Assembly on the Prevention and Control of NCDs.

Where do we stand now?

Premature mortality from noncommunicable diseases constitutes one of the major challenges for development in the 21st century. It affects women and men between the ages of 30 and 70 years and leaves no country untouched: 15 million people died prematurely from noncommunicable diseases in 2015. The burden continues to rise disproportionately in low-income and lower-middle-income countries where 47% (7 million) of premature deaths from noncommunicable diseases occur.

The global epidemic of premature deaths from noncommunicable diseases is driven by poverty, the impact of the globalization of marketing and trade of products deleterious to health, rapid urbanization and population ageing. Within countries (at all levels of development), noncommunicable diseases particularly affect the poorest and most disadvantaged people. Therefore, premature mortality from noncommunicable diseases is the threat to socioeconomic development.

Premature deaths from noncommunicable diseases in people between the ages of 30 and 70 years can be largely prevented or delayed by implementing the updated set of “best buys” and other recommended interventions for the prevention and control of noncommunicable diseases⁶ⁱ endorsed by the Health Assembly in resolution WHA70.11 in May 2017.

Efforts to reach target 3.4 of the Sustainable Development Goals (by 2030 reduce by one third premature mortality from noncommunicable diseases through prevention and treatment and promote mental health and well-being) require that the existing political commitments made at the United Nations General Assembly in 2011 and 2014 be implemented on a dramatically larger scale. The current rate of decline in the number of premature deaths from noncommunicable diseases is insufficient for the target to be met by 2030.

The General Meeting of the WHO GCM/NCD

The General Meeting of the WHO GCM/NCD will be co-organized by the Government of Switzerland and WHO and in accordance with the modalities set out in Appendix 1 to Annex 3 of document A68/11⁷

Duration: 1,5 days

Scope: The General Meeting will address how governments can facilitate and enhance coordination of activities, multistakeholder engagement and action across sectors. It will also provide an opportunity to highlight action and progress made in mobilizing multi-stakeholder partnerships to share knowledge, expertise, technology and financial resources to complement the efforts of Governments to reduce risk factors for NCDs in an integrated manner, strengthen health care and to achieve the nine voluntary global NCDs targets for 2025, as well as SDG target 3.4 for NCDs for 2030.

⁶ http://apps.who.int/gb/ebwha/pdf_files/WHA70-REC1/A70_2017_REC1-en.pdf#page=27

⁷ Available at http://apps.who.int/gb/ebwha/pdf_files/WHA68/A68_11-en.pdf

The General Meeting will discuss how the GCM/NCD can continue to provide the added value, namely at country level, through implementing its mandate, considering the results of the preliminary evaluation of the GCM/NCD. It will build on the outcome of the third High-level Meeting of the United Nations General Assembly on the Prevention and Control of NCDs.

Governance: The General Meeting requires a diligent preparatory process, with strong involvement of Member States, UN agencies, other intergovernmental organizations as well as non-State actors. For that purpose, an informal Steering Committee of Member States has been established to provide strategic guidance in the preparatory process of the WHO GCM/NCD General Meeting. The Steering Committee upholds the principle of geographical balance, where each of six WHO regions can be represented by up to three countries. Switzerland, in the capacity of the host country serves as a co-chair of the Steering Committee together with the WHO Secretariat.

All other GCM/NCD participants will also be involved in the preparatory process through informal consultations.

Participants: All GCM/NCD Participants will be able to attend - Member States, funds, programmes and specialized agencies of the United Nations System, the UN Inter-Agency Task Force on NCDs, other intergovernmental organizations, non-State actors – relevant non-governmental organizations, selected private sector entities, philanthropic foundations, and academic institutions. Participation criteria of non-State actors will be in accordance with WHO's Framework on Engagement with non-State Actors⁸.

In line with paragraph 3 of the modalities the host country and WHO will explore the interest of the World Bank, the World Trade Organization and the United Nations Development Programme to co-organize the meeting.

Goal

The **goal** of the General Meeting is to bring together Governments, the United Nations System, and non-State actors (non-governmental organizations, academic institutions, philanthropic foundations and private sector entities) with the aim to galvanize commitments and accelerate multi-sectoral and multi-stakeholder action at the local, national, regional and global levels to meet the NCD targets of the WHO Global Action Plan and the NCD (SDG3.4) and the NCD-related targets of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Objectives

The **objectives** of the General Meeting are the following:

- To highlight action and progress made in mobilizing multisectoral and multistakeholder partnerships to share knowledge, expertise, technology and financial resources to complement the efforts of national Governments towards achieving the nine voluntary global targets of the WHO Global Action Plan on NCDs (2013-2020) and the NCD- (SDG 3.4) and NCD-related targets of the 2030 Agenda;
- To promote and take stock of commitments and pledges made by non-State actors to support national efforts for NCD prevention and control;

⁸ FENSA: http://www.who.int/about/collaborations/non-state-actors/A69_R10-FENSA-en.pdf?ua=1 v

- To showcase and identify best practices and enabling factors that make partnerships successful, scalable and sustainable;
- To highlight the key role of the health sector as a steward for policy coherence and universal health coverage for NCDs;
- To call for increased cooperation between Governments and non-State actors, including the private sector, to accelerate country-level action, while avoiding duplication of efforts and potential conflicts of interest;
- To discuss the results of the preliminary evaluation of the GCM/NCD and outline future strategic directions to enhance the GCM/NCD's value added and continued relevance;
- To explore the role of the GCM/NCD to facilitate the country-level implementation of global commitments, including the outcome of the UNGA HLM3.

Format: As described in paragraph 8 of the modalities, including opening and closing plenary chaired by the Minister of Health of the host country, formal plenary meetings, as well as interactive round tables and on specific topics.

While the paragraph 8 of the modalities of the General Meeting, states that Switzerland will chair formal plenary meetings, a possibility for other interested countries and other GCM/NCD participants to (co-)chair some of the sessions will be considered. Pursuant to Paragraph 11 of the modalities the General Meeting will provide interpretation services in the six official languages of the United Nations.

The General Meeting will also provide web-conferencing services for Participants unable to attend and will broadcast the proceedings over the internet.

Expected Outcomes: The General Meeting outcomes will include:

- Greater understanding of the GCM/NCD's value to help Member States and non-State actors to accelerate the implementation of the commitments delineated in high-level political declarations and outcome documents, 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the WHO Global Action Plan 2013-2020 at global, regional national and local levels;
- Increased ownership of the GCM/NCD by its Participants as a platform to increase awareness, encourage innovation, advance multisectoral action, advocate for resource mobilization, share best practices and forge partnerships to enhance the NCD prevention and control at all levels;
- Increased multistakeholder and multisectoral dialogue and communication on how to capitalize on each stakeholder's strength for accelerating action towards SDG 3.4 and improved accountability;
- Agreement on the future strategic directions of the GCM/NCD, taking into account the preliminary results of the GCM/NCD evaluation, outcomes of the UNGA third High-level Meeting on NCDs, and the WHO 13th General Programme of Work.

Output: The General Meeting is expected to result in a concise report. Co-chairs may consider issuing a statement.
