

## WHF Statement – Agenda Item 11.7 – Preparation for UN HLM on NCDs in 2018

Honourable Chair, distinguished delegates,

The World Heart Federation welcomes the Secretariat's report.

We commend WHO for emphasizing in their report that taking action on NCDs is first and foremost a political choice, and we further commend the Secretariat for highlighting the chronic underfunding of the response to this epidemic.

We believe that investing in interventions to tackle NCDs, such as cardiovascular disease (or CVD), is a matter of health justice, affecting the most vulnerable among us. 82% of premature deaths from NCDs in 2015 occur in LMICs, and 37% are caused by CVD.<sup>1</sup>

Despite this, only 1.2% of global development assistance for health went to NCD-related interventions in 2011.<sup>2</sup> Yet the recent report '*Saving Lives, Spending Less*' demonstrates real return on investment for governments. For every US\$1 per person per year spent on the WHO Best Buys, there is a yield of US\$7, and a priceless return in improved health and wellbeing.

We therefore urge Heads of State, Ministers of Health and Finance to attend the High-level Meeting on 27<sup>th</sup> September to commit to better health and improved economic development in their countries.

We further call on political leaders to **commit to action in three key areas** that can have an immediate and long-lasting impact to reduce CVD risk throughout the life course:

1. **Treat Those at Risk of Heart Attack and Stroke:** Strengthen health systems to provide access to screening, essential medicines, and care for people with hypertension and at high risk of heart attack and stroke.
2. **Step Up Action on Childhood Obesity to Protect Children and Future Generations:** Implementing the recommendations of the Commission on Ending Childhood Obesity (ECHO) will protect children everywhere and prevent future deaths and disability from CVD.
3. **Tax Unhealthy Commodities:** Introduce or increase taxes on unhealthy commodities such as tobacco products, alcohol and sugar-sweetened beverages (SSBs). Governments should earmark resources raised from these taxes to invest in NCD prevention and control.

Thank you for your attention.

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<sup>1</sup> [http://www.who.int/en/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/cardiovascular-diseases-\(cvds\)](http://www.who.int/en/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/cardiovascular-diseases-(cvds))

<sup>2</sup> [https://www.path.org/publications/files/NCD\\_nes\\_exec\\_summary.pdf](https://www.path.org/publications/files/NCD_nes_exec_summary.pdf)