

FCA Policy Position for NCD Outcomes Document

The Framework Convention Alliance is made up of nearly 500 organisations in more than 100 countries working on the development, ratification and implementation of the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control. We make the following recommendations for the outcomes document for the comprehensive review and assessment of the progress achieved in the prevention and control of non-communicable diseases (NCDs).

Progress has been made on the commitments made in the 2011 Political Declaration on the Prevention and Control of NCDs via the development of the NCD Global Action Plan and targets. By setting ambitious targets to reduce premature mortality due to NCDs and decrease tobacco use by 2025, United Nations Member States clearly demonstrated their commitment to tackle some of the key threats to development in this century.

However, establishing global targets and plans is only the first step in a long journey to achieve healthy lives for all. As noted in the report of the Secretary-General, overall progress in prevention and control of NCDs – the change achieved on the ground in particular – remains insufficient and uneven¹.

Achieving the target of a 30 percent reduction in tobacco use by implementing effective tobacco control measures is key to meeting the overall target of reducing premature mortality due to NCDs by 25 percent by 2025.

Tobacco use is currently responsible for 10 percent of adult deaths worldwide, and highly cost-effective policies to address the epidemic are among WHO's 'best buys' to improve health. Indeed, governments have committed to implementing a full set of tobacco control measures to reduce tobacco use through the Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (FCTC). However, in order to meet the target of a 30 percent reduction in tobacco prevalence, tobacco control needs to be significantly stepped up.

Many countries have tobacco control policies and plans in place; however such policies are not being implemented and only limited resources are being made available for such efforts. The five key FCTC interventions are estimated to cost only US\$0.05 per capita per year (in low-income countries) to US\$0.15 (in upper-middle-income countries)^{2,3}. But the resources allocated for FCTC implementation remain well below these modest levels. The WHO estimates that only US\$0.001 to US\$0.005 is spent annually per capita on tobacco control in low and middle-income countries⁴.

¹ Para 44 document A/68/650

² WHO. 2011. Scaling up action against noncommunicable diseases: How much will it cost? Geneva: WHO.

³ As classified by WHO/WEF study on NCD best buys: WHO and WEF. 2011. From Burden to "Best Buys": Reducing the Economic Impact of Non-Communicable Diseases in Low- and Middle-Income Countries. Geneva: World Economic Forum.

⁴ WHO. 2008. WHO Report on the Global Tobacco Epidemic. Geneva: WHO



Both political commitment and sufficient resources are needed to achieve the NCD commitments, as stated by the Secretary-General's 2013 report on NCDs⁵. But this is not our main message. In fact, we have positive news for Member States.

Earlier this year, WHO issued a publication titled, Raising Tax on Tobacco – What You Need to Know. It says: “raising taxes on tobacco is the most cost-effective solution for reducing tobacco use in all types of settings” and “[tobacco] tax increases generate substantial additional revenues for governments.”⁶ Significantly increasing tobacco taxes is essential to achieving the reduction in tobacco use needed to reach the NCD goal.

We, therefore, call on Member States to adopt the following commitments at the 2014 High-level meeting on the comprehensive review and assessment of the progress achieved in the prevention and control of NCDs:

- Accelerate implementation of the FCTC, including substantially increasing tobacco taxes and establishing national tobacco tax targets;
- By 2015 develop **costed** national multi-sectoral plans to achieve the NCD national targets, in particular the target of reducing tobacco use prevalence by 2025;
- Commit to allocating sufficient human, technical and financial resources to implement key tobacco control measures based on the WHO costing tool developed in 2011; and
- Request the Secretary-General and the Director-General to invite the FCTC Conference of the Parties to review progress towards achieving a target of a 30 percent reduction in tobacco use prevalence and towards achieving all tobacco control related indicators in order to provide guidance to the Secretary-General in reporting on the progress to the General Assembly or the World Health Assembly.

NCDs are the leading cause of death worldwide and tobacco is the only risk factor common to the four major groups of NCDs. Given this, NCDs and tobacco must be addressed in the post-2015 development agenda. Thus, we encourage governments to support the inclusion of NCDs, tobacco control and the FCTC in the sustainable development goals.

⁵ Para 46 document A/68/650

⁶ Available at: http://apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/10665/112841/1/WHO_NMH_PND_14.2_eng.pdf?ua=1