

CARDIOVASCULAR HEALTH AT THE HEART OF GLOBAL ACTION

ON THE ROAD TO THE 4TH UN
HIGH-LEVEL MEETING AND
MENTAL HEALTH



Cardiovascular disease (CVD) remains the world's leading cause of death, responsible for 20 million lives lost every year. This is part of a broader challenge: non-communicable diseases (NCDs), including cardiovascular disease, diabetes, cancer, and chronic respiratory conditions, now account for nearly three-quarters of deaths worldwide.

Most of these deaths could be prevented with accessible, comprehensive and timely health care, and stronger policies. Yet, noncommunicable diseases continue to be severely underfunded, receiving only 1% to 2% of global health financing. The situation is especially dire in low- and middle-income countries, where health systems are often under-resourced and ill-equipped to manage the

rising tide of cardiovascular disease. Of the 193 Member States of the World Health Organization, only 16 currently have national strategies or action plans dedicated to heart health, most of them in Europe and the Western Pacific.

The upcoming United Nations High-Level Meeting on Non-Communicable Diseases and Mental Health, taking place on 25 September 2025, is a crucial opportunity to confront this imbalance and elevate cardiovascular health on the global agenda. Stronger policies, greater investments, and a renewed global commitment to heart health are critical, not only to save lives today, but to build healthier, more resilient populations for the future.



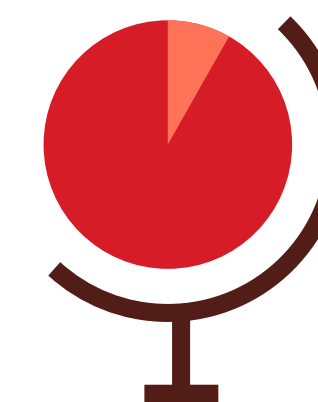
**CARDIOVASCULAR DISEASE IS
THE LEADING CAUSE OF DEATH
WORLDWIDE.**



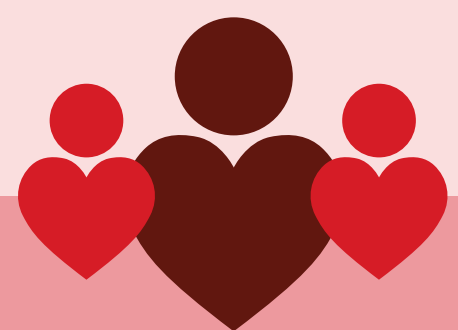
**UP TO 80% OF PREMATURE
DEATHS FROM CVD ARE
PREVENTABLE.**



**ONLY 1–2% OF GLOBAL HEALTH
FUNDING GOES TOWARD
PREVENTING AND TREATING
CVD AND OTHER NCDs.**



**ONLY 16 OUT OF 193 WHO
COUNTRIES HAVE NATIONAL
CARDIOVASCULAR HEALTH
PLANS.**



WHAT IS THE UN HIGH-LEVEL MEETING ON NCDs AND MENTAL HEALTH?

The UN High-Level Meeting is a key international event convened by the United Nations to bring together heads of state, government officials and high-level representatives from member countries, as well as civil society organizations, experts and the private sector.

These meetings are held infrequently and focus on addressing critical global issues that require collective action and international cooperation.

The 4th UN High-Level Meeting on NCDs and Mental Health will be held on 25 September 2025 during the 80th United Nations General Assembly to tackle the rising burden of NCDs, of which cardiovascular disease represents the highest burden.



WHAT IS THE GOAL OF THE 4TH UN HIGH-LEVEL MEETING?

The meeting aims to mobilize political commitment from world leaders to take urgent action in reducing the NCD burden.

The **Political Declaration** that will emerge from this meeting is a key document that will outline the **commitments of UN Member States to take concrete steps in tackling NCDs**.

A Zero Draft for the meeting was shared in May. Since then, multiple consultations and rounds of feedback from Member States have taken place. WHF has also provided comments and will continue to contribute to the process until the UN High-Level Meeting takes place. These documents provide the initial proposals for the commitments and actions to be discussed and agreed upon during the meeting, setting the stage for the political declaration.



WHY IS THE 4TH UN HIGH-LEVEL MEETING IMPORTANT FOR CARDIOVASCULAR DISEASE?

- ♥ This UN High-Level Meeting offers an opportunity for world leaders to reaffirm their commitment to addressing CVD. Strengthening political will is key to mobilizing resources, improving policies, and enhancing responses to CVD prevention, treatment, and care.
- ♥ Policies discussed at the meeting, such as taxes on tobacco, alcohol and sugar-sweetened beverages and enhanced hypertension treatment, can directly reduce CVD risks. Additionally, strong health systems, particularly primary healthcare, are vital for effective prevention, diagnosis, and treatment.
- ♥ CVD inclusion in Universal Health Coverage (UHC) ensures accessible prevention and care for all.

WHAT ARE OUR KEY ASKS AT THE 4TH UN HIGH LEVEL MEETING ON NCDS?

1. TREAT 500 MILLION MORE PEOPLE WITH HYPERTENSION BY 2030, AIMING FOR 50% HYPERTENSION CONTROL.

- ♥ Improve primary healthcare systems for better diagnosis, treatment, and follow-up.
- ♥ Focus on vulnerable groups, especially in low- and middle-income countries.

2. TAX TOBACCO, ALCOHOL AND SUGAR- SWEETENED BEVERAGES BY AT LEAST 50% TO REDUCE CONSUMPTION AND RAISE FUNDS FOR HEALTH SYSTEMS.

3. IMPLEMENT THE WHO'S 2021 AIR QUALITY GUIDELINES TO REDUCE POLLUTION AND PREVENT MILLIONS OF CVD DEATHS.

- ♥ Set national air quality targets and invest in monitoring systems.

4. ADDRESS SYSTEMIC HEALTH INEQUITIES AND ESTABLISH SUSTAINABLE FINANCING STRUCTURES FOR CARDIOVASCULAR DISEASE MANAGEMENT.

- ♥ Close financing gaps by increasing domestic health budgets and scaling up development assistance for NCDs, with specific prioritization of LMICs.

5. COMMIT TO A 50% REDUCTION IN NCD- RELATED DEATHS AND DISABILITY ACROSS ALL AGE GROUPS BY 2050.

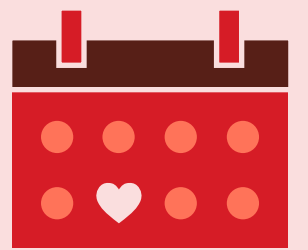
- ♥ Broaden the existing SDG 3.4 target to cover children, adolescents, and older adults, beyond the 30–70 age range.
- ♥ Include morbidity in national and global targets and monitoring frameworks.

AS WHF MEMBERS, HOW CAN YOU ENGAGE IN AND CONTRIBUTE TO THE 4TH UN HIGH-LEVEL MEETING?



BEFORE 25 SEPTEMBER

As WHF Members, you can urge your government to prioritize cardiovascular disease in national policies and the UN High-Level Meeting discussions:



- ♥ **Join our World Heart Day campaign:** This year's World Heart Day theme, "Don't Miss a Beat," is a powerful reminder that every heartbeat matters, and every second counts. Get involved on 29 September and help us spread the word!
- ♥ **Sign our petition:** Sign our petition demanding a cardiovascular health plan in every country.
- ♥ **Email your elected officials:** Use our template to email your elected representatives and urge them to support national strategies for cardiovascular health.
- ♥ **Share our social media templates** to amplify the message and engage the public on CVD issues.
- ♥ **Develop your own advocacy messages:** Create advocacy materials, share evidence-based findings, and/or use WHF resources to inform policymakers about the importance of CVD in the global NCD agenda.
- ♥ **Engage in regional and global consultations,** side events, workshops and briefings to share evidence-based strategies for CVD prevention and care.
- ♥ **Join forces with health organizations,** and other stakeholders to push for CVD-related targets at the UN High-Level Meeting.

AFTER 25 SEPTEMBER

- ♥ Monitor progress on CVD-related commitments and ensure the political declaration is followed through.
- ♥ Participate in or organize policy dialogues to maintain momentum and keep CVD a priority on health agendas.
- ♥ Advocate for the development and implementation of National CV Health Action Plans.
- ♥ Lead efforts to share successful models and interventions, such as through webinars and reports.
- ♥ Continue lobbying for the adoption of HLM recommendations, especially for CVD prevention, treatment, healthcare system strengthening, ensuring adequate funding for CVD.