A person dies every two seconds from an NCD, says WHO report

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Every two seconds, a person under the age of 70 dies of an NCD, and 86% of those deaths occur in low- and middle-income countries (LMICs), says the World Health Organization in a new report **[1]and accompanying data portal [2]announced today on the sides of the 77**th **UN General Assembly (UNGA).**

NCDs are one of the greatest health and development challenges of this century. Chief among them - cardiovascular diseases (heart disease and stroke), cancer [3], diabetes [4]and chronic respiratory diseases [5], along with mental health [6], cause nearly three-quarters of deaths in the world and kill 41 million people every year.

The large majority of these deaths occur in LMICs, making NCDs [7]an equity and development issue. In lower-income settings around the world, millions of people cannot access the prevention, treatment and care that could prevent or delay NCDs and their consequences.

The report*, Invisible numbers: The true extent of noncommunicable diseases and what to do about them* spotlights the numbers behind the noncommunicable disease burden and their risk factors. It also shows cost-effective and globally applicable interventions that can change those numbers and save lives and money.

> *"This report confirms what we've long suspected - that chronic diseases are now beginning to outstrip infectious diseases as the main driver of mainly preventable ill health and death in lower and middle income countries."* **Katie Dain, CEO of the NCD Alliance.**

The NCD data portal [8]with the latest country-specific data, risk factors and policy implementation for 194 countries brings the numbers in the report to life. It allows the exploration of the data for four NCDs and their main drivers and risk factors. The portal makes the patterns and trends in countries visible and allows comparison across countries or within geographical regions.

> *"We urgently need a major financial and public health reset by national governments and the global*

health community before it is too late - families, say, in East African countries such as Uganda and Kenya are becoming just as concerned about both the health and economic costs of diseases like diabetes and hypertension, as they are about HIV and tuberculosis." **Katie Dain, CEO of the NCD Alliance**

The report and data portal come at a critical juncture for public health: in 2022, only a handful of countries were on track to meet the Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) target on reducing early deaths from NCDs by a third by 2030. This is despite the fact that the NCDs are truly at the heart of sustainable development and their prevention and treatment is a prime opportunity for investment that will have myriad impacts on economic growth, far outweighing the money spent.

"The imperative for action is clear and urgent. NCDs will cost more suffering and lives this decade than any other health issue; will drain the global economy and impede human capital; will both fuel and be fuelled by the growing inequalities in our countries and globally; and will undermine any efforts to ensure the world is better prepared for future pandemics after COVID-19. Inaction and paralysis is not a viable option." **Katie Dain, CEO of the NCD Alliance**

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