



International
Diabetes
Federation



Joint Statement by the International Diabetes Federation, International Union Against Cancer and World Heart Federation.

Health and Development: Held back by Non-Communicable Diseases

The world is experiencing a global epidemic of non-communicable diseases (NCDs) that threatens to overwhelm healthcare systems worldwide. Cardiovascular disease, diabetes, cancer and chronic respiratory diseases cause 35 million deaths a year. Four out of five of these deaths occur in low- and middle- income countries.

An under-appreciated cause of poverty and a barrier to economic development, NCDs are estimated to reduce GDP by up to 5% in many low- and middle-income countries. The evidence shows that the majority of NCDs can be prevented by addressing risk factors like unhealthy diet, physical inactivity and tobacco use.

Those that are non-preventable can be treated with essential medicines. While medicines such as aspirin, penicillin and insulin to control diseases, and morphine to relieve pain have been on the Essential Medicines List for years, the reality is that they remain beyond the reach of many. Funding models for HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria should be expanded to allow for the provision of essential medicines for NCDs.

Health systems cannot be built vertically, disease by disease. Comprehensive and integrated action at country level is the means to achieve success.

The International Diabetes Federation, International Union Against Cancer and World Heart Federation, representing 730 member organizations in over 170 countries, fully support the WHO Action Plan for the Global Strategy for the Prevention and Control of NCDs and call on all governments, partners, and stakeholders to support its implementation.

In addition, we call on the international community to:

1. Ensure the availability of essential medicines for people living with NCDs in low- and middle-income countries
2. Immediately and substantially increase financing for NCDs
3. Integrate NCD prevention into national health systems and the global development agenda
4. Create a Special Envoy of the UN Secretary-General for NCDs
5. Support a UN General Assembly Special Session on NCDs