

**WORLD HEART FEDERATION
END OF YEAR
REVIEW 2019**





Dear Friends,

As we approach the end of 2019, I am thrilled to be able to look back on what has been a truly remarkable year for both the World Heart Federation and the global cardiovascular community as a whole.

In August, we held our first joint **Congress** with the European Society of Cardiology, which attracted an extraordinary 33,000 delegates, and convened global health leaders at the **4th Global Summit on Circulatory Health** to explore technological innovations and their implications for cardiovascular health.

2019 was also the year of the first **United Nations High-Level Meeting on Universal Health Coverage** (UHC), where we convened Ministers of Finance from different regions and launched a **ground-breaking report** examining the attitudes and beliefs of Finance Ministries towards taxing tobacco and other harmful products to help fund UHC at the national level.

In October, we welcomed the sixth cohort of **WHF Emerging Leaders** – a programme created just five years ago and which has already developed into a 150-strong expert community of global health leaders. This year, a team of Emerging Leaders, supported by WHF, led the effort to add new oral anticoagulants (NOACs) to the **World Health Organization Essential Medicines List**, a critical step to improve the availability and affordability of these important drugs.

Over the last year, we stepped up our efforts against neglected cardiovascular diseases. During the **World Health Assembly** in May, we supported the ultimately successful effort to establish an official **World Chagas Day**, and our **RHD Taskforce**, a global community of leaders and advocates who are working to consign rheumatic heart disease (RHD) to the history books, has been working tirelessly to secure improved access to the essential drug benzathine penicillin G in low-resource settings.

We have also committed to taking bold action to address the impact of air pollution on people's health. Our newly formed **Air Pollution Expert Group** is advocating for further research on the link between air quality and heart health, calling on policymakers to implement air pollution reduction policies, and supporting the development of clinical guidelines on air pollution and cardiovascular health.

Our community has never been stronger, and I would like to take this opportunity to thank all our Members and Partners for your loyalty, friendship and support over the past year. It is only by working together that we can make a real difference to people's lives, and I very much look forward to our continued journey together in 2020.

With my very best wishes,

Prof Karen Sliwa
President, World Heart Federation

Leadership in advocacy

WHF releases new Advocacy Strategy for 2019-2022

In support of reaching the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), WHF has released its new **Advocacy Strategy for 2019-2022: Advocating like Investors**, which aims to strengthen our mission of reducing the global burden of cardiovascular disease by focusing on three general objectives:



Promoting the reduction of air pollution as a risk factor for CVD

Every year, air pollution causes 1.4 million stroke deaths and 2.4 million heart disease deaths globally. WHF is committed to reducing the impact of air pollution on people's health by making it a priority area in our global advocacy efforts. We will support global and local actions towards this objective, including developing partnerships with organizations and calling on policymakers to better examine the link between CVD and air pollution.



Supporting global, regional, and national advocacy towards the eradication of RHD

Rheumatic heart disease (RHD) is a preventable, treatable form of CVD that affects over 33 million people around the world. To tackle this health challenge, WHF will strongly support the RHD Taskforce, lead global advocacy for the availability of Benzathine Penicillin G (BPG) and advocate for access to surgical treatment of RHD based on the World Health Organization (WHO)'s resolution.



Advocating for fiscal policies towards the SDGs and UHC objectives

WHF will promote the reduction of risk factors for CVD and their underlying determinants as an investment towards the SDGs and Universal Health Coverage (UHC). We are committed to advocate for fiscal policies, such as increased or new taxes on tobacco, alcohol, sugar-sweetened beverages and fossil fuel, and ensure that we and our Members make every effort to shape the long-term policy agenda.



Download the Advocacy Strategy 2019-2022



This year, WHF continued working with the UN to bring attention to the CVD agenda.



WHF advocated at the 72nd World Health Assembly (WHA) focusing on Universal Health Coverage (UHC).

WHF welcomes new Air Pollution Expert Group

Air pollution is rapidly being recognized as one of the most significant risk factors for cardiovascular health. To combat this major issue, ten air pollution and CVD experts from around the world came together to form the new **Air Pollution Expert Group (APEG)**, which is already looking forward to several technical engagements, including a Position Paper and a capacity-building toolkit in partnership with WHO.

WHF Air Pollution Expert Group (APEG) Members:

- Prof Michael Brauer, Canada/United States
- Dr Narantuya Davaakhuu, Mongolia
- Dr Michael Hadley, United States
- Mr Daniel Kass, United States
- Prof Mark Miller, United Kingdom
- Prof María Consuelo Escamilla Nuñez, Mexico
- Prof Dorairaj Prabhakaran, India
- Dr Ta-Chen Su, Taiwan
- Dr Ilonca C.H. Vaartjes, The Netherlands
- Dr Rajesh Vedanthan, United States



Every year, air pollution causes 2.4 million heart disease deaths globally.

WHF advocates for CVD solutions at the 72nd World Health Assembly

On 20 May 2019, representatives from 194 WHO member states met in Geneva for the **72nd World Health Assembly (WHA)** focusing on Universal Health Coverage (UHC). WHF called on Member States to implement NCD ‘best buys’ and fiscal policies as a way to finance UHC, pushing for increased investment in research on the link between air pollution and CVD, advocating for improved access to medicines for RHD and ensuring the WHO budget appropriately allocates funding for scaling up the fight against NCDs.

WHF held three side events on issues related to CVD:

Chagas Disease – Breaking the Silence

Chagas Disease is a neglected tropical disease affecting 7 million people in the world. WHF convened patients, Chagas experts, government representatives, and policymakers in an informal comprehensive event to discuss the obstacles preventing access to quality care and treatment of the disease. WHA also approved the designation of a World Chagas Disease Day on 14 April each year, after FINDECHAGAS and partners strongly called on WHO Member States to make World Chagas Day an official WHO global health day.

“ In Brazil, the economic burden of Chagas disease is greater than Hepatitis C, but it’s a disease of the poor community, which has no voice. ”

– **Julio Croda, Director of the Department of Communicable Disease Surveillance, Brazil**



Chagas patient Ermita Roca delivering the FINDECHAGAS petition for an official WHO World Chagas Day.

Joining Forces to Fight CVD in People with Diabetes: Pathways to Solutions

WHF also organized an in-depth discussion on how CVD-related premature mortality in people with diabetes can be reduced and the role that UHC can play in achieving this goal. Participants included key experts in diabetes and CVD education and care, policymakers and people living with diabetes and CVD.

“ When my father had a heart attack, no one told me that I was at a higher risk of developing heart disease. We need campaigns to increase awareness of modifiable risk factors, especially among young people. ”

– **Lucas Xavier de Oliveira, Nursing student living with diabetes**

Inequity in NCDs: Making the Case for Familial Hypercholesterolemia

Familial hypercholesterolemia (FH) is a vastly under-diagnosed and under-treated genetic disorder that leads to premature morbidity and mortality from heart disease. Patients, key FH experts, WHO representatives, and policymakers came together for an in-depth discussion to increase the level of awareness of FH and give exposure to testimonials from patients living with the disease.

“ FH is still underestimated, underdiagnosed and undertreated despite the genetic mechanism of the condition being identified and linked to CVD. ”

– **Gabriele Hanauer-Mader, FHchol Austria**

WHF advocates for heart health at the UN General Assembly

On 23 September, WHF attended the high-level meeting on universal health coverage held at the United Nations General Assembly in New York, United States. The meeting, **Universal Health Coverage: Moving Together to Build a Healthier World**, brought together heads of state, political and health leaders, policymakers, and universal health coverage champions to advocate for health for all. WHF co-hosted two side events during that week: Discussion with Ministries of Finance on Fiscal Policies and Financing UHC and Exploring Solutions for Multi-Morbidities Prevention and Control.

WHF launches Economist Intelligence Unit report on Financing UHC

In order to better advocate for harmful product taxes that reduce the burden of CVD, it is crucial to understand the views of those bodies best positioned to implement fiscal policies: **Ministries of Finance**. To this end, WHF commissioned a report by the **Economist Intelligence Unit** to examine the attitudes and beliefs of Ministries of Finance towards taxing tobacco and other harmful products in order to fund health priorities, including UHC.



WHF President-Elect Professor Fausto Pinto at the UN High-Level Meeting in New York.

Driving action for improved access to essential medicines

At the UN High-Level Meeting on UHC, the **Global Coalition** member organizations' leadership held a side event under the theme **Exploring solutions for multi-morbidities prevention and control: the case of circulatory health** in partnership with the American Heart Association (AHA). The event also marked the launch of a **Call to Action for Improving Access to Essential Medicines for Cardiovascular Diseases**, in the form of a position paper which proposes four key recommendations to national governments to improve and expand access to essential medicines. The Coalition is now working behind the scenes to build on the White Paper for Circulatory Health, which was launched last year at the UN High-level Meeting on NCDs.



The Global Coalition Members exploring solutions for multi-morbidities at AHA's offices in New York.

World Congress of Cardiology 2019

A true partnership in action: the first-ever joint Congress

Largest ESC Congress

- 151 Participating countries
- 33,510 Participants
- 646 ESC Scientific and Educational Programme Sessions
- 5,114 Participants in the Programme
- 8950.5 m² Exhibition

ESC Congress 2019 together with the World Congress of Cardiology was held from 28 August to 4 September 2019 in Paris, France. Over **33,000 health professionals** gathered to attend more than **600 expert sessions** covering the entire spectrum of cardiovascular medicine. WHF launched **two new CVD Roadmaps** during the Congress, a Roadmap for Heart Failure and a Roadmap on CVD prevention among people living with diabetes, and hosted the second edition of the **WHF Meet & Share Forum**. We also teamed up with the city of Paris to organize an event to raise awareness of CVD among the general public. Around 5,000 people visited our stand at the esplanade of Paris City Hall and received detailed information about CVD prevention and heart care.



“ We were delighted to partner with the European Society of Cardiology on this important event and bring WHF’s unique global perspective, contributing to making this the largest ESC Congress yet. A true example of joining forces in the fight against cardiovascular disease. ”

– WHF President Professor Karen Sliwa

WHF President Prof Karen Sliwa at the Opening Ceremony of the Congress.

From 1950 to today, from Paris to Chicago, the WHF's World Congress of Cardiology (WCC) has been a key event on the cardiovascular calendar, offering a truly global perspective on cardiovascular health and bringing together thousands of cardiology professionals from all over the world with the common goal of reducing the global burden of CVD. The next WCC and Meet & Share Forum will be held in partnership with the American College of Cardiology's 69th Annual Scientific Session on **28-30 March in Chicago, United States.**

Did you miss the Congress? Watch a summary here!



More than 33,500 health professionals attended the ESC Congress 2019 together with the World Congress of Cardiology.



Exchanging ideas and practices across borders

WHF hosted the **2nd Meet & Share Forum** from 31 August to 1 September at the Paris Congress, bringing together leading foundations and associations related to CVD to discuss challenges in combating heart disease. Each 3-hour session was focused on one core skill: **social media, fundraising, campaigning, and advocacy.**

This was an exciting opportunity for foundation representatives across all continents to bring to the agenda their own understandings and use this forum as a stage to showcase successes and challenges. The Meet & Share Forum at ACC.20/WCC will take place on 28-30 March 2020 and will also be built around interactive panel discussions with expert representatives from each global region.



Discussing CVD challenges at the 2nd Meet & Share Forum in Paris.

World Heart Day 2019

World Heart Day, raising awareness of CVD around the globe

World Heart Day (29 September) is the world's biggest awareness-raising platform for CVD. In 2019, we asked everyone to be a **Heart Hero by making a promise** to someone they love or care about. A promise to eat more healthily, to get more active, to say no to smoking. A simple promise... for my heart, for your heart, for all our hearts.

Across the world, thousands of organizations held all sorts of activities on and around 29 September: from walks, runs and sporting events, to concerts, screenings and social media campaigns. More than **11,000 heart hero posters** were created on the website, over 100 iconic landmarks were illuminated, and more than **39,000 materials** were downloaded to support World Heart Day activities. We also translated our resources in **42 languages** and collected **22 new Heart Heroes stories** from inspiring teams and individuals fighting against CVD all over the world.

We launched a prototype of the **World Heart Day Challenge mobile app**, which aims to help companies encourage their employees to improve their daily health habits. A first test with selected organizations will be conducted in 2020 to test the impact of the app.



Héroes de la Restauración Monument in Los Caballeros, Dominican Republic, illuminated for World Heart Day.



World Heart Day celebrations around the world.

4th Global Summit

Discussing digital innovations in circulatory health

The **4th Global Summit on Circulatory Health** was held in Paris, France on 29-30 August 2019 under the theme **Innovations in Circulatory Care and Technologies**. It convened more than 100 professionals and changemakers in health, technology, policymaking, academia and civil society to learn how digital health solutions and artificial intelligence are shaping circulatory health.

The Global Summit is a thought leadership event designed to elevate the world's number one killer as the top priority for key opinion leaders, Ministers of Health, Public Health Officials, and industry leaders. It aims to:

- Convene and mobilize advocates in circulatory health
- Coordinate stakeholders and policymakers around shared goals
- Campaign for circulatory health with a collective voice and a clear message
- Catalyze action for circulatory health through civil society and policy engagement

The **5th Global Summit on Circulatory Health** will take place on 15-17 June 2020 in Washington, D.C.

“*The Summit is an incredible opportunity for leaders from across the world, researchers, and those in advocacy to interact with government organizations, to learn from each other and to share some of the best practices and enthusiasm we all have for the areas of essential medicines and access to devices.*”

– George Nel, Pan-African Society of Cardiology (PASCAR)



Experts and stakeholders reunited at the 4th Global Summit in Circulatory Care.

Did you miss the Summit? Watch a summary here!



Emerging Leaders Programme

WHF empowers the next generation of leaders on heart failure

The **WHF Salim Yusuf Emerging Leaders Programme** was created by WHF to develop a long-term cadre of experts who collaborate, research and act to reduce premature mortality from CVD globally. The **2019 cohort** marked the sixth year of the programme and focused on **heart failure and digital health**.

Between 13 and 18 October 2019, 25 participants from 16 countries received a tailored training programme and produced a seed-funded group project at the Emerging Leaders Seminar in London, United Kingdom. Organized in three groups, the teams presented their final proposals:

- A community-based multicomponent heart failure program in low- and middle-income countries: A feasibility study (COMM-HF initiative)
- Screening for PREGnancy-related Heart Failure: a multicentre study in Sub-Saharan Africa (PREG-HF Study)
- UNderstanding roadbLOCKS to improve Heart Failure care (UNLOCK-HF)

The 2020 Emerging Leaders Programme will focus on the prevention of CVD among people living with diabetes. Applications to join the cohort will open in January.

Don't miss 2020 applications



The 2019 Cohort with WHF President Prof Karen Sliwa, WHF President-Elect Prof Fausto Pinto and WHF Past President Prof David Wood.



The 2019 Cohort working on their proposals guided by Dr Amitava Banerjee (Institute of Health Informatics), who chaired the programme.

New medicines added to WHO's Essential Medicines List

WHF welcomed the addition of new oral anticoagulants (NOACs) to prevent stroke and fixed dose combinations (FDCs) of antihypertensive medications to the **World Health Organization's (WHO) Essential Medicines List (EML)**. The push to add FDCs of antihypertensive medications to the list was led by **Resolve to Save Lives** and is a critical step to improve the availability and affordability of these drugs. The effort to add NOACs to the EML was led by a team of WHF Emerging Leaders as part of the 2018 GOALPoST project, which aims to improve global access to oral anticoagulants to prevent stroke in atrial fibrillation.

Roadmaps and Roundtables

WHF launches new Global Roadmaps on Diabetes and Heart Failure



WHF launched two new roadmaps at the Congress in Paris, with the aim to prioritize and implement solutions to reduce premature CVD: **The Roadmap on the prevention of CVD among people living with diabetes** and the **Roadmap for Heart Failure**.

A Roadmap is a framework designed and developed by a team of experts to help identify challenges and suggest potential solutions on specific topics impacting cardiovascular mortality.

The Roadmap on the prevention of CVD among people living with diabetes, led by Prof Laurence Sperling (WHF) and Prof Nam Cho (International Diabetes Federation), is a key reference document for anyone involved in the planning, organization, implementation and evaluation of approaches related to CVD prevention in people living with diabetes.

Due to an aging population and improved survival rates for cardiovascular conditions, the prevalence of heart failure is increasing globally to an estimated 26 million. The **Roadmap for Heart Failure**, led by WHF President Prof Karen Sliwa, is relevant for all professionals caring for patients with this condition. This document aims to provide comprehensive guidance on the complex syndrome of heart failure by creating a graphical display of the ideal pathway for heart failure care.

We launched a **new Roadmaps website** to make all the global documents and their respective policy briefs publicly available. Take a look at it [here!](#)

Download the Roadmaps 

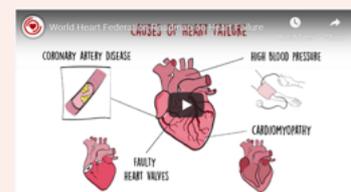
WHF Roadmap on Diabetes



Watch the video



WHF Roadmap for Heart Failure



Watch the video



Implementing national CVD guidelines in Kenya

To address the major burden of CVD in Kenya, the Ministry of Health (MoH) launched the **National Guidelines for the Management of Cardiovascular Diseases** in 2018, a key resource to improve the health outcomes of people living with heart disease. Less than a year after, WHF has been working to accelerate the dissemination of the National CVD Guidelines in collaboration with MoH and the Kenya Cardiac Society (KCS).

On 14 March, a national meeting brought together in Nairobi more than 60 national stakeholders to discuss the right monitoring approach to track success of the dissemination. The meeting was followed by a 'Train the Trainers' Workshop in June, which convened 25 participants from five different counties to unpack the CVD guidelines. After these successful discussions, the KCS kickstarted the country-level dissemination workshops between 16 September and 31 October. The project aims to reach **2,000 health professionals and 100 health facilities**, and thus improve the treatment and management of CVD for an estimated 10,000 people living with CVD.



Stakeholders discuss the CVD Guidelines' implementation at a national meeting in Nairobi, Kenya.

Finding solutions to CVD in Brazil and Vietnam

On 31 October, WHF and the São Paulo Society of Cardiology convened a **Roundtable on the prevention of CVD among people living with diabetes**, based on our Global Roadmap. Key stakeholders who participated in the discussion included representatives from the Brazil Ministry of Health, cardiology societies, diabetes and endocrinology societies, industry, and several patient representatives.

On 11 December, WHF held the **Hypertension Roundtable: Reducing CVD Mortality in Vietnam**, in Hanoi, in partnership with the VinaCapital Foundation, the Vietnam Heart Association and Access Accelerated. Healthcare professionals, academics and representatives from the Vietnam Ministry of Health discussed key treatment barriers and community approaches to hypertension management in the country, using the WHF Roadmap on Hypertension as guidance.

Host a Roundtable in your country



WHF's Hypertension Roundtable held in Hanoi, Vietnam.

United to end RHD

New educational booklet raises awareness of RHD in low-income countries

WHF partnered with Edwards Lifesciences and the Mozambique Institute for Health Education and Research to launch an **educational colouring book** which teaches children, teachers and parents about rheumatic heart disease (RHD), including how to recognize symptoms and what to do when they first appear. Currently in its pilot phase, the educational booklet has been trialed in three schools in three different countries where RHD is endemic: **Mozambique, Nepal, Sudan**.

WHO endorses WHF's and Reach's Regional Framework on RHD

RHD emerged as an important topic of discussion at the **WHO Regional Committee for the Eastern Mediterranean**, celebrated from 14 to 17 October in Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran. A regional framework for action on RHD, which had been developed by WHF in partnership with Reach, was endorsed by WHO members states during the meeting. Building on this momentum, a follow-up EMRO regional expert meeting on RHD was celebrated on 16 and 17 December.

WHF's RHD Taskforce advocates for universal access to BPG

In 2019, the RHD Taskforce assisted WHO, Clinton Health Access Initiative (CHAI) and Reach in supporting access to **Benzathine Penicillin G (BPG)** and the necessity to properly assess manufacturing practices at the API level. WHF and the American Heart Association (AHA) offered to financially support **API plant assessments** for BPG in China, an initiative envisioned



Launch of the RHD colouring book in Maputo, Mozambique with the attendance of WHF President Professor Karen Sliwa.

to take place at the beginning of 2020 that aims to enable WHF to assess how to work best towards quality assurance.

Additionally, the Taskforce supported the Cardiothoracic Surgery Intersociety Alliance (CSIA) on implementing an effective strategy to address the scourge of RHD in low-income countries through access to life saving surgery, goals stated in the **Cape Town Declaration on Access to Cardiac Surgery for RHD**.

WHF establishes new Science Committee

In April 2019, the **WHF Science Committee** was established to oversee, consolidate and align all WHF science-based activities. The Committee has successfully outlined a strategy for each activity and it's looking towards 2020 with priority areas that will serve to strengthen the WHF mission to connect a diverse cardiovascular community, translate science into policy and stimulate the exchange of information and practices.

WHF Science Committee Members:

- Prof Dorairaj Prabhakaran, India
- Prof Kay-Tee Khaw, London
- Prof Carolyn Lam, Singapore
- Prof Kristin Newby, United States
- Dr Dike Ojji, Nigeria
- Dr Daniel Piñeiro, Argentina
- Prof Janina Stępińska, Poland

“ *The science committee embodies what is needed to combat CVD in the world: Eminent members around the world with a wide array of knowledge in CVD prevention, great but practical projects with clear timelines and evaluation matrix, good communication with the advocacy committee for effective dissemination.* ”

– Dr Dorairaj Prabhakaran

Global Heart becomes open access in January

Global Heart is the official journal of WHF and the principal journal for research, opinion and educational material on the prevention, treatment and control of CVD with a special emphasis on lower- and middle-income countries. This year, WHF was pleased to welcome the journal's new Editor-in-Chief, Professor Diederick Grobbee, and announce that the journal will become open access in January.

Key dates in 2020

3 February 2020 - 8 February 2020

WHO Executive Board

28 March 2020 - 30 March 2020

ACC.20 / World Congress of Cardiology

17 May 2020 - 21 May 2020

World Health Assembly

15 June 2020 - 17 June 2020

5th Global Summit on Circulatory Health

29 August 2020 - 02 September 2020

ESC Congress 2020

15 September 2020 - 30 September 2020

UN General Assembly

20 September 2020 - 25 September 2020

Emerging Leaders Programme 2020

29 September 2020

World Heart Day

14 November 2020 - 16 November 2020

AHA Scientific Sessions

Please check the **Events** section of our website for a full list of events.

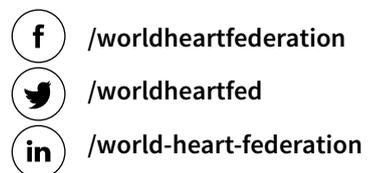
www.worldheart.org

Our Partners

We would like to thank all our 2019 partners, without whom our initiatives, activities and projects would not have been possible: **Access Accelerated, Amgen, BMS Pfizer, Boehringer Ingelheim, Edwards Life Sciences, Eli Lilly, Manulife, Medtronic, Novo Nordisk, Sanofi, Vifor Pharma, and Withings.**



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