

10 KEY MESSAGES + KEY INDICATORS

FROM LOCAL ACTION TO GLOBAL IMPACT : HOLISTIC COMMUNITY DRIVEN APPROACHED 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))