

Policy brief makes undisputable case for investment in NCD prevention and care

Language English



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12 April 2022, Geneva – [Noncommunicable diseases](#) [1] are the world's most prevalent and deadly diseases. They represent a pandemic in their own right, but when mixed with an infectious disease outbreak like COVID-19, the result is devastating. In a newly released policy brief, the NCD Alliance demonstrates that NCD investment must no longer be an afterthought to infectious diseases or neglected within health services. Instead, investment in NCD prevention and care must be urgently prioritised, as part of delivering universal health coverage and for future pandemic preparedness.

The policy brief [Invest to Protect: NCD financing as the foundation for healthy societies and economies](#) [2] argues that governments and the global health community must make substantial changes to achieve a more targeted and strategic approach to investment in the NCD response that will yield long-term dividends. It provides a roadmap to mobilise NCD financing by 2023, outlining specific actions that can be taken by low- and high-income country governments, funding agencies and philanthropies, private sector (provided they are free of conflict of interest with population health) and civil society.

“This brief reinforces what the COVID-19 pandemic has already taught us,” said NCD Alliance CEO Katie Dain. “That a failure to invest in health is a failure to invest in a country’s own security.”

It also demonstrates that the world can still feasibly reach Sustainable Development Goal target 3.4 to reduce premature mortality from NCDs by one-third by 2030, if the necessary investment can be mobilised to implement tailored packages of NCD interventions in every country. For a global investment of US\$18 billion per year, 39 million lives can be saved by 2030. This investment would pay for itself many times over for LMICs, with a projected return of US\$19 for every dollar spent – equating to a global benefit of US\$2.7 trillion by 2030.

The longstanding failure of governments and the global health community to mobilise adequate funding for NCD prevention and care has amplified the human and economic cost of the pandemic, and remains the major barrier worldwide to improving health outcomes and ensuring health system resilience and sustainability.

“This has been a bitter pill to swallow but going forward must serve as a lesson hard learned, a wake-up call for all

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Published on NCD Alliance (<https://old.ncdalliance.org>)

governments: that keeping your citizens healthy from preventable NCDs is not simply about a choice to invest in health, it is an investment to a country's economic stability, security, and tantamount for pandemic preparedness in the future," said Dain.

The brief is primarily intended for health and development advocates, to support engagement with financial decision-makers and investors. It will also be a useful tool for NCDs civil society in the lead up to the Second Global NCD Financing Dialogue set to take place in 2023, and forthcoming UN General Assembly High-Level Meetings on Universal Health Coverage in 2023 and NCDs in 2025.

Post Date: Tuesday, 12 April, 2022

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[1] <https://ncdalliance.org/why-ncds/NCDs>

[2] <https://ncdalliance.org/resources/invest-to-protect-ncd-financing-as-the-foundation-for-healthy-societies-and-economies>

[3] <https://old.ncdalliance.org/taxonomy/term/52>

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