

UN ECOSOC calls for scaling up of resources for NCDs as part of the COVID-19 response

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The United Nations (UN) Economic and Social Council ([ECOSOC](#) [1]) adopted a [resolution](#) [2] on the United Nations Inter-agency Taskforce on the prevention and control of noncommunicable diseases earlier this month as part of the COVID-19 response and recovery.

The resolution recognized that people living with NCDs are more susceptible to COVID-19 and are among the hardest hit by the pandemic and called on the Task Force to scale up their support to Member States.

The resolution emphasized the need to mobilize resources for NCDs and mental health, including the new multi-partner trust fund for NCDs and mental health that is being established, in line with World Health Assembly decision [WHA72\(11\)](#) [3], the recommendation of the WHO Independent High-level Commission on NCDs and previous ECOSOC resolutions ([2017/8](#) [4], [2018/13](#) [5], [2019/9](#) [6]). This year's ECOSOC resolution was led by the Russian Federation and co-sponsored by 11 countries: Armenia, Brazil, Colombia, India, Jamaica, Japan, Kyrgyzstan, Nicaragua, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Thailand and Uruguay.

The work of the Taskforce has become even more relevant in the light of the COVID-19 pandemic. People living with NCDs (PLWNCs) such as cardiovascular disease (e.g. hypertension, heart disease and stroke), chronic respiratory disease, diabetes, obesity and cancer are at a greater risk of becoming severely ill with or dying from COVID-19. This challenge is also significantly exacerbated by the disruption of essential health services for the NCDs in many countries due to the COVID-19 pandemic, with the low- and middle-income countries being the worst affected.

The establishment of a multi-partner trust fund will initially facilitate the integration of NCD prevention and control in national COVID-19 response and recovery plans. It will also support governments to address other persistent issues, including the integration of NCDs and mental health responses into health and development strategies, the implementation of optimized policies (fiscal, legislative and regulatory), and access to life-saving healthcare for NCDs and mental health conditions.

In the new resolution, ECOSOC also requested the Task Force to do more in area of multi-sectoral action and digital health, and ensure the meaningful engagement of communities, including people living with NCDs.

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[1] <https://www.un.org/ecosoc/en/home>

[2] <https://undocs.org/E/2020/L.23>

[3] [https://apps.who.int/gb/ebwha/pdf_files/WHA72/A72\(11\)-en.pdf](https://apps.who.int/gb/ebwha/pdf_files/WHA72/A72(11)-en.pdf)

[4] <https://undocs.org/en/E/RES/2017/8>

[5] <https://undocs.org/en/E/RES/2018/13>

[6] <https://undocs.org/en/E/RES/2019/9>

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