

## 10 key moments for the NCD movement in 2023

Language English



NCDA at WHA 76

The NCD movement's efforts to accelerate action on NCDs have paid off this year. From raising the profile of NCDs and people living with NCDs on national and international health agendas to concrete policy wins, here are the 10 highlights of 2023.

### UN holds 3 High-Level Meetings on health

2023 saw three High-Level Meetings on health: 1. Universal Health Coverage (UHC), 2. Fight against tuberculosis, 3. Pandemic prevention, preparedness and response.

The NCD movement engaged deeply in the HLM UHC. NCD Alliance (NCDA) published a [critical response to the draft Political Declaration](#) [1], calling for the global community to keep the pressure on decision-makers at national level so that they fulfil commitments made in the document.

The World Health Organization (WHO) Presidential Group on NCDs, an informal, voluntary, and collaborative group of Heads of State and Government interested in NCDs, met on the sidelines of the HLM UHC. Speakers highlighted the progress seen and barriers faced in low- and middle-income countries and regions. Countries such as Barbados, Timor Leste, and Ghana related their experiences in the fight against NCDs, [reported Health Policy Watch](#) [2].

[Watch the meeting](#) [3].

Despite this unprecedented health focus and strong declarations by many governments, commitments made fell short of the concrete actions and targets needed.

According to an NCD Alliance [official statement](#) [4], health advocates were disappointed that the political declaration from the HLM on UHC did not make stronger commitments to addressing inequalities and financial risk protection, and lacked specific targets on health spending. There was also a missed opportunity for the declaration to recognize people living with health conditions, including noncommunicable diseases (NCDs), as a vulnerable group.



*Monica Arora, NCDA President, speaking at HLM UHC.*

### Bridgetown Declaration adopted

The Bridgetown Declaration was adopted by Small Island Developing States (SIDS) at the SIDS Ministerial Conference on NCDs and Mental Health, held in Barbados in June.

NCDA, along with the Healthy Caribbean Community, lauded the document for its focus, including its recommendations to:

- Adopt a SIDS-specific approach to deliver on the commitments in the Global NCD Compact 2020-2030;
- Address the commercial determinants of health and climate change as the main drivers of the burden of NCDs.

It is [hoped](#) [5] that this Conference will be a turning point for SIDS, supported by the global community, to accelerate action on the largely preventable burden of NCDs, including mental, neurological and substance use disorders (MNSDs), that disproportionately impacts SIDS. People living in SIDS are at higher risk of dying prematurely from a major NCD, and SIDS show the highest rates of childhood and adult obesity worldwide.

[Listen to an analysis on Voices of the health revolution](#) [6].



*Liz Arnanz, NCD Alliance Policy & Advocacy Manager (on the left), and Katie Dain, NCD Alliance CEO (on the right), with Colin Tukuitonga, Co-Chair of the SIDS High-Level Policy Expert Group.*

### **Mexican lawmakers ban use of trans fats**

Thanks to a successful campaign by Mexico SaludHable, supported by Resolve to Save Lives and NCD Alliance, lawmakers in Mexico banned the use of trans fats. The substances, also known as industrially-produced trans fatty acids or partially hydrogenated oils, cause 13,000 deaths a year in Mexico and 540,000 globally.

Trans fats are a common ingredient in processed foods and a major cause of cardiovascular disease and stroke.

[Read more](#) [7].





[8]

## WHO launches Framework on Meaningful Engagement

In May, WHO launched its Framework on Meaningful Engagement of People living with NCDs and Mental Health and Neurological Conditions. It is designed to provide practical guidance, norms, and standards to support WHO and Member States to advance, co-create, and enhance policies, programmes, and services via the meaningful engagement of people with lived experience.

The WHO Framework is aligned with the NCDA [Global Charter on Meaningful Involvement of People Living with NCDs](#) [9] and will support advocacy work towards ensuring meaningful involvement. Since 2021, NCDA, our network and the Our Views, Our Voices Advisory Committee have provided inputs and feedback to the Framework as part of the consultative process towards its development. [Read more](#) [10].



## India's NCD programme spotlights meaningful engagement

Also in May, India's Ministry of Health and Family Welfare revamped its existing national programme, which focused on prevention and control of specific NCDs, to become the comprehensive National Programme for Prevention and Control of Non-Communicable Diseases (NP-NCD).

The Operational Guidelines of the NP-NCD emphasise: task-sharing and people-centred care; health promotion; screening, early diagnosis and management; capacity-building; and multisectoral coordination. The Guidelines also include:

- Creation of a consortium of stakeholders – NCD Network India; and
- Advocacy and networking with people living with NCDs.

Inclusion of meaningful involvement of people living with NCDs in the Operational Guidelines is an important win for the Healthy India Alliance (HIA). Through its network of people living with NCDs, HIA is now working with key stakeholders towards effective implementation of the Guidelines. [Read more](#) [11].

## The global NCD community cares: Global Week for Action

The theme for the 2023 Global Week for Action on NCDs, the sixth year of the event, was **The moment for caring**. Like its predecessors, this Global Week continued to engage more members of the NCD movement, in more ways, than ever before. This included:

- 10 Global Champions engaged, including 6 Heads of State or Government
- 12 blogs authored by NCDA members and posted on [actonncds.org](https://actonncds.org)
- 68 events worldwide entered on the Map of Impact
- 2,044,521 posts viewed on NCDA's social media channels, leading to,
- 1,089 new followers. [Read the evaluation report](#) [12].





### Report finds devastating financial impact of NCDs on households

Globally, the money that people must spend out-of-pocket (OOP) on NCDs treatment and care is estimated to be twice as high per visit to a health facility than for infectious diseases, revealed a new report by NCDA and The George Institute.

OOP spending hits people living with NCDs in low- and mid-income countries (LMICs) especially hard. For example, those in low-income countries pay 44% of costs OOP while the figure in high-income countries is 21%, found the report, titled Paying the price.

The result? People living with NCDs in LMICs are at greater risk of catastrophic health expenditure, spending that exceeds 40% of income. In some countries more than 60% of people living with cancer, diabetes and stroke experience catastrophic spending. [Read more](#) [13].

# PAYING THE PRICE

A deep dive into the household economic burden of care experienced by people living with noncommunicable diseases

## POLICY RESEARCH REPORT



[14]

## Created: Africa Regional Advocacy Agenda of People Living with NCDs

The Africa Regional Advocacy Agenda of People Living with NCDs underlines key challenges and calls to action to address Africa's NCD burden within four pillars: 1. Human rights and social justice, 2. Prevention, 3. Treatment, care and support, and 4. Meaningful involvement.

The Africa Regional Advocacy Agenda was developed by 238 people living with NCDs as a part of the Africa NCD Network's partnership with NCDA, drawing on the Our Views, Our Voices initiative to promote the meaningful involvement of people living with NCDs in Africa in the NCD response. [Read more](#) [15].



## THE AFRICA REGIONAL ADVOCACY AGENDA OF PEOPLE LIVING WITH NCDS

[16]

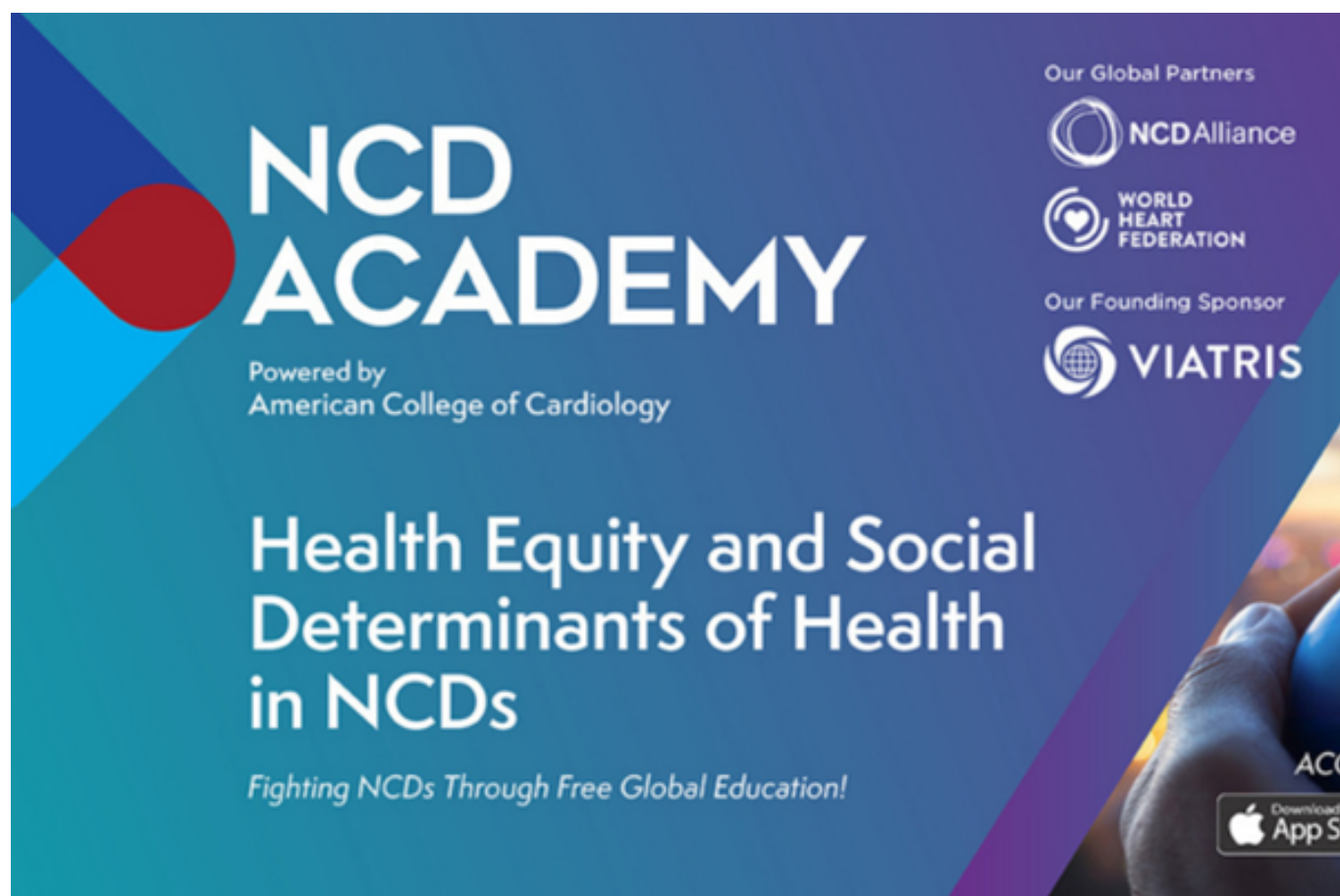
### Course launched on health equity and social determinants of health

The NCD Academy launched a new course, Health Equity and Social Determinants of Health in NCDs. It aims to educate and increase awareness of health inequities and provide support on how to address them to achieve equitable care for all.

Course topics include an overview of social determinants of health, a closer look at the impact of structural discrimination, and strategies for tackling disparities in vulnerable communities, as well as in low- and middle-income countries.

The Academy is a user-friendly interactive online platform developed by the American College of Cardiology (USA), in partnership with NCDA and the World Heart Federation and sponsored by Viatrix. [Read more](#) [17].





## New report finds that integration = *Spending wisely*

Integrating NCD health services for people living with HIV delivers significant returns on investment and better health outcomes for patients, according to a report launched by NCDA and RTI International.

Titled [Spending Wisely: Exploring the Economic and Societal Benefits of Integrating HIV/AIDS and NCDs Service Delivery](#) [18], the report found that integrated HIV-NCD programmes can save resources for both patients and health systems. Patients benefit the most (about 85% of the total savings) because of synchronized care visits, or care offered closer to their homes. [Read more](#) [19].

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## Looking to 2024 and beyond

- **22-27 January 2024** — 157th meeting of the [WHO Executive Board](#) [21];
- **27-29 February 2024** — [Global high-level technical meeting on NCDs in humanitarian settings: building resilient health systems, leaving no-one behind](#) [22]. Will bring together NCD, emergency, refugee and health systems experts from UN agencies, Member States, academic bodies and international and national non-State actors to strengthen the integration of NCDs in humanitarian responses;
- **27 May – 1 June 2024** — [77th World Health Assembly](#) [23];
- **20-22 October 2024** — [4th NCD Forum](#) [24] — Organized by the NCD Alliance (NCDA) in partnership with the Rwanda NCD Alliance as local host, the Forum will offer a prime opportunity to unite and mobilize civil society ahead of the next UN High-Level Meeting on NCDs in 2025;
- **June** — [Global dialogue on financing national NCD responses](#) [25];
- **2025** — [4th High-Level Meeting on NCDs](#) [25] — The Fourth High-level Meeting of the UN General Assembly in 2025 is a deadline for a set of nine voluntary global targets for the prevention and control of NCDs.

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[Global Week for Action on NCDs](#) [27]

[Advocacy Institute](#) [28]

[meaningful involvement](#) [29]

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[2] <https://healthpolicy-watch.news/ncd-gathering-unga/>

[3] <https://webtv.un.org/en/asset/k1i/k1izc95fqu>

[4] <https://ncdalliance.org/news-events/news/un-high-level-meeting-on-universal-health-coverage-falls-short-of-commitments>

[5] <https://ncdalliance.org/news-events/news/bridgetown-declaration-brings-high-hopes-for-healthier-sids>

[6] <https://ncdalliance.org/why-ncds/voices-of-the-health-revolution>

[7] <https://ncdalliance.org/news-events/news/mexican-lawmakers-ban-use-of-trans-fats-which-cause-13000-deaths-a-year-in-the-country>

[8] <https://old.ncdalliance.org/ncdalliance.org/news-events/news/mexican-lawmakers-ban-use-of-trans-fats-which-cause-13000-deaths-a-year-in-the-country>

[9] <https://ncdalliance.org/what-we-do/capacity-development/our-views-our-voices/global-charter-on-meaningful-involvement-of-people-living-with-ncds>

[10] <https://ncdalliance.org/news-events/news/new-who-framework-provides-technical-guidance-for-meaningful-engagement-recognises-the-value-of-lived-experience>

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[12] <https://actonncds.org/news/20231129-global-week-action-evaluation-report-shows-more-impact-and-reach-ever>

[13] <https://ncdalliance.org/news-events/news/new-report-confirms-devastating-financial-impact-of-ncds-on-households-and-a-crippling-lack-of-data>

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[15] <https://ncdalliance.org/resources/africa-regional-advocacy-agenda-of-people-living-with-ncds>

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