

# 10 KEY MESSAGES + KEY INDICATORS

FROM LOCAL ACTION TO GLOBAL IMPACT : HOLISTIC COMMUNITY DRIVEN APPROACH TO NON-COMMUNICABLE DISEASES

## 1. Put equity first in NCD response

- 18 million people die from NCDs before age 70 every year; 82% of these premature deaths occur in low- and middle-income countries (WHO, 2024).
- NCDs cause 75% of global deaths but **receive <1% of development assistance** for health (~US\$300–400M/year, now declining). (Lancet Global Health, 2025)

## 2. Integrate NCD in social protection coverage

- In low- and middle-income countries, treating major NCDs costs more than most families can ever afford — with annual expenses of around **\$7,400 for COPD, \$6,000 for cardiovascular disease, \$3,300 for cancer, and \$1,000 for diabetes** — amounts that often exceed or rival the average household income (~\$1,500–2,000 in Sub-Saharan Africa).  
(Kazibwe et al., 2021; World Bank)
- In India, households affected by mental illness spend nearly **1 in 5 of their monthly budget** on mental health care, pushing many already vulnerable families deeper into financial distress (Source: *Catastrophic Health Expenditure and Poverty Impact Due to Mental Illness in India*, 2025).
- >50% of NCD health costs in LMICs are paid out-of-pocket, pushing millions into poverty each year. (World Bank/WHO UHC Report, 2021)

## 3. Integrate NCD at all levels of the health system

- The world's biggest killer = 43 million NCD deaths in 2021 = **3 in 4 deaths** worldwide (cardiovascular disease, cancer, chronic respiratory disease, diabetes and mental health) (WHO World report, 2021)
- **Less than 50%** of primary health facilities in Africa can provide basic NCD services. (WHO Service Readiness Assessment)
- Globally, over 2.2 billion people — about 1 in 3 people worldwide - live with vision impairment or blindness, and at least 430 million have disabling hearing loss — conditions often linked to NCDs such as diabetes, stroke, or untreated infections. Yet < 50% of African primary care facilities are equipped to provide essential NCD services.” 【WHO World Report on Vision 2019; WHO Hearing Report 2021; WHO Service Readiness Assessment】

## 4. Treat patients, families and communities as co-owners in NCD care

- Up to 80% of NCD care can be effectively delivered at community/primary care level if families are engaged. (WHO PEN, 2020)
- Community health worker programmes improve adherence to diabetes and hypertension care by 20–30%. (Jeet et al., PLoS One, 2017)

## 5. Promote healthy lifestyles in policies and actions

- **Every \$1 invested** in WHO’s “Best Buys” (tobacco taxes, food labeling, alcohol regulation, trans-fat bans) yields up to **\$7 in health and economic benefits**. 【WHO, *Saving Lives, Spending Less*】
- **1 in 7 adolescents (10–19 years)** lives with a mental health condition, often linked to stress, inactivity, and substance use. 【WHO, 2021】
- Around **half of teenagers** spend 4+ hours/day on recreational screen time; those with heavier screen use are **more than twice as likely** to report anxiety or depression symptoms. (CDC study)

## 6. Act on climate and environmental change and mitigate NCD risks

- Household air pollution from unsafe cooking fuels exposes 40% of people — including 1 billion children — to toxic smoke. (WHO, 2023)
- **Climate change is already amplifying NCD risks**: rising heatwaves increase cardiovascular deaths, while climate-linked malnutrition, vector expansion, and air pollution are projected to cause an additional **250,000 deaths annually by 2050**. That’s about **685 deaths every single day**. Roughly 28 deaths every hour. 【WHO, Climate & Health, 2018; Lancet Countdown 2023】

## 7. Privilege holistic, lifecourse and cross-sector NCD solutions

- 70% of premature adult NCD deaths are linked to risks beginning in adolescence. (Lancet Adolescent Health, 2016)
- More than 1 billion people now live with obesity — 1 in 8 globally — with prevalence doubling since 1990. (WHO 2024; Lancet 2023)

## 8. Systematically link Mental Health and NCD

- 1 in 8 people worldwide live with a mental health condition — and 8 out of 10 are in low- and middle-income countries (Global Burden of Disease Study 2019 (Lancet Psychiatry, 2022 update)).
- **Chronic illness link**: Persons with chronic illnesses have **2–5 times higher rates of depression and anxiety** compared to the general population 【WHO, 2003 (graphic)】 .

## 9. Leverage indigenous knowledge and palliative care in NCD response

- 88% of countries report use of traditional/complementary medicine, but only 50% regulate it. (WHO Traditional Medicine Strategy)
- Globally, fewer than 1 in 7 people who need palliative care receive it; in LMICs, access to pain relief is <10%. (WHO, 2020; Lancet Commission, 2017)

## 10. Invest in innovative and adapted NCD resources and medical supplies

- **Half of LMICs experience frequent stock-outs of essential NCD medicines** (like insulin, antihypertensives, and cancer drugs such as chemotherapy), leaving millions without treatment when they need it most. (WHO *Medicines Access Report, 2023*) tools can reduce blood pressure by 5–10 mmHg in LMIC trials. (Lancet Digital Health, 2023)
- **Less than 30% of health facilities in many LMICs consistently stock basic psychotropic medicines** (for depression, anxiety, or psychosis), leaving mental health needs largely unmet. (WHO *Mental Health Atlas, 2020*)

- Less than 10% of patients in low-income countries who need chemotherapy actually receive it (The Lancet Commission on Cancer and Access to Medicines (2020))