



World Health
Organization

WHO Global Coordination Mechanism on the Prevention and Control of NCDs (GCM/NCD)

Engagement Strategy for GCM Participants

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Introduction

Noncommunicable diseases (NCDs) have a far-reaching impact, affecting people from "all walks of life, and in all parts of the world", posing devastating health consequences for individuals, families, and communities worldwide" [1]. Over the past 20 years, NCDs have become the leading cause of death in most countries, resulting in 200 million premature deaths among women and men aged between 30 and 70, the majority living in low- and middle-income countries [2]. During the next 10 years, at least another 150 million premature deaths from NCDs will occur unless urgent and collective action is taken.

Pathway analyses in the NCD Countdown 2030 report [3] show that, in 2021, every country still had options for achieving SDG target 3.4 by 2030 – *to reduce by one-third premature mortality from non-communicable diseases through prevention and treatment and promote mental health and well-being*. Several of these options are based on the consensus that addressing the prevention and control of NCDs and their determinants (social, environmental, economic, and commercial) requires action from sectors beyond health and coordinated collaboration with a wide range of stakeholders.

This is because much of the NCD burden is caused by modifiable risk factors, which are strongly influenced by complex contexts such as rapid urbanization, climate change, pandemic threats, the proliferation of unhealthy commodities, extreme poverty, inequities, and multimorbidity [4]. Therefore, addressing NCDs is determined largely by policies and actions reaching beyond the health sector.

The 2018 Political Declaration of the 3rd High-Level Meeting of the General Assembly on NCDs states that governments need to address a broad range of social, economic and governance issues for the prevention and control of NCDs [5]. The WHO Global Action Plan for the Prevention and Control of Noncommunicable diseases 2013-2030 (NCD-GAP) [6] additionally emphasizes that effective NCD prevention and control requires leadership, coordinated multisectoral and multistakeholder engagement across a broad range of sectors, and partnerships with relevant civil society and private sector entities.

Only through cross-sectoral coherence, stakeholder collaboration and cooperation at national, regional, and global levels can countries achieve effective and inclusive policies, programmes, and services to reduce the preventable and avoidable burden of morbidity, mortality, and disability due to NCDs and mental health conditions.



WHO Global Coordination Mechanism on the Prevention and Control of NCDs

The WHO Global Coordination Mechanism on the Prevention and Control of NCDs (GCM/NCD) was established in 2014 by Member States at the Sixty-seventh World Health Assembly after a two-year intergovernmental process. The GCM/NCD is led by Member States with the engagement of other collaborating partners (i.e., GCM Participants) including United Nations funds, programmes and organizations, other relevant intergovernmental actors, through the United Nations Interagency Task Force on NCDs, and non-State actors, as appropriate [7]. Its unique mandate rests primarily in its engagement capacity to leverage and unite the comparative strengths of its partners in advancing coherent and effective measures for the prevention and control of NCDs.

The GCM/NCD builds on country needs to facilitate and enhance coordination of activities, multistakeholder engagement and action across government sectors at the local, national, regional and global levels [7].

The GCM/NCD's vision is to catalyze united and inclusive action towards a world free from premature mortality from NCDs and mental health conditions through a life-course approach [8].

The GCM/NCD supports the implementation of the WHO global action plan for the prevention and control of noncommunicable diseases 2013-2030 (NCD GAP) across its six objectives, in particular advancing objective 2 – to strengthen national capacity, leadership, governance, multisectoral action and partnerships to accelerate country response for the prevention and control of NCDs [6].

The GCM/NCD is part of the Global NCD Platform department (GNP) at WHO headquarters. The GNP acts as a facilitator, a convener, and an accelerator of action across stakeholders and sectors, including Member States, non-State actors, and the United Nations system [9]. GNP accomplishes this by increasing synergies and amplifying the impact of the GCM/NCD and the United Nations Interagency Task Force on NCD prevention and control at global, regional, and country levels.



In 2021, the World Health Assembly endorsed a decision on “the role of the Global Coordination Mechanism on the Prevention and Control of Noncommunicable Diseases in WHO’s work on multistakeholder engagement for the prevention and control of noncommunicable disease” [10]. The decision extended the GCM/NCD’s mandate until 2030, to support countries to achieve the SDG 3.4 and NCD-related targets and highlighted five priority areas of work for the GCM/NCD (see Box 1).

BOX 1

GCM Priority Areas

The priority areas ensure a more focused approach to implementation in line with the scope and purpose of the GCM/NCD, as provided by its terms of reference, and alignment across the WHO NCD-related programme.

- 1 Serving as the operational backbone for knowledge collaboration and the dissemination of innovative multistakeholder responses at country level, by raising awareness and promoting knowledge collaboration among Member States and non-State actors and by co-creating, enhancing, and disseminating evidence-based information to support governments on effective multisectoral and multistakeholder approaches;
- 2 Enabling global stocktaking of multistakeholder action at country level for the co-design and scale of innovative approaches, solutions, and initiatives to strengthen effective multisectoral and multistakeholder action;
- 3 Providing or updating guidance to Member States on engagement with non-State actors, including on the prevention and management of potential risks;
- 4 Serving as a global facilitator for the strengthened capacity of Member States and civil society to develop national multistakeholder responses for the prevention and control of NCDs; and
- 5 Convening civil society, including people living with NCDs, and mental health and neurological conditions to raise awareness and build capacity for their meaningful participation in national NCD responses.

Source: WHA74/11 - [https://apps.who.int/gb/ebwha/pdf_files/WHA74/A74\(11\)-en.pdf](https://apps.who.int/gb/ebwha/pdf_files/WHA74/A74(11)-en.pdf)



GCM/NCD Participants

Traditionally, the GCM/NCD Secretariat has engaged with partners focused on NCD advocacy and capacity development. This engagement strategy will support the GCM/NCD Secretariat to expand its engagement of relevant non-State actors to accommodate a wider, more diverse group of stakeholders beyond health and with a wider geographic focus. For instance, local non-State actors, as opposed to those with a global profile, play a critical role in translating and applying knowledge and best practices at the ground level. They may be ideally positioned to interact with governments and other nongovernmental communities and achieve positive impact at the local level.

While the primary audience for this engagement strategy are non-State actors, people living with NCDs and mental health and neurological conditions offer another critical engagement pathway. The GCM/NCD is committed to valuing their voices, expertise and inputs from the design to the implementation of health programmes and services, and recognizes people with lived experiences as key drivers of political processes.

For the purpose of this engagement strategy, GCM Participants include:

- Non-governmental organizations specializing in delivering, supporting and/or advocating for evidence-informed and equitable NCD prevention and control measures, mitigating modifiable risk factors and supporting the management of NCDs, while addressing the determinants of health in line with SDG 3.4;
- People living with NCDs, mental health and neurological conditions, and related interest and advocacy groups;
- Academic institutions and research entities assessing and producing evidence relevant to tackling the global NCD epidemic through multisectoral and multistakeholder responses;
- Philanthropic foundations and donors funding NCD prevention and care through financial, in-kind or other support;
- Private sector entities, including national or international business associations supporting NCD prevention and control, aligned with WHO framework of engagement with non-State actors [11] (FENSA).



NOTES

- Where appropriate, the GCM/NCD's normative and leadership work aims to benefit from private sector expertise, resources, technologies, and efficiencies. However, the GCM/NCD strictly adheres to the WHO FENSA for any engagement with non-State actors, including the private sector.
- Although the GCM/NCD Secretariat engages with a broad range of individuals and organizations in view of their role in NCD prevention and control, this engagement strategy focuses on WHO-approved GCM Participants aligning with the Terms of Reference of the GCM/NCD and with WHO policies and procedures, including FENSA.



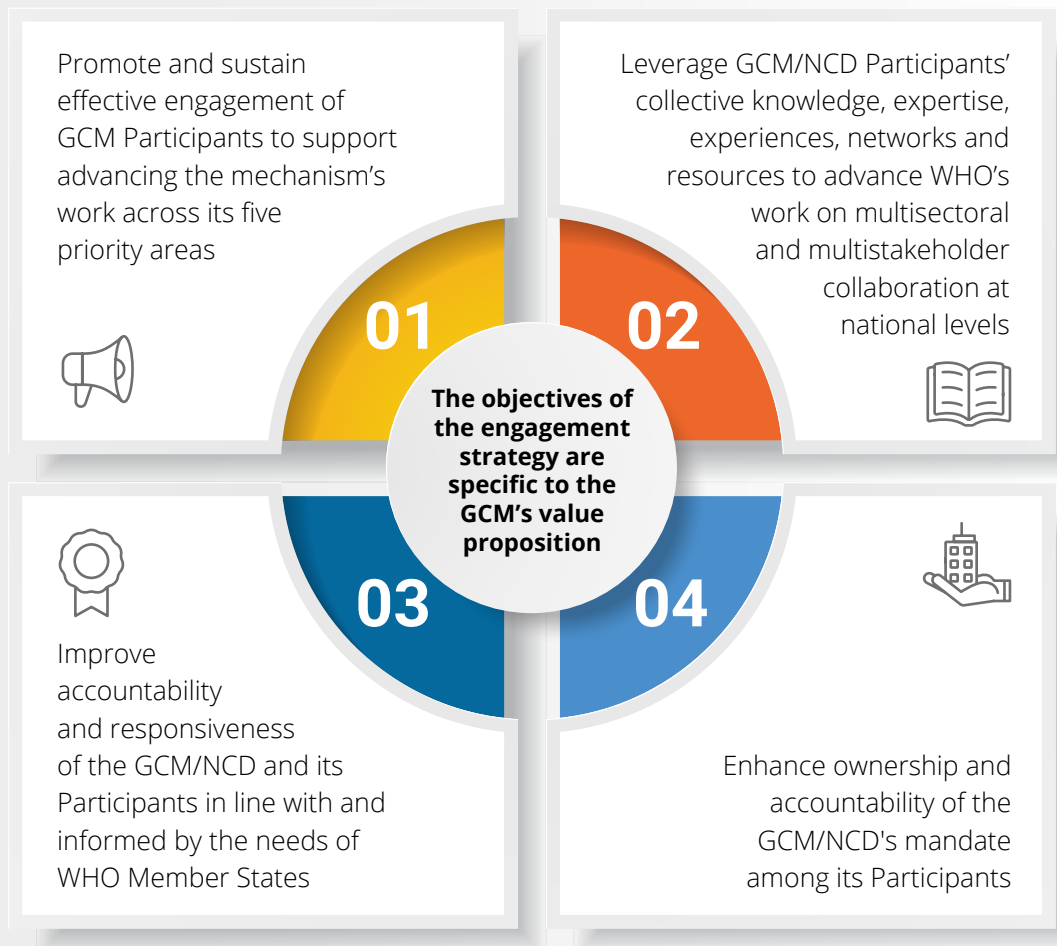
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Purpose and objectives of the engagement strategy

This document outlines the approach that will guide the GCM/NCD's engagement with its Participants. The strategy builds on the lessons learned since the launch of the GCM/NCD in its continuous efforts to engage with the growing scope of Participants and ultimately addresses one of the recommendations of the GCM/NCD's evaluation [12].

The emphasis of this strategy is on leveraging efforts, expertise, and resources to enhance collaboration with and amongst GCM Participants to support the implementation of the GCM/NCD mandate.

The engagement strategy will support (i) optimal performance of the GCM/NCD, with a more focused approach to the delivery of its functions and (ii) alignment with the objectives set in the NCD-GAP and with WHO's ongoing work on noncommunicable diseases.



tap to navigate

Guiding principles of engagement

This engagement strategy draws from the GCM/NCD's collaborative approach and hence aims to be ethical, participatory, rights-based, and outcome-focused. Through implementing these principles, the engagement strategy will additionally ensure that all activities under the GCM/NCD adhere to WHO's mission and standards.

PRINCIPLE 1

Engagement for advancing actions on the prevention and control of NCDs

The Secretariat of the GCM/NCD and its Participants work together towards facilitating, mobilizing, and strengthening meaningful engagement with relevant stakeholders to advance global, regional, national and local NCD responses in line with WHO's work on NCDs. The GCM/NCD will seek to engage its Participants as legitimate partners to support countries achieve SDG target 3.4 and other NCD-related SDGs, and to liaise with WHO's country and regional offices and governments whenever possible.

Engagement activities with GCM Participants are outcome-focused, taking into account a life-course approach to NCDs. Activities are measured by clear indicators focused on providing technical assistance, supporting policy coherence, and promoting, enhancing and enabling multisectoral and multistakeholder responses to accelerate progress in national and local efforts to achieve SDG 3.4.

PRINCIPLE 2

Engagement based on ethical, participatory, and rights-based approaches

The GCM/NCD's engagement will ensure diversity, equity, inclusion, and ethical standards in its operations, following WHO policy and procedures, promoting participatory approaches, and respecting the diverse knowledge and experiences of GCM/NCD Participants. This human rights-based approach is grounded in a commitment to empower individuals and communities, including children, young adults, Indigenous People, and their families, to know and claim their rights to health and participation, without discrimination on the grounds of race, age, gender, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, or any other factors [13].



PRINCIPLE 3

Engagement through effective communication and knowledge-sharing

The GCM/NCD will continue to build relationships with its Participants to promote openness, transparency and trust, acting upon evidence, facts and reliable information, and to provide a forum for knowledge collaboration across its Participants including through the WHO [Knowledge Action Portal \(KAP\)](#), overcoming language and technological barriers of its participants. This is a critical component of GCM/NCD's efforts to build collective knowledge, informing NCD programmes and establishing a collaborative global community committed to a culture of learning and improvement.

PRINCIPLE 4

Engagement through safe spaces, preventing and eliminating perceived or potential conflict of interest

The GCM/NCD's engagement with its Participants is guided by WHO FENSA principles, "to protect WHO from any undue influence, in particular on the processes in setting and applying policies, norms and standards; not compromise WHO's integrity, independence, credibility and reputation; be effectively managed, including by, where possible avoiding conflict of interest, and other forms of risks to WHO; be conducted on the basis of transparency, openness, inclusiveness, accountability, integrity and mutual respect" [14].



Value of engagement

GCM/NCD adds value to its participants by offering:

- A WHO-led platform with the legitimacy to engage with Member States, United Nations funds, programmes and organizations and other relevant intergovernmental organizations, and non-State actors, including fellow GCM Participants;
- A globally active NCD network jointly strategizing, sharing knowledge and information, best practices and lessons learned, and co-designing and co-financing projects to advance multisectoral and multistakeholder actions;
- An interface to connect with, convene and amplify the voices of a diverse group of stakeholders and individuals with lived experiences representing different WHO regions, cultures, areas of work or health conditions;
- Priority access to dedicated tools, online communities, knowledge resources and thematic publications, and special events and consultations; and
- Mutual learning, skill transfer and access to WHO and GCM/NCD expertise and further networks, aiming to promote dialogue and collaboration on NCDs according to WHO policies and procedures.

GCM/NCD Participants contribute with their:

- Strong ability to advocate for and support needs- and evidence-based NCD policy and programme development, capacity building, implementation and monitoring;
- Ability to expand the reach and impact of WHO's recommended NCD policies and actions, particularly with underserved and vulnerable populations and individuals, through multiple and diverse networks, in-kind and financial resources that have the potential to achieve scale and sustainability;
- Expertise and capabilities to support countries in their efforts to implement WHO-recommended policies and programmes to address NCD prevention and control and its determinants; and
- Agility, efficiency and innovation to develop and implement actions to address NCD prevention and control and its determinants, especially at national or subnational levels.



Terms of engagement

Roles and Responsibilities

GCM/NCD Participants have a central and accountable role to play within the Mechanism's mandate. Both the GCM/NCD Secretariat and its Participants commit to roles and responsibilities in relation to this engagement strategy ensuring productive and effective collaboration.

Roles and Responsibilities of GCM Secretariat

- Facilitate and enhance coordination of activities among GCM Participants, in line with its functions and the Principles of Engagement, creating opportunities for co-designing, co-implementing and co-funding projects with its Participants to leverage resources and capacities;
- Consult GCM Participants regularly on the overall direction, strategic activities, and dissemination of GCM/NCD's work, including upcoming opportunities for input and engagement (both in-person and virtual), and communicate and report on progress against GCM/NCD workplan;
- Offer opportunities for GCM/NCD Participants to contribute to and collaborate on dedicated platforms. This can include publishing latest knowledge resources, disseminating their work, sharing lessons learned with relevant networks, and participating and collaborating in WHO-hosted events and roundtables (in person or virtual);
- Provide opportunities for GCM/NCD Participants to engage in working groups to strengthen WHO's technical work and/or provide strategic input on the development and implementation of the GCM/NCD's workplan;
- Support GCM Participants in strengthening their own NCDs-related activities as it relates to GCM's scope of work/mandate, and facilitate their engagement with national and regional WHO NCD teams, when appropriate; and
- Enhance visibility of NCD priorities and guidelines, including their risk factors and determinants, through tailored communication activities taking into account the diversity of GCM Participants.



Roles and Responsibilities of GCM/NCD Participants

- Support, promote, co-design, co-develop and/or co-implement GCM/NCD activities, contributing with expertise, networks and resources (i.e.; in kind or through WHO-agreed funding mechanisms) in support of GCM/NCD's workplan;
- Support the dissemination of WHO's work, including specific GCM/NCD initiatives, through social media materials, news, publications, and other channels as applicable;
- Participate in GCM/NCD events, such as dialogues, general meetings, working groups, consultations, joint activities to advance the GCM/NCD's work; and
- Share relevant information with the GCM/NCD for dissemination through the WHO [Knowledge Action Portal on NCDs \(KAP\)](#) or other communication channels and provide input (written or verbally) to GCM/NCD's work as requested.

Facilitating an active participant base, network, collaboration and continuous contribution, the GCM/NCD Secretariat reserves the right to grant or renounce GCM Participant status.

NOTES

- GCM Participants should promote WHO normative guidance and technical tools, as appropriate to national circumstances, and WHO policies and procedures, including WHO FENSA.
- Sharing information provided by GCM Participants in WHO-hosted platforms and communication channels does not imply endorsement by WHO.
- Participants will, in principle, be responsible for their own expenses in relation to activities under the GCM/NCD (including, but not limited to, travel and subsistence for attending meetings).
- Each GCM Participant may, at its discretion, contribute funds, personnel, and other resources to the GCM/NCD Secretariat, subject to WHO policies and regulations.



Engagement Modalities

The modality for engagement with each of the GCM/NCD's constituent groups (i.e.; NGOs, academia, philanthropic foundations, and the private sector) will be tailored according to the specific task and the resource capabilities of the GCM/NCD Secretariat and its Participants. The modalities are represented in ascending levels, each requiring increased commitment, collaboration, and involvement from the GCM/NCD Secretariat and its Participants.

The following four levels of engagement modalities present GCM/NCD Participants with opportunities to collaborate with WHO. Adherence to WHO policies and procedures is required across all modalities.

LEVEL ONE

Inform and exchange: Information dissemination and knowledge collaboration

The GCM/NCD Secretariat is committed to regularly sharing milestones, updates, news, events, launches, resources, best practices, country cases and opportunities for collaboration, among others, relevant to the WHO, including the GCM/NCD's workplan, and GCM/NCD Participants from across its network. The core public platform for knowledge sharing and collaboration is the Knowledge Action Portal on NCDs (KAP) and the GCM/NCD Newsletter. Information sessions conducted in-person or virtually will further support information exchange.

LEVEL TWO

Involve: Consultations, dialogues, communities of practice and events

GCM/NCD Participants are offered opportunities to engage in multistakeholder consultations, policy dialogues and events to obtain and share inputs, provide guidance and recommendations and network with other GCM/NCD Participants, other WHO programme areas and stakeholders. On the Knowledge Action Portal, Participants have the opportunity to join existing or launch new communities of practice, with dedicated spaces to feature news, stakeholder mapping and connect stakeholders, host thematic knowledge repositories, and facilitate group discussions online.



LEVEL THREE

Collaborate: GCM general meetings, expert groups, working groups* and steering groups

GCM/NCD Participants are engaged to generate knowledge, co-develop plans and policy papers, to provide guidance to WHO through the GCM/NCD Secretariat, and carry out actions based on decisions emerging from the GCM/NCD's collaborative work. For example, the GCM/NCD Secretariat convenes general meetings of GCM/NCD Participants including the participation of people with lived experience of noncommunicable diseases and mental health and neurological conditions to discuss challenges, celebrate successes, identify opportunities to scale best practices in multistakeholder and multisectoral action, and to recognize outstanding contributions to the NCD community.

LEVEL FOUR

Partnering: Collaborating through in-kind or financial contributions

WHO aims to leverage knowledge, networks, and resources of GCM/NCD Participants to strengthen the impact and scope of multisectoral and multistakeholder actions for NCDs. This entails that GCM/NCD Secretariat and its Participants establish collaborations and/or partnerships through formal agreements that can involve financial or in-kind contributions (as appropriate and according to WHO policies and procedures, including FENSA) for the development and/or implementation of projects and activities that contribute to WHO's work through the GCM/NCD.

* The GCM/NCD has a mandate and standing terms of reference for working groups that provide a forum to identify barriers and share innovative solutions and actions for the implementation of the NCD-GAP and to promote sustained actions across sectors. The Secretariat will continue to establish the modality of working groups to support developing and implementing the priorities defined by WHO in the GCM/NCD's workplans.



How to join the GCM/NCD

To join the GCM/NCD, relevant non-State actors can express their interest via a dedicated online form on the Knowledge Action Portal. At this initial stage, candidates are required to provide information on their organizations' name, country, legal status, purpose, focus and areas of work, and alignment with WHO's work and the Sustainable Development Goals, and other relevant information. During the pre-registration process, candidates are required to additionally designate two focal points or delegates.

The GCM/NCD Secretariat will then proceed to screen and assess candidates' applications. Caution will be applied during screening and risk assessment of the private sector and other non-State actors whose policies or activities may be at risk of negatively affecting human health or contradicting with WHO's policies, norms, and standards, in particular those related to noncommunicable diseases and their determinants.

As part of its assessment, the Secretariat will initiate the candidates' FENSA clearance process, determining the assessment of which groups non-State actors belong to (nongovernmental organizations, private sector entities, international business associations, philanthropic foundations, and academic institutions).

When selecting non-State actors, the GCM/NCD will consider a balanced representation of the four groups of non-State actor entities amongst its Participants and may apply additional selection criteria to support thematic or regional balance.

Existing GCM Participants are encouraged to suggest new Participants and are at liberty to leave the network at any point.



More about the GCM/NCD on the Knowledge Action Portal on NCDs
<https://knowledge-action-portal.com/en/about/gcm>



Submit your application to join the GCM/NCD
<https://knowledge-action-portal.com/en/about/join-gcmncd>



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