

First meeting of the UN Inter-Agency Task Force on the Prevention and Control on COVID-19 and the NCD-related SDGs

Date: 7 April 2020

Participants: Around 25 UN system agencies joined

Summary:

1. Ed Kelley (WHO) provided a broad overview of WHO's response to COVID-19
2. Bente Mikkelsen and Jill Farrington (WHO) provided a description of the work being done by the newly established WHO Working Group on COVID-19 and NCDs. Task Force Secretariat represented on this to ensure activities across the UN system are part of the discussion and act as a focal point for alignment of cross-UN activities (PowerPoint presentation attached).
3. Roundtable discussion on current activities across UN system agencies on COVID-19 activities, with a focus on NCDs and mental health. Following the meeting activities were mapped across the 6 WHO NCD COVID-19 work plan areas that are being used by the WHO Working Group on COVID-19 and NCDs (the 6 areas align with the WHO Global NCD Action Plan). (Annex)

Colleagues considered the meeting helpful and requested a further call next week. The preference is for short frequent webinars, with some suggesting that we use each meeting to focus on a distinct theme.

Next steps:

- Agencies to review the Annex and edit as required. Agencies that did not have a chance to speak at the meeting to provide add their contribution to the table.
- Agencies to identify particular themes that they would like to see covered with regards NCDs/mental health and COVID-19 to inform the Secretariat.
- Teleconference to be arranged for next week. Invitation and agenda to follow.

9 April 2020 (updated 14 and 17 April)

Annex: Summary of activities across Task Force members reported in videoconference meeting, 7 April 2020

Agency	WHO NCD COVID-19 work plan areas						
	Advocacy	Governance	Prevention/ Promotion	Treatment/ Health Systems	Research	Surveillance	Other
1 UNDP	<p>Socio-economic impact assessments.</p> <p>Job portal matching unemployed workers with response efforts (Barbados).</p> <p>Official COVID information website (Cabo Verde).</p>	<p>Supporting government business continuity plans and crisis response coordination mechanisms.</p>	<p>#SpreadingFacts mass media campaigns against misinformation.</p> <p>Pool of 8,000 doctors to provide telemedicine (Bangladesh).</p>	<p>Procuring health commodities to support the COVID-19 responses in 70+ countries.</p> <p>Facilitating salary payments for health workers.</p> <p>3-D printing PPE (Honduras).</p>	<p>Integrating COVID-19 modeling into ongoing and planned investment cases (NCDs, Mental Health, FCTC, Air Pollution and Road Safety);.</p> <p>District-level Mapping of COVID Comorbidity (India).</p>	<p>Supporting UNDP research to monitor ICU bed capacity by country.</p> <p>Rapid surveys of business impacts among small and medium enterprises.</p> <p>Symptoms-tracking app launched (Iraq).</p> <p>Website for COVID diagnostics and triage (Korea).</p>	<p>Social support payments to poor during lockdown (Bangladesh).</p> <p>Ensuring continued access to HIV medicines (Philippines).</p> <p>NB: country activity listings can be found at: https://airtable.com/shr2xNxlgBXK5oWDb/tblwPhDJfiisTMNg6?blocks=hide </p>
2 WFP			<p>Highlighted as a major area of concern (e.g. food security). Esp in fragile environments.</p> <p>WFP supporting provision of meals for</p>	<p>WFP may be able to have a role in supporting supply chains.</p> <p>WFP putting in place mechanisms for social protection.</p>	<p>- Linkages between COVID-19 and double burden of malnutrition.</p>	<p>Impact of covid-19 on children (working closely with WHO).</p>	

			schoolchildren who can't be at school.	Involved in building some hospitals. Providing support for HCWs.			
3 ILO	<p>Recognizing COVID-19 as occupational/labour/social protection issue for HCW but many other essential workers with advocacy effort.</p> <p>World Day for Safety for Health coming up will focus on COVID-19 as an occupation disease (infection but also mental health issues, violence and harassment).</p>		<p>- Preventing economic and social protection impacts on workers.</p> <p>Impact of overuse of detergents/chemicals – e.g. respiratory disease.</p>		Overuse of detergents linked to harmful chemical exposure.		Health and social impact on the workforce in the long term with effect to the economy post pandemic.
4 World Bank		WB has set up the Fast Track Facility (USD14bn) for immediate response (health and economic angles). To date main response on health prevention, treatment,	The WB's immediate, emergency response for health focuses on the following broad strategies: (i) preventing and limiting local transmission, including detection, and contact tracing; (ii) building or expanding clinical care and quarantine capacity; (iii) building systems for real-time community-based disease surveillance, through procurement of critical equipment; and training of front-line workers and responders.		<p>Knowledge sharing across countries.</p> <p>Analytic work on socioeconomic impact of COVID-19.</p>	See Fast Track Facility.	Multiple sectors at the World Bank are supporting the COVID-19, such as the digital solutions, gender, macroeconomic/poverty, and gender groups.

		surveillance). 26 projects (USD2bn) approved. Another 20 under preparation.			Much more work required on drawing out synergies between NCDs and COVID-19.		
5 UNFPA	Focus of sexual and reproductive health and rights. Big focus on youth.	Access to health services protection for HCWs.	Increasing access to PPE.	Ensuring adequate provision of reproductive health services.			Access to FP, routine and emergency antenatal care and access to safe delivery outside health system.
6 UNEP	Less focused at the moment on the acute phase – will be important to highlight the environment in the recovery – no reversal towards climate change priorities etc.				Work ongoing wrt links between COVID-19 and air pollution and medical water/environment.	Highlighting environment links for zoonosis and surveillance systems.	
7 UNHCHR	Importance of ensuring that refugees and IDPs are considered in national responses but systems often not strong enough.	Focus on refugees and IDPs.	Scaling up preparedness and response – direct action in camps, including NCDs. Protection of elderly in camps (have had some discussion on this with WHO).	Ensuring adequate supply of NCD medicines is a major challenge.			

8 UNAIDS	Highlighting impact of service disruption on the ground, esp those with HIV comorbidities (NCDs and mental health).			Multi-month dispensing of HIV/AIDS and NCD/mental health treatment. (guidance has just been released – including action outside the health system and supply chain management).		Monitoring stigma, discrimination and violence connected to COVID-19.	Working closely with GFATM – flexible funding for support for COVID-19 action.
9 UNSCN	Emphasizing key messages on healthy diets during the pandemic.				Has compiled UN resources relating to COVID-19 and nutrition. Looking at how COVID-19 changes the food environment. UNSCN is launching a short survey on this worldwide.		
10 OECD	Policy paper on different containment and mitigating measures being used.		Policy paper on health system response to COVID-19: focus on vulnerable, diagnosis, treatment, digital and data to improve surveillance and		Collecting and analyzing evidence on COVID-19 and socioeconomic impact (including SMEs, labour, tourism etc.		

					www.oecd.org/coronaviruses/en). Developing microsimulation models for COVID building on the experience of NCDs.		
11 IAEA	Weekly webinars with professional group on how to manage patients with cancer during COVID-19.		Close collaboration with FAO on nutritional issues.	Guidance available shortly on radiotherapy and nuclear medicine for cancer patients during the pandemic. Procuring equipment in 40 countries, with plans to expand to 90. Strengthening available of NCD diagnostics.	Looking at vaccinations, diagnostics for animal infections, sterilization of PPE with radiation.		
12 UNODC	Resources available at www.unodc.org/unodc/en/covid-19.html						
13 UNESCO	For UNESCO's support for educational responses to COVID-19, see https://en.unesco.org/covid19/educationresponse/support						
14 IDLO	More to say on activities in the coming days and weeks. In the meantime, see: www.idlo.int/news/policy-statements/statement-director-general-idlo-jan-beagle-rule-law-based-response-covid-19 and www.idlo.int/news/policy-statements/statement-director-general-idlo-jan-beagle-world-health-day-2020						

15 ITU	<p>Joint WHO ITU Be He@lthy, Be Mobile programme: supporting projects related to citizen engagement and fighting misinformation (multi-channel Health Alert chat bot, mobile app, SMS messages) and using the EU mHealth Hub: scoping mHealth solutions for COVID-19 and providing guidance, best practices and guiding principles for mHealth tools and services for COVID-19 (http://mhealth-hub.org/mhealth-solutions-against-covid-19)</p> <p>The AI for Good Webinar Series https://aiforgood.itu.int/webinar/</p>
16 WTO	<p>Throughout the crisis, ensuring the <u>transparency</u> of trade-related policy measures remains in the mutual interest of WTO members and economic operators. The WTO DG Azevêdo has therefore asked WTO Members to provide the Secretariat with information about their COVID-19 policies with trade implications. Additionally, the DG has established a task force of experts from across the Secretariat to monitor the impact of COVID-19 on trade flows and the overall global economy https://www.wto.org/english/news_e/news20_e/dgra_24mar20_e.htm</p> <p>A WTO webpage dedicated to COVID-19 provides access to a <u>non-exhaustive list of trade-related measures</u> taken by WTO Members that is compiled from official sources and updated on a daily basis by the WTO Secretariat. As of 16 April: the majority of measures are trade facilitating (94), while 72 measures may be considered as trade-restrictive. Formally notified trade policy-related measures on COVID-19 include, as examples, measures on electronic phytosanitary certificates to facilitate trade in relation to problems caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, to facilitate the importation of surgical and sanitary mask supplies, temporary export prohibition necessary to protect human health and prevent critical shortage of essential products, etc. https://www.wto.org/english/tratop_e/covid19_e/covid19_e.htm</p> <p>In coordination with other IGOs, the WTO launched a survey for governments and the private sector asking for the challenges in trading goods in the present circumstances, and how the Trade Facilitation Agreement can ease the situation. https://wto.formstack.com/forms/tfaf_covid_survey</p> <p>The analysis used in the annual WTO trade forecast (which is generally published in the first half of the year and subsequently updated), launched this year on 8 April, included an assessment of the impact on the global economy of the COVID-19 pandemic. https://www.wto.org/english/news_e/pres20_e/pr855_e.htm</p> <p>The WTO COVID-19 webpage also makes other important information available to the public, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Report on Worldwide Trade in COVID-19 Medical Products</u>: traces trade flows for products such as personal protective products, hospital and laboratory supplies, medicines and medical technology while providing information on their respective tariffs https://www.wto.org/english/news_e/news20_e/rese_03apr20_e.htm • <u>Information note on Transparency – Why It Matters At Times of Crisis</u>: highlights the importance of transparency at domestic and global level and provides an overview of relevant notification mechanisms under WTO agreements https://www.wto.org/english/tratop_e/covid19_e/covid19_e.htm • Series of Joint IGO Statements 31 March: <u>FAO-WHO-WTO Statement</u> to minimise the impact of COVID-19 related border restrictions on trade in food https://www.wto.org/english/news_e/news20_e/igo_26mar20_e.htm

	6 April: <u>WCO-WTO Statement</u> to facilitate trade in essential goods such as medical supplies, food, and energy https://www.wto.org/english/news_e/news20_e/igo_06apr20_e.htm
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