

64th EMRO Committee Meeting  
09 – 12 October 2017, Islamabad, Pakistan

**WHF Statement on Agenda Item 2(g): Prevention and Control of NCDs**

Honourable chair, distinguished delegates,

The World Heart Federation welcomes the Committee's progress report and commends the attention given to tackling non-communicable diseases (or 'NCDs') at this year's meeting.

Few parts of the world face as many pressing health challenges as the EMRO Region. Nevertheless it is vital that Member States continue to act to prevent and control NCDs: according to a recent review, approximately 58.4% of total deaths in the region were attributable to NCDs in 2015. The primary cause was cardiovascular diseases (or CVDs), which account for 27.4% of total deaths.<sup>1</sup>

The challenge of delivering timely health care for NCDs is perhaps greatest in the region's migrant and refugee settings. Cardiovascular events, hypertension, and diabetes – which require regular treatment and access to medicines – are among the most common health problems for refugees and migrants,<sup>2</sup> and we welcome the news that an NCD emergency kit will be piloted in the region this year.<sup>3 4</sup>

We further commend ongoing support provided by WHO to help integrate NCD services into primary health care, and in this regard we draw Member States' attention to the Global HEARTS initiative, a technical package for CVD management in primary health care being implemented in 8 countries.<sup>5</sup>

This partnership – led by WHO – represents an unprecedented alignment of stakeholders in global CVD management, and we stand ready to offer policy, technical and implementation support to EMRO Member States.

To help reduce the burden of NCDs in the region, we suggest the following actions:

1. **Implement affordable interventions to address NCDs at the primary health care level**, as outlined in the WHO Global HEARTS Technical Package and the WHO PEN Package.<sup>6</sup>
2. **Support policies and increase resources devoted to tackling NCDs** through sustainable and cost-effective measures, such as taxes on tobacco and sugar-sweetened beverages, and legislation regulating the marketing of unhealthy products to children.
3. **Develop or strengthen operational NCD units and national strategies** ahead of the UN High-level Meeting on NCDs next year.

Thank you for your attention.

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<sup>1</sup> [http://www.who.int/healthinfo/global\\_burden\\_disease/projections/en/](http://www.who.int/healthinfo/global_burden_disease/projections/en/)

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.who.int/bulletin/volumes/90/6/11-097048/en/>

<sup>3</sup> [http://applications.emro.who.int/docs/RC\\_technical\\_papers\\_2017\\_inf\\_doc\\_6\\_20022\\_en.pdf?ua=1](http://applications.emro.who.int/docs/RC_technical_papers_2017_inf_doc_6_20022_en.pdf?ua=1)

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3978000/>

<sup>5</sup> <http://apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/10665/252661/1/9789241511377-eng.pdf?ua=1>

<sup>6</sup> [http://www.who.int/nmh/publications/essential\\_ncd\\_interventions\\_lr\\_settings.pdf](http://www.who.int/nmh/publications/essential_ncd_interventions_lr_settings.pdf)