



Response to the Secretary General's Synthesis Report on the Post-2015 Development Agenda

The Framework Convention Alliance welcomes the opportunity to provide a reaction to the Secretary General's Synthesis Report on the Post-2015 Development Agenda. The FCA is made up of nearly 500 organizations from over 100 countries.

As stated by the Secretary General in the report, people are increasingly being afflicted by the global epidemic of non-communicable diseases (NCDs). The major burden of disease and death in low and middle income countries has shifted from infectious diseases to NCDs. Nearly 80% of NCD related deaths occur in low-and middle-income countries, impeding development at a household and national level.¹

We are pleased to see the inclusion of the burden of non-communicable diseases within the health priorities in this report. Rates are rising extremely fast in low and middle income countries, and if this crisis is not addressed immediately, there will be significant economic consequences. A significant amount of money is spent to train individuals in specific occupations. If they die earlier, as is frequently the case with NCDs, that investment is lost.

If people live longer, healthier, and more productive lives, they are able to contribute to the economy. Thus, we must focus on prevention. The prevention of the four most common NCDs (cancer, cardiovascular disease, chronic respiratory disease, and diabetes) is by far more cost-effective² and less costly to the global economy than treatment and chronic disease management.³

The one risk factor common to the four main groups of NCDs – tobacco use – kills over 6 million people each year.⁴ As the Secretary General stated, we must promote healthy behaviors. This must include decreasing tobacco use.

Tobacco use is perpetuated by globalization and efforts directed towards economic growth, while at the same time representing a source of health and economic inequities and an imminent obstacle to sustainable development. For example, tobacco use is an important obstacle to achieving the following [Sustainable Development Goals](#):

- (Goal 1) End poverty in all its forms everywhere
- (Goal 2) End hunger, achieve food security and improve nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture

¹ WHO. 2010. Global status report on noncommunicable diseases. Geneva: WHO

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

³ Bloom, D.E. et al. 2011. The Global Economic Burden of Noncommunicable Diseases. Geneva: World Economic Forum.

⁴ WHO. 2011. *WHO Report on the global tobacco epidemic*. Geneva: WHO.

- (Goal 4) Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all
- (Goal 8) Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all
- (Goal 11) Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable

Tobacco use kills workers during their most productive years, which drives families further away from prosperity and further into poverty. In some of the poorest households in many countries, 15% of income is spent on tobacco.⁵ This takes away resources from families that could be used for food, education, and shelter.

In order to reduce the burden of disease and death due to tobacco use, as well as the associated negative impacts, countries must implement the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control. The FCTC has been included in the Open Working Group's proposal for SDGs as a means of implementation target under the health goal; however it has not been mentioned in the Secretary General's report. The OWG's proposal states:

“Goal 3: Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages.”

“3a. strengthen implementation of the Framework Convention on Tobacco Control in all countries as appropriate.”

It is imperative that target 3a remains in the text of the SDGs. The treaty contains a comprehensive set of tobacco control policies that are key to prevention and are proven to be successful in all low, middle, and high income countries. The FCTC is an existing legally binding public health treaty in the UN system. This encompasses the purpose of “means of implementation,” which aims to build on existing commitments and governance structures. In addition, by implementing the FCTC, it could provide a source of revenue to finance the SDGs through tobacco taxes.

The Secretary General calls for indicators to be broadly disaggregated across all goals and targets. This is particularly relevant to tobacco control policy based indicators, as they span various areas of sustainable development and should be included under each corresponding goal and target.

We hope that in the coming months the Secretary General and Member States will acknowledge the importance of the FCTC and tobacco control within the post-2015 development agenda, not just in the health context, but from a sustainable development perspective.

⁵ United Nations. 2010. Note by the Secretary-General transmitting the report by the Director-General of the World Health Organization on the global status of non-communicable diseases, with a particular focus on the development challenges faced by developing countries in follow up to the outcome of the Millennium Summit. UN General Assembly: New York