



14 September 2023

Subject: United Nations High-Level Meeting on Universal Health Coverage 2023 and High-level engagement during the Global Week for Action on NCDs

Dear Sir

It is our privilege to contact you on behalf of the **NCD Alliance** and **South East Asia Regional NCD Alliance (SEAR NCD Alliance)** in relation to the Political Declaration on Universal Health Coverage (UHC) that is currently being negotiated ahead of this September's United Nations High-Level Meeting on the topic in New York, USA.

By way of introduction, [NCD Alliance \(NCDA\)](#) is a global civil society organisation founded in 2009, NCDA unites over 300 members in more than 81 countries. Our mission is to unite, strengthen and stimulate collaborative advocacy, action, and accountability for the prevention and control of non-communicable diseases (NCD). [SEAR NCD Alliance](#), formed in 2020 is an influential consortium that spearheads transformative advancements in global health. At its core, this alliance consists of a vibrant civil society network, encompassing NCDA members, over 65 national and regional alliances, and a formidable assembly of more than 1,000 founding members' associations. Their unwavering commitment converges on a singular objective: the advancement of non-communicable diseases (NCDs) prevention and control on a worldwide scale.

We call on you to engage in the United Nations High-Level Meeting on UHC, taking place on 21st September 2023 and the associated negotiations for a Political Declaration in order to take a lead in the progressive realization of UHC. As we strive to attain UHC, we call for the consideration of the following recommendations from the NCD Alliance and Bangladesh NCD Forum during negotiations:

- The need to **invest** in the prevention and control of NCDs through sustainable and adequate resources for UHC. NCDA commends the UHC Political Declaration zero draft's reference to transitioning toward sustainable financing, domestic resource mobilization, and strengthening international cooperation. We further recommend aligning national spending targets with the Abuja Declaration's goal of allocating 15% of government expenditure to healthcare.
- **Accelerating** the implementation of quality NCD prevention and care services into UHC health benefit packages. NCDA applauds references to scaling up efforts for health promotion, equitable access to medicines, and strengthening health information systems. We stress the need to strengthen the continuum of care, including health promotion, prevention, diagnosis, treatment, rehabilitation, and palliative care, and recommend the inclusion of legal and regulatory measures to promote intersectoral policies and improve access to essential medicines.
- Significance of **aligning** development and global health priorities to achieve UHC. We highlight the need for resilient health systems based on primary healthcare and a people-centred approach that ensures inclusivity and addresses the vulnerabilities of populations living with multiple chronic conditions, including NCDs.
- The importance of **engaging** people living with NCDs in decision-making processes, aiming to keep UHC people-centered. We recommend institutionalising mechanisms for inclusive health governance that involve patients and individuals living with chronic





conditions, while addressing conflicts of interest and undue influence from industries that may harm public health.

NCDA has prepared a series of resources to assist governments to take advantage of the opportunity that the United Nations High-Level Meeting on UHC poses for advancing the NCD prevention and control agenda globally. The [NCDA messages to the Zero Draft of the Political Declaration on UHC](#) details key opportunities to strengthen the current draft, by building on the [NCDA Advocacy Priorities](#) of the NCD community. For more detailed comments to the Zero Draft, and subsequent updates to the Political Declaration, please contact Marijke Kremin, NCDA Policy and Advocacy Manager (mkremin@ncdalliance.org).

2023 Global Week for Action on NCDs

We also take the opportunity to inform you about the upcoming Global Week for Action on NCDs. Since 2020, the Global Week for Action on NCDs raises awareness on a specific theme with the aim of reducing the NCD burden globally and increasing health and equality. Held from 14th to 21st September, the theme for the 2023 Global Week for Action on NCDs is bridging the care gap. To bridge that gap, global leaders need to ensure that everyone has access to essential, affordable health services. The campaign is calling on everyone to get involved - no action is too small; no voice is insignificant.

Thank you for your commitment to supporting people living with NCDs. NCDA, SEAR NCDA and Bangladesh NCD Forum is fully committed to support the pursuit of our shared goals towards the progressive global achievement of UHC and reduced burden of NCDs for all.

South East Asia Regional NCD Alliance

Secretariat, Bangladesh NCD Forum (BNCDF)

