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## **Crossing sectors, breaking down silos: Highlights of the NCDA 2016 Annual Report**

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José Luis Castro, Chair of the NCD Alliance, speaking at the event "Leveraging Solutions to Improve Access to Healthcare for People Living with NCDs", held in September 2016 on the sidelines of the 70 UN General Assembly in New York. © Adam Watt

***The NCD Alliance is delighted to release our [annual report for 2016](#) [1]. Once again, we're reflecting carefully on progress made and lessons learned, and we're setting our sights firmly ahead in our commitment to making NCDs a priority everywhere. The 2016 annual report provides a snapshot of the activities and achievements of NCDA: of our network, supporters, partners, volunteers, and staff. It serves as a testament and heartfelt thank you to our community as we move closer towards meeting our common goal: to reduce the NCD burden for people everywhere.***

### **From vision to action**

On-going global advocacy is the beating heart of our mission to turn the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) into solid action for NCDs. It has been a busy, invigorating year for NCDA. As a growing global alliance, we've been working round the clock and on all fronts to unlock new partnerships, capabilities and win-win solutions across the sustainable development community.

Our motto has always been *"together we are stronger"*. In 2016, we intensified our efforts to cooperate, collaborate and communicate across all sectors. From nutrition to the environment; HIV/AIDS to women and children's health, we've continued to join forces and connect the dots, break down silos and develop integrated co-benefit approaches.

Achieving our goals means moving with the times. As the global threat of NCDs grows, we as a network must evolve to meet new challenges head on. In the lead-up to the 2018 UN High-Level Meeting on NCDs, which will examine progress achieved in the prevention and control of NCDs, we are giving greater emphasis to specific modifiable risk factors, particularly alcohol use and physical inactivity.

### **Strengthening capacity, sharpening focus**

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*"We believe that a vibrant civil society movement is central to achieving WHO's "25 x 25" target of a 25% reduction in premature mortality from NCDs by 2025."*

During 2016, we scaled up national and regional capacity development activities, and increased our focus on patient engagement and empowerment. By working with local civil society partners, we have been continuously building expertise and supporting coalitions that demand change for NCD prevention and control, influence the policy environment, and monitor progress.

Over the past year, we have expanded the reach of regional NCD civil society meetings and continued to work together to build an evidence base. These efforts have borne fruit. The number of national and regional NCD alliances has risen to 52 and counting – with more civil society organisations coming together to form united platforms for NCD advocacy.

At the end of 2016, we proudly announced the second Global NCD Alliance Forum for 9-11 December 2017, to be held in Sharjah UAE, and we are gearing up to the 2018 High-Level Meeting on NCDs with grit, gusto and purpose.

Last year, we rejuvenated the NCDA website to boost the accessibility and value of NCDA's digital platform for knowledge exchange, advocacy resources and capacity building activities. We also stepped up our social media engagement and translated resources into multiple languages to extend our reach and impact across geographies and audiences.

### **Evolving NCDA governance and operations to deliver impact**

Our delivery and impact as an alliance is set to increase, as we laid foundations during 2016 to implement important governance changes in 2017. These changes are geared to make NCDA more inclusive, strengthen its sustainability, and harness members' and partners' strengths and actions.

By the middle of 2017, NCDA will be a registered NGO in Switzerland with a newly appointed President, Board, and consolidated membership base; marking the start of a new chapter.

This transition will not change NCDA's well established and effective operating model and strategy but has important implications. NCDA now has even greater potential to invigorate the NCD community at a crucial time with the upcoming 2018 UN High-level Review on NCDs. With progress off track, a stronger, united civil society network will drive action at national level to ensure progress toward achieving global NCD prevention and control targets.

### **We are what you make us**

NCDA's achievements are rooted in our collaboration with our global network, supporters, experts, federations, and partners, for which we are thankful. *"Together we are stronger"* is our enduring mantra, and we look forward to you joining us on the next chapter of our journey. As long as NCDs continue to present challenges, we will work with determination, resourcefulness and ambition, in tireless pursuit of our common goal: *to reduce their burden for people, everywhere.*

### **About the Author**

**Katie Dain** ([@KatieDain1](#) [2]) is the NCD Alliance Executive Director. She has worked with NCDA since its founding in 2009. Her experience has included organisational and strategic development; global advocacy and policy-making; and program design and capacity-building in low- and middle-income countries. Katie is widely recognised as a leading advocate and expert on NCDs, and has authored or co-authored numerous papers and commentaries on global health and development policy issues.

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