General Talking Points (Importance of cancer and NCD control)

Cancer and other non-communicable diseases (NCDs) are a major global health burden.
- NCDs are the leading causes of death in the world, accounting for 63% of global deaths.\(^1\)
- Cancer accounts for more deaths worldwide than AIDS, malaria, and tuberculosis combined.\(^2\,^3\)

Cancer and other NCDs have a major economic impact throughout the world.
- According to the World Economic Forum (WEF) chronic diseases are among one of the three greatest risks to the global economy, due to escalating cost of care, the threat to productivity from death and disability, and the effects of costs on household impoverishment.\(^4\)
- Cancer takes the greatest global financial toll of any disease.\(^5\)

The burden of cancer and NCDs are greatest in the developing world.
- Nearly 80 percent of NCD deaths each year occur in developing countries.\(^6\)
- Rapid growth of the NCD burden is expected due to population aging and development-linked changes in behavior, including increased use of tobacco and the adoption of calorie-rich, but nutritionally deficient diets.
- Developing countries account for over 60% of all cancer deaths worldwide.\(^7,^8\)
- The growth in cancer incidence by 2030 is projected to be over twice as high in low income countries (82% growth)

Cancer is not a death sentence: We have the knowledge and tools to prevent more than half of all new cancer cases and cancer deaths worldwide.\(^9\)

We urgently need to increase development aid for cancer and NCD control.
- Less than 3% of overall global development assistance for health is allocated to preventing and controlling NCDs.\(^10\)
- Even though developing countries bear 80% of the global cancer burden,\(^11\) only an estimated 5% of resources for cancer control are spent in these countries.\(^12\)

Improving cancer and NCD control does not undermine other global health priorities and is essential to health system strengthening.
- Investing in cancer and NCD prevention and control will improve health communications, human resources, technical capacity, and healthcare infrastructure in ways that alleviate the burden on healthcare systems, strengthen the prevention and control of all diseases, and diminish poverty.
ASK 1: Tobacco Control
Accelerate implementation of the WHO FCTC to achieve a world free from tobacco by 2040.

Talking Points

Tobacco use is the single most preventable cause of death in the world. Tobacco use kills over 5 million people each year. By 2020 tobacco is projected to be responsible for about one in ten deaths. Tobacco use accounts for 1 in 6 of all NCD deaths. Lung cancer is the most common cause of cancer and cancer death in the world.

We know how to address the death and disease caused by tobacco use.
- The WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (FCTC) is the first global public health treaty that provides an evidence-based roadmap for implementing cost-effective demand and supply reduction strategies to curb tobacco use.
- While 173 Parties have ratified this treaty, it still needs to be implemented effectively in the vast majority of countries.
  - Even though 87% of the world’s population live in countries that have ratified the FCTC, less than 10% of the world’s population is covered by any domestic tobacco control policy.
  - Parties to the Convention are obliged to invest in FCTC implementation, including providing technical and financial assistance and scientific, technical and legal co-operation.

If countries fully implement just four key FCTC policy measures, we could avert over 5·5 million deaths over 10 years in developing countries, where the majority of deaths from tobacco use will occur. These include:
- Regularly increasing taxes on tobacco products
- Creating 100% smoke-free public and work places
- Using graphic warning labels to communicate the dangers of tobacco use
- Enforcing comprehensive bans on tobacco advertising, promotion and sponsorship

The most effective tool governments have to reduce consumption is tobacco taxation.
- Increasing tobacco prices is the single most effective way to motivate tobacco users to reduce consumption or quit, and discourage people from starting.
- Increasing tobacco taxes by 10% decreases consumption by about 4% in high-income countries and 8% in low- and middle-income countries.
- Tobacco also generates additional revenue for governments that can be applied to tobacco control, combating NCDs, infectious diseases, or other local health priorities.
- The World Bank recommends setting tobacco taxes to between two-thirds to four-fifths of retail price.

Implementing a comprehensive national tobacco control strategy benefits the economy in many ways
- Higher tobacco taxes increase government revenue.
- Smoke-free workplaces create a healthier workforce that benefits businesses by reducing absenteeism, improving productivity, and lowering healthcare costs and insurance premiums.
- When smokers quit, their families benefit financially. For poor families, tobacco costs can be a significant part of household spending, diverting precious resources from food, education, and other needs. In several countries, low income households have been found to spend 10% or more of household income on tobacco products.
Ask 2: Comprehensive Cancer & NCD Control
Increase access to affordable drugs and technologies for cancer and other NCDs

Talking Points

We need to increase access to essential drugs and technologies.

- The WHO has documented the limited availability and affordability of NCD medications in developing countries\(^{30}\).
- Ensuring a steady supply of affordable, appropriate, and quality medicines, vaccines and diagnostic technologies to those in developing countries is a critical component of addressing the NCD burden\(^{31}\).
- One of the Millennium Development Goal targets is to “provide access to affordable essential drugs in developing countries”\(^{32}\).
- Many cancers are treatable with effective off-patent drugs that can be manufactured generically at affordable prices\(^{33}\).
- For several cancers, life can be substantially extended with fairly low-cost systemic treatment\(^{33}\).
- Global and regional negotiation strategies for pricing and procurement can make essential drugs and vaccines accessible in poor countries\(^{34}\).
- People in all countries should equitably benefit from effective technologies: while medicines on the WHO list of essential medicines should be a priority, improving access should not be limited to technologies already included on the WHO list of essential medicines. There is a need to accelerate inclusion of evidence based medicines on the WHO essential medicines to ensure equitable access\(^{35}\).

We need to increase global access to cancer vaccines, which are effective cancer prevention strategies especially important in developing countries.

- Vaccination diminishes incidence of cancers linked to infectious agents, which account for approximately 26% of cancer cases in developing countries\(^{36,37}\).
- Liver cancer can be largely prevented with the HBV vaccine to control Hepatitis B. The WHO calls vaccination against Hepatitis B a “best buy” for NCD control in its *Global Status Report on NCDs*\(^{38}\).
- Cervical cancer is the largest cancer killer among women in most developing countries. It is principally linked to the human papillomavirus (HPV), which is transmitted sexually.
- Widespread access to HPV vaccination for women will prevent hundreds of thousands of deaths, especially in countries that lack the resources for screening and treatment.
- The WHO recommends vaccination against (HPV) as a priority population-wide intervention for NCD prevention in its Global Status report on NCDs\(^{39}\).
- Recent negotiations between the Global Alliance for Vaccines and Immunizations (GAVI) and manufacturers will permit the world's poorest countries to acquire the vaccine at a subsidized cost of about US$0.20 to 0.40 per dose.
We can, We should, We will conquer cancer

Ask 2: Comprehensive Cancer & NCD Control (continued)

Early detection programs for cervical and breast cancer have been proven to be effective in saving women’s lives.⁴⁰ ⁴¹ ⁴²

• **Cervical Cancer**
  - When detected at an early stage, cervical cancer is one of the most successfully treated cancers.
  - A shocking 90% of cervical cancer deaths occur in developing countries, where survival rates are vastly lower than those in developed countries because the cancer is detected at a later stage.⁴³
  - The WHO considers cervical cancer screening as a “best buy” health-care intervention in its *Global Status Report on NCDs* ⁴⁴.

• **Breast Cancer**
  - Breast cancer is the leading cause of cancer death in women worldwide.⁴⁵
  - Inequities in access to screening and treatment result in survival rates that range from about 90% in some countries to as low as 12% in some developing countries.⁴⁶
  - The WHO considers breast cancer screening through mammograms a cost-effective health-care intervention in its *Global Status Report on NCDs* ⁴⁷.

We need to expand access to pain-relief and end-of-life care to improve the quality of life of people living with cancer and other NCDs. It is a humanitarian obligation.

• Opioid drugs are considered essential medicines by the WHO. These drugs have a very low cost and are essential for pain-relief among cancer patients. Yet 2 out of 3 people dying of cancer in developing countries do not receive pain-relief.
• 74% of those who die in severe pain live in low and middle-income countries.
• Developing countries consume only 6% of the pain medicines.
• Access to pain relief is not an NCD-specific issue, it is also important for those diagnosed with infectious diseases such as HIV/AIDS.
References:

Priority actions for the NCD crisis will prevent millions of premature NCD events every year

The NCD crisis

NCD (non-communicable diseases), including cardiovascular disease (largely heart disease and stroke), cancer, chronic respiratory diseases, and diabetes, cause two of every three deaths each year. The massive global toll of NCD deepens poverty, impedes development, threatens health systems, and is a major cause of disability and health inequality.

The solution

We know how to prevent millions of premature NCD deaths at low cost. The Lancet NCD Action Group and the NCD Alliance propose five priority actions to tackle this crisis (figure).1

Five priority actions

The overall goal

The overall goal is to reduce NCD death rates by 2% per year, saving at least 36 million lives over the next decade. The cost of the proposed package is small (table); in total it will require just US$ 9 billion per year.

UN HLM: a major opportunity for global health

The UN will convene a High-Level Meeting on Non-communicable Diseases (UN HLM) on Sept 19–20, 2011, in New York, USA. This meeting will stimulate global and national action in five areas:

1. Leadership

Heads of state and governments should expand national responses to NCD by:

- Framing NCD as a critical development issue
- Investing in coordinated action across the whole of government and involving the private sector and non-government organisations
- Committing to a small number of priority interventions (table) with timed targets and indicators for assessing outcomes
2. Prevention

Top priorities (table) for a global movement to prevent NCD are to address the risk factors that cause NCD:

http://www.who.int/fctc

- Acceleration of implementation of the Framework Convention on Tobacco Control, with the goal of a world essentially free from tobacco by 2040
- Reduction of salt intake to less than 5 g per person per day by 2025
- Improvement of diets and physical activity including early in life
- Reduction of harmful alcohol intake

3. Treatment

Treatment requires strengthening primary health-care systems and:

- Increased access to high-quality, low-cost medicines for people at high risk of heart disease or stroke, and for people who already have diabetes, cancer, and chronic respiratory diseases
- Provision of affordable vaccines, as appropriate, to people at risk of infection-related cancers
- Provision of pain relief for end-of-life care

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<th>Costs of priority interventions: country examples</th>
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<th>Interventions</th>
<th>Cost per person per year (US$)</th>
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<td>China</td>
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<td>1. Tobacco use</td>
<td>Accelerated implementation of the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control</td>
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<td>2. Dietary salt</td>
<td>Mass-media campaigns and voluntary action by food industry to reduce consumption</td>
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<td>3. Obesity, unhealthy diet, and physical inactivity</td>
<td>Mass-media campaigns, food taxes, subsidies, labelling, and marketing restrictions</td>
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<td>4. Harmful alcohol intake</td>
<td>Tax increases, advertising bans, and restricted access</td>
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<td>5. Cardiovascular risk reduction</td>
<td>Combination of drugs for individuals at high risk of NCDs</td>
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<td>Total cost per person*</td>
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*Excludes any cost synergies or future treatment cost savings.

Table: Estimated costs of five priority interventions for non-communicable diseases (NCDs) in three countries

4. International cooperation

Top priorities for international cooperation to prevent NCD are to:

- Raise the priority of NCD on the global agenda and increase funding for their prevention and treatment
- Promote synergies between programmes for NCD and other global health priorities, such as infectious diseases and the reduction of climate change; there is a direct link between preventing NCD and promoting sustainability
- Invest in the proposed low-cost strategies because these will have an enormous impact, bring rapid returns, and have co-benefits for other NCD

5. Monitoring, reporting, and accountability

Countries should establish goals and targets to reduce the major risk factors and NCD death rates and report regularly to the UN on progress towards these goals and targets.

Reference

From the NCD Alliance Proposed Outcomes document we would like to highlight the following 10 actions:

**LEADERSHIP AND INTERNATIONAL CO-OPERATION**

- **Establish an NCDs Partnership**, linked to WHO, to coordinate follow up action with member states, other UN and multilateral agencies, foundations, NGOs and private sector
- Commit to a **whole-of-government** response through **costed national plans** for NCD prevention and treatment
- Increase **national and international resources** for NCD prevention and treatment
- Include NCDs in future **global health and development goals**

**PREVENTION**

- Accelerate implementation of Framework Convention on **Tobacco Control** (FCTC)
- Reduce dietary **salt, sugar, saturated and trans-fats** and harmful use of **alcohol**
- Implement strategies to encourage **physical activity** and to **improve diet**

**TREATMENT**

- Strengthen **health systems** through integration of NCD prevention and treatment
- Increase access to **affordable, quality-assured essential medicines and technologies** to prevent and treat cancer, cardiovascular disease, chronic respiratory disease and diabetes, including vaccines and palliative care

**MONITORING, REPORTING AND ACCOUNTABILITY**

- Establish a **high level Accountability Commission on NCDs** with cross sector representation to monitor Summit commitments