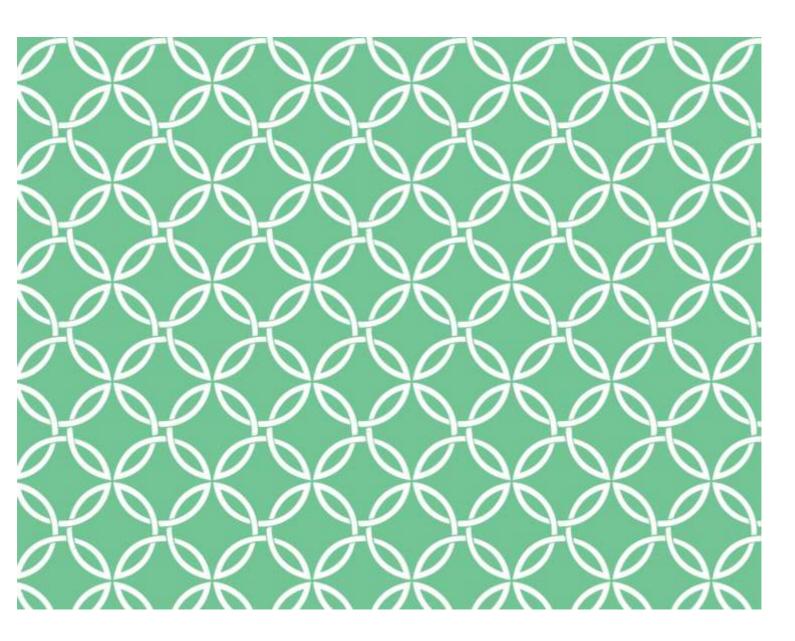


United Nations Inter-Agency Task Force on the Prevention and Control of Non-communicable Diseases

2022-2025 strategy



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INTRODUCTION

The United Nations Inter-Agency Task Force on the Prevention and Control of Non-communicable Diseases (NCDs) provides a platform for cooperation among the United Nations (UN), governments and non-state actors to support governments in addressing NCDs and mental health conditions. The Task Force was established by the UN Secretary-General in 2013 and reports annually to the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) of the UN.

The Task Force's strategy for 2019–2021 set four strategic priorities: (i) supporting countries in delivering multisectoral action; (ii) mobilizing resources; (iii) harmonizing action and forging partnerships; and (iv) exemplifying UN reform (1). These priorities remained largely relevant at the end of 2021 and in line with the Task Force's terms of reference (2) and mandates established in UN General Assembly political declarations and ECOSOC resolutions¹ (Annex 1).

NCDs such as cancer, diabetes, heart disease, chronic respiratory diseases and stroke as well as mental health conditions have a major impact on health and well-being and are responsible for about 74% of deaths globally every year. These diseases and their major risk factors (tobacco use, alcohol use, unhealthy diet and lack of physical activity) also have significant negative consequences on economic productivity and financial stability for individuals and households: NCDs and mental health conditions are critical development issues.

Countries continue to face challenges in responding to the rapid increase in the rates of NCDs and mental health conditions within the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. A key challenge is multisectoral action to reduce the burden of NCDs and improve mental health as part of a "One Health" approach to advancing health and health equity more broadly and to meet commitments for achieving health as a human right. The COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated the challenge of responding to NCDs and mental health conditions (3–6):

- NCDs and their metabolic, behavioural and environmental risk factors are associated with greater susceptibility to SARS-CoV-2 infection and greater risks of severe disease and death from COVID-19.
- Mental health conditions are also associated with increased risks of severe disease and death from COVID-19.
- The pandemic is severely disrupting care for people living with NCDs and mental health conditions, and the pressure on health services is likely to increase in the long term.
- The pandemic and measures taken to respond to it (e.g., lockdowns) are increasing:
- o the rates of mental health conditions, including mental, neurological and substance use disorders (7); and
- o for some people, certain behavioural risk factors for NCDs, such as physical inactivity, an unhealthy diet and harmful use of alcohol.

The 2021 publication Saving lives, spending less states that "As a public health investment, NCD prevention and control is a remarkable bargain which yields a return of US\$7 for every US\$ invested by 2030, saving millions of lives and adding millions of healthy life years lived" and that "Preventing NCDs will also help vulnerable populations better resist future pandemics by improving people's cardiovascular and overall physical health" (8). Importantly, investing in the prevention and control of NCDs generates billions of US dollars in economic gains that are crucial to meeting broader development goals.

Ever greater investment is required of Member States and their development partners, including the UN system, to: (i) strengthen political action on NCDs; (ii) build capacity throughout government for policy development, coherence and implementation (multisectoral action); (iii) increase domestic and international financing; (iv) enhance understanding of the impact of economic, market and commercial factors and take action; and (v) strengthen health systems as part of achieving universal health coverage (9).

Between 2019 and 2021, the Task Force increased its global importance by supporting 39 countries (Annex 2). Further details are provided in the reports of the WHO Director-General on the work of the Task Force submitted by the UN Secretary-General to ECOSOC in 2019, 2020 and 2021 *(10)*.

The 2022–2025 strategy outlines the way forward for ensuring that the UN system as a whole continues to support Member States in developing and implementing their action plans, in line with the WHO Global NCD action plan, 2013–2030, the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (WHO FCTC) and its protocols and the WHO Comprehensive Mental Health Action Plan 2013–2030, including its evidence-based interventions, many of which require action beyond the health sector. The end-point of the strategy is in line with most of the Global NCD targets (*11*) and those of the Fourth high-level meeting on NCDs (*12*) for 2025.

The 2022–2025 strategy will also support the 2023–2030 Road map for the Global NCD Action Plan 2013–2030, which is being finalized *(13)*. This states: (i) that the Task Force provides a mechanism for coordinating the support of the UN and intergovernmental organizations for national responses to NCD-related Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the Global NCD action plan 2013–2030 and implementation of the WHO FCTC and its protocols; (ii) that the Task Force provides support for stronger governance for NCDs and mental health nationally, among governments and the UN system; and (iii) that the UN Multi-Partner Trust Fund to Catalyse Country Action for NCDs and Mental Health, which was established in 2021 by WHO, the UN Children's Fund and the UN Development Programme, will enable implementation of the Road map *(14)*. Delivering the strategy will require action and coordination among its Members at all levels and with other relevant platforms, such as the UN Nutrition, Health, Environment and Climate Change Coalition and the WHO Global Coordination Mechanism on the Prevention and Control of NCDs.

¹ Reports of the United Nations Inter-Agency Task Force on the Prevention and Control of NCDs, ECOSOC, the UN General Assembly and the World Health Assembly

The strategy builds on the experience of the 2019–2021 strategy and the findings of the mid-point evaluation of the Global Action Plan for the Prevention and Control of NCDs 2013-2030 (Annex 3).

The 2022–2025 strategy continues in the direction of the 2019–2021 strategy as the strategic priorities remain as relevant as ever. Nevertheless, flexibility and responsiveness remain crucial for the Task Force to be most effective. Thus, the strategy will be updated as and when required in order to incorporate and reflect new or emerging global policies and/or resolutions. The focus during the next 4 years must be for even greater action for achieving the four strategic priorities described below, with broader developments to achieve the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda, including effective responses to and recovery from COVID-19.

The 2022–2025 strategy will be evaluated before the Fourth high-level meeting in 2025 to contribute to preparation of a further strategy that takes into account the outcomes of the Fourth meeting and the action necessary to meet the 2030 SDG targets.

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

1. Support countries in accelerating multisectoral action towards the SDG targets related to NCDs and mental health.

The Task Force will continue to advocate for whole-of-government, wholeof-society action and respond to the increasing demand from countries for context-specific technical assistance to support national action and capacitybuilding to attain the NCD-related SDG targets and implementation of the WHO FCTC and its protocols, including "building back better" in the context of national COVID-19 response and recovery plans.

The Task Force will:

- · advocate at the highest level of governments for greater investment in the prevention and control of NCDs, in support for mental health and in implementing the WHO FCTC and its protocols, including whole-ofgovernment and whole-of-society actions;
- provide and facilitate technical assistance to countries, both directly and through UN country teams and their respective regional offices, by identifying and sharing knowledge on best practices and cost-effective investments for NCD prevention and control and mental health;
- serve as an entry point for countries to demand joint UN technical support; and
- highlight examples of whole-of-government and whole-of-society action, • including through meetings of the Friends of the Task Force and Task Force awards.

2. Mobilize resources for development of national actions to achieve the SDG targets related to NCDs and mental health.

The Task Force will mobilize political, financial and technical resources to support governments, the UN and other development partners in building strong, sustained responses to NCDs and mental health conditions.

The Task Force will:

- ensure that the UN Multi-partner Trust Fund to Catalyse Country Action for NCDs and Mental Health is fully capitalized and operational to support governments and their development partners in scaling up multisectoral action on NCDs and mental health, including through a "One Health" approach and through Strategic priority 1;
- ensure that the Multi-partner Trust Fund provides support for action on NCDs and mental health that is aligned with the countries' plans for COVID-19 response and recovery;

- work with Member States and development partners to ensure that that the activities of the Multi-partner Trust Fund are aligned with existing and future financing mechanisms for NCDs and mental health;
- · continue to build the technical and financial resource base of the UN system to support national responses, including through UN joint programming, to provide more effective support to countries in responding to NCDs and mental health conditions;
- encourage multisectoral action to support Member States in designing and implementing whole-of-government, whole-of society policies and programmes to achieve better public health outcomes; and
- promote imposition of "health taxes" as a means for improving health and raising revenue for socioeconomic development.

3. Harmonize action and forge cross-sectoral partnerships

The Task Force will support countries by harmonizing its work with that of other global health and development initiatives and forging multi-stakeholder partnerships and alliances at all levels to achieve public health and SDG targets related to NCDs and mental health (15).

The Task Force will:

- identify synergies with relevant global development institutions, partnerships and initiatives (for, e.g., health, education, economics, environment, trade) and promote cooperation and joint action in the context of the road map 2023–2030 for implementation of the WHO Global action plan for the prevention and control of NCDs 2023–2030, the 2013–2030 WHO Comprehensive mental health action plan, the Global action plan for healthy lives and well-being for all (16) and other relevant UN policies, strategies and programmes established to support countries in work on NCDs and mental health, as part of universal health coverage and the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda;
- extend and form new partnerships with governments and non-state actors (including, community-led interventions), Including UN joint programmes, collaborations and thematic groups, while ensuring that Task Force members are protected from undue influence by any form of vested interest (paragraph 22 of reference 2);
- advocate for and support effective, efficient collaborative partnerships and ensure that countries' domestic resources and development assistance are optimally planned and used for "best buys" and other recommended interventions to deliver maximum impact; and
- promote a "One health" approach to bringing sectors together to support countries in developing and implementing programmes and policies to achieve better public health outcomes.

4. Exemplify an ever more effective UN system

The Task Force will be a beacon of excellence among UN and development partners, working as one, proactively and responsively to support governments and their partners in achieving the SDG targets for NCDs and mental health.

The Task Force will:

- · encourage its members to build their technical and advocacy capacity in accordance with the mandates of their agencies and strengthen global, regional and national collaboration among its members, in line with the "best buys" and effective interventions endorsed by the World Health Assembly and with countries' responses to and recovery from COVID-19;
- promote inclusion of NCD-related SDG targets and outcomes in UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Frameworks, policies, strategies and plans at national level and support resource mobilization for their delivery;
- promote a human rights-based approach to the prevention and treatment of NCDs and mental health by: (i) promoting human rights as the overarching principle in the treatment and prevention of NCDs, in line with human rights instruments such as the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and the Convention on the Rights of the Child; (ii) ensuring that the outputs, advocacy and messaging of the Task Force substantively integrate human rights; (iii) supporting implementation of UN, ECOSOC and World Health Assembly resolutions, including the WHO NCD global action plan, 2013–2030 and the Comprehensive mental health action plan 2013–2030; (iv) participating in joint programming missions and their followup as resources allow; (v) integrating human rights into the work of joint programmes and thematic groups; and, to support these actions, establish a new cross-agency human rights group;
- encourage the governing bodies of its members' agencies to consider NCDs and mental health in the context of the WHO "triple billion targets" and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development; and
- encourage its members to implement policies for healthy (including smokefree) workplaces and the model policy for agencies of the UN system on preventing tobacco industry interference.

MONITORING AND EVALUATING RESULTS AND IMPACT

It is sometimes difficult to identify progress in countries that is directly attributable to the Task Force. The Task Force can, however, demonstrate its contributions to wider achievement of the NCD-related SDG targets.

INDICATIVE MONITORING FRAMEWORK

icator	Success as compared with a baseline in 2021	Source of information
upporting countries to accelerate n DG targets	nultisectoral action on the NCD- and	mental health-related
Number of countries that request and receive policy guidance and technical support from the Task Force for which there is evidence that recommendations are being implemented	50 countries request and receive support from the Task Force or two or more of its members at global or national level	Task Force reports of countries' demands, responses to those demands and recommendations and their implementation
Number of UN-led global, regional and national joint programmes and initiatives in place, resourced and delivering at national level	Increases in the numbers of new joint programmes, projects, collaborations and initiatives financed and operational with impact at national level, with their impact on COVID-19 response and recovery described	Reports and assessments of programmes, projects, collaborations and initiatives
	Evidence that joint programmes, projects, collaborations and initiatives are delivering even stronger support to countries, with their impact on COVID-19 response and recovery described.	
lobilizing resources to support the o argets related to NCDs and mental l	development of national responses to health	achieve the SDG
Multi-partner Trust Fund capitalized and disbursing funds to countries	Fund capitalized and countries accessing funding and benefiting from technical assistance	Multi-partner Trust Fund reports
	funding and benefiting from technical	Multi-partner Trust Fund reports
disbursing funds to countries Number of countries with projects funded by multilateral development banks and by the Global Fund to Fight	funding and benefiting from technical assistance First wave of support aligned with countries' responses to and recovery from	
disbursing funds to countries Number of countries with projects funded by multilateral development	funding and benefiting from technical assistance First wave of support aligned with countries' responses to and recovery from COVID-19 Increase in the number of countries that received funding for projects from	reports World Bank and regional development bank

The Task Force reports annually to ECOSOC on its results and impact through the WHO Director-General. Ten indicators are used to evaluate results and impact during implementation of the Strategy.

A small working group will be established to lead monitoring and evaluation of the indicative monitoring framework.

Ind	licator	Success as compared with a baseline in 2021	Source of information
ŀ	larmonizing action and forging cross	s-sectoral partnerships	
6.	Number of countries that receive support from the Task Force and/or its members to strengthen multistakeholder coordination and action	Increased number of countries that have functional multisectoral coordination mechanisms for NCDs and mental health	Task Force reports
7.	Operational partnerships between governments and the private sector catalysed by UN system	New partnerships in place at global, regional and national levels	Task Force reports
8.	Countries in which the Task Force has catalysed multi-agency, multi-sectoral action for the prevention and control of NCDs and improving mental health	New partnerships in place at country level	Task Force reports
E	xemplifying an ever more effective	UN system	
9.	Number of countries for which Cooperation frameworks include SDG targets related to NCDs and/or mental health, including target 3.a on implementation of the WHO FCTC, with evidence of funds available for joint programming and implementation	Increased number of Cooperation frameworks that include NCDs and mental health in joint funding for action	Global survey
10.	Task Force members have prioritized national action aligned with the "best buys" endorsed by the World Health Assembly and effective interventions, in line with countries' response to and recovery from COVID-19	Action taken forward by members in line with the briefs of individual Task Force agencies and the strategic approaches common to NCDs and COVID-19 set out in reference 4	Reports from members
11.	Task Force members implement healthy workplace policies and the model policy for agencies of the United Nations system on preventing tobacco industry interference <i>(17)</i>	Increased number of agency campuses that are smoke-free and implement policies to encourage healthy diets and physical activity Increased number of agencies that implement the model policy	Reports from members
12.	Proportion of Task Force activities and outputs that include substantive action to promote human rights	Human rights systematically reflected in Task Force activities and outputs	Task Force reports

LOGIC AND CHANGE MODEL (9, 15)

Priority area	Inputs	Activities	Outputs	Outcomes	Impact statements
Supporting countries to deliver multisectoral action	 Mandates and guidance from UN General Assembly, ECOSOC and World Health Assembly 	Task Force / UN system agencies providing advocacy, policy guidance and technical assistance to Member States to deliver multisectoral action on NCDs and mental health	Number of countries with national multisectoral NCD and mental health included strategies, policies, (implementation) plans that are costed and budgeted Number of UN country teams with joint UN programming and joint programmes on NCDs & mental health, included in UN Cooperation Frameworks	Demonstrable progress by governments and their partners in implementing multisectoral actions aligned with national priorities and strategies for NCDs and mental health at country level	Reduction in disease burden and levels of exposure to risk factors
Mobilising resources to support the development of country-led responses	 Political, financial and technical contributions from Task Force members, Member States and development partners Multi-Partner Trust Fund 	Work with Member States and development partners to develop investment plans, increase domestic (and where appropriate development partners') resources for NCDs & mental health, and also establish and efficiently utilize a financing mechanism for countries to access to catalyze effective domestic responses to the NCD-related SDGs	UN NCD and Mental Health MPTF capitalized and operational. An increase in domestic resources and where appropriate, ODA for NCDs, including through development bank and Global Fund financing	Increased financing available at the country level for NCDs and mental health related SDGs and meeting the triple billion in the context of the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda	Challenges for implementing the best buys and other recommended interventions overcome
Harmonizing action and forging cross- sectoral partnerships	 Joint programmes Thematic working groups Common set of planning, advocacy and technical 	Broker and support multi-sectoral partnerships with governments and non-state actors	Stronger multi-sectoral and -stakeholder partnerships / coordination platforms in support of the NCD-related SDGs in place in countries	Government led national multisectoral platforms, actions and accountability systems engage health and non-health sectors, civil society, relevant private sector entities, academic institutions and philanthropic foundations	Progress made by Member States in achieving the NCD and mental health-related SDGs and public health goals and in leaving no one behind
16:5	tools			Greater UN system coherence, efficiency and capacity in place to support countries in addressing the NCD and mental health- related SDGs as part of the 2030	UN system making a clear impact on national multisectoral action on the NCD and mental health

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related SDGs as part of the 2030

Agenda

agendas