

NCD Alliance Advocacy Briefing 71st WHO AFRO Regional Committee Meeting (Virtual session) 24-26th August 2021

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This briefing note provides an overview of the NCD Alliance's main advocacy priorities and key messages for the 71st WHO AFRO Regional Committee Meeting (RCM). The 2021 RCMs take place as the world continues to grapple with the COVID-19 pandemic.

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Extended Description: This briefing note provides an overview of the NCD Alliance's main advocacy priorities and key messages for the 71st WHO AFRO Regional Committee Meeting (RCM). The 2021 RCMs take place as the world continues to grapple with the COVID-19 pandemic. This year's RCMs are set to be held virtually months after the 74th World Health Assembly (WHA74; held as a hybrid meeting), the United Nations High-Level Political Forum 2021 (HLPF 2021), and the release of the final report of the Independent Panel for Pandemic Preparedness and Response.

This year RCMs present a key opportunity to encourage rapid implementation of global commitments, especially those set out in Political Declarations of the High-Level Meetings (HLMs) on Noncommunicable diseases (NCDs) and Universal Health Coverage (UHC) and captured in the NCD-related Resolutions and Decisions adopted by the WHA74 in May 2021. RCMs can also be pivoted to encourage leaders to drive progress at a rate which goes above and beyond the language contained within these documents, catalysing a wider international response.

The areas outlined in this briefing are intended to support advocates in conversations with Member State representatives and combine relevant agenda items and key messages used for the past global meetings, as well as those specific for agenda items for the 71st session of the WHO AFRO RCM. Official documents for the meeting can be found [here](#).

Key messages

- We urge Member States to prioritise a whole-of-government response to the COVID-19 pandemic. This entails deploying coherent measures to contain the virus and mitigate its impacts, as far as possible, on all sectors, including health, social care, the economy, employment, education, and trade.
- We urge Member States to include NCDs in COVID-19 response, recovery and preparedness plans, and

ensure their national plans are designed around their community's most pressing needs. In order to understand people's needs, community engagement must be enshrined in national response and recovery plans.

- We urge governments to prioritise UHC, strengthen health services and primary care at the community level. Efforts to strengthen pandemic preparedness and UHC can be mutually reinforcing, and core measures for addressing the pandemic should be rooted in UHC to ensure inclusive and continuous health services before, during, and after outbreaks.

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