

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

Date: 17 April 2020

Participants: Around 25 UN system agencies joined. Interventions provided by WHO, UNODC, FAO, WTO, IAEA, UNDP, UNIADS, ITU, UNICEF, IARC, UNEP, and UNFPA, WFP.

Summary:

1. Agencies were provided with an update on activities under the WHO COVID-19/NCDs Working Group, (PowerPoint presentation attached). The Working Group has used inputs from Task Force members during (and subsequent to) the first Task Force COVID-NCDs meeting to develop priority actions activities for each of the 6 work plan areas of the WHO COVID-19/NCDs Working Group (including products over the next 7-10 days). Teams for each of the 6 work plan areas now being established with opportunity for Task Force agencies to participate. Joint position statements, campaign materials and advocacy products highlighted as examples of quick win joint products with technical products to follow.
2. Mental Health and psychosocial issues. Repeatedly highlighted as important but underrepresented in the COVID-19 response. WHO described briefing papers and advocacy documents that have been developed in multiple languages as well as webinars. Collaboration with a number of Task Force members already – but opportunity to scale this up.
3. Financing identified as a missing area on the WHO COVID-19/NCDs Working Group. Important to consider actuate and longer-term responses. Health taxes described as being used in some countries as a way to finance COVID-19 response and UNDP said that they are working on some projections on this. In addition, WHO-UNDP investment cases are now attempting to be COVID-19 informed.
4. Discussion around possible areas for including in future UNIATF COVID-19 webinars (and to feed into the products that may require to be developed). Opportunity to do deep dives into the areas covered under each of the workstreams of the WHO COVID-19/NCDs Working Group. Other areas identified by participants included: (i) mental health; (ii) harmful use of alcohol; (iii) tobacco control, nutrition; (iv) financing (including investment cases and health taxes); (v) community engagement, systems and responses (including drawing on the HIV/AIDS experience); (vi) health systems responses; (vii) poverty, COVID-19 and NCDs; (viii) data and digital; (ix) air pollution; and (x) post emergency effects of COVID-19 on NCDs and action that

needs to be taken. A number of these would be covered under the different workstreams of the WHO COVID-19/NCDs Working Group.

5. Updates received from agencies: reflected in the table annexed (updated from last week).

6. For the moment keep to 1-hour meetings each week.

Actions:

1. Task Force Secretariat to share latest guidance on hydroxychloroquine with members as soon as possible (in response to a specific request from UNFPA). Task Force Secretariat to determine if there are messages being issued from WHO on association between air pollution/other forms of pollution, and COVID-19 (in response to a specific request from UNEP).
2. Agencies to shared COVID-specific webpages on their agency websites with Task Force Secretariat.
3. Agencies to share new publications/other outputs as they emerge with Task Force Secretariat for sharing with the WHO COVID-19/NCDs Working Group and with other members of the Task Force.
4. Task Force Secretariat to work with WHO COVID-19/NCDs Working Group to agree how best to get Task Force/UN agency inputs in the teams/work of the Working Group and also how to disseminate the work of the Working Groups to Task Force members.
5. Agencies to encourage their focal points on the Mental Health & Psychosocial Support (MHPHS) Network to advocate for attention on mental health during COVID-19.
6. Agencies wanting to join forces on the WHO-UNDP investment cases that are aiming to be more COVID-19 informed or on the health tax work to let UNDP or the Task Force Secretariat know of their interest.
7. UN NCD Task Force Thematic groups and Joint programmes: Secretariat to get in touch with them to ensure they are including COVID-19 in their activities.

21 April 2020 (updated 23 April)

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

Agency	WHO NCD COVID-19 work plan areas						Other
	Advocacy	Governance	Prevention/ Promotion	Treatment/ Health Systems	Research	Surveillance	
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.	7 field hospitals will be built - the first two will be delivered at the end of April to Addis Ababa and Accra. The other 5 will be delivered in May. These field hospitals are intended to care for UN staff and dependents. Special attention to staff will be given to those with co-morbidities (including those who have NCDs)			
				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>28 April 2020 World Day for Safety and Health will focus on COVID-19 as an occupation disease</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.		<p>Health and social impact on the workforce in the long term with effect to the economy post pandemic.</p> <p>https://www.ilo.org/global/topics/coronavirus/lan-g--en/index.htm</p>

	(infection but also mental health issues, violence and harassment).						
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, surveillance). 26 projects (USD2bn) approved. Another 20 under preparation.	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.		Knowledge sharing across countries. Analytic work on socioeconomic impact of COVID-19. Much more work required on drawing out synergies between NCDs and COVID-19.	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.
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. https://www.unfpa.org/covid19
6 UNEP	Focused at the moment on the acute phase – will be important to				Work ongoing wrt links between COVID-19	Highlighting environment links for zoonosis and	

	<p>highlight the environment in the recovery – no reversal towards climate change priorities etc.</p> <p>Information on capacity and legal guidance and technology assessments.</p>				and air pollution and medical water/environment.	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.	<p>Scaling up preparedness and response – direct action in camps, including NCDs.</p> <p>Protection of elderly in camps (have had some discussion on this with WHO).</p>	Ensuring a 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.	<p>Guidance available shortly on radiotherapy and nuclear medicine for cancer patients during the pandemic.</p> <p>Procuring equipment in 40 countries, with plans to expand to 90.</p> <p>Strengthening available of NCD diagnostics.</p> <p>Over 500 people attended webinars on managing radiotherapy services during COVID-19.</p> <p>Webinars done in multiple languages (in collaboration with WHO). New video training on COVID-19 diagnosis and treatment.</p> <p>Scaling up supply of equipment and guidance.</p>	Looking at vaccinations, diagnostics for animal infections, sterilization of PPE with radiation.		https://humanhealth.iaea.org/hw/ https://www.iaea.org
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12 UNODC	www.unodc.org/unodc/en/covid-19.html		Prevention of substance use (see link), and the importance of access to controlled medicines during COVID-19				
13. FAO	Specific web page that answers questions around food systems, food security, agricultural livelihoods.		Policy briefs prepared – e.g. maintaining health diet, risk to food supply chains.				http://www.fao.org/2019-ncov/en/
14. UNICEF	<p>Risk communication and community engagement through CHW networks</p> <p>Mental health webinars with youth</p> <p>Working with WHO and UNODC to adapt HAT tools for messaging to young people and caregivers on healthy behavior, psychosocial support and risk factor prevention</p>	Supporting countries with COVID-19 preparation and response strategies	Mass media campaigns for prevention and health promotion messaging + countering misinformation	<p>Developing guidance tool for community health systems response to COVID</p> <p>Strengthening IPC in health facilities through provision of vital supplies including PPE</p> <p>Safeguarding supply & logistics chains + supporting country procurement and donation distribution for COVID19 medical products and commodities</p>	<p>Using existing digital health platforms to establish a system to monitor health service delivery and utilization.</p> <p>Developing data dashboard to assess secondary impact of COVID on services and health outcomes</p>	Supporting surveillance through community-based case detection and contact tracing, digital health initiatives and mobilization of pre-existing networks of community health workforce and rapid response teams	Providing guidance and technical support to countries on prioritization of MNCAH activities

15. IARC					<p>Data collection, especially genetic information.</p> <p>Several scientific papers that researchers are collaborating, for example antic-cancer drugs and COVID-19 therapies webinars on risk and on mitigating the risks of handing samples.</p> <p>Training and information provided through existing training platforms with Nigerian and Kenyan members of the bio banks and code networks.</p>	
16. WTO	<p>Secretariat established Task Force 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>31 March: FAO-WHO-WTO Statement to minimise the impact of COVID-19 related border</p>	<p>WTO asking its members and economic operators to provide information about their COVID-19 policies with trade implications. https://www.wto.org/english/tra_top_e/covid19_e/covid19_e.htm</p>	<p>Latest WTO trade forecast launched April 2020 includes 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>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Report on Worldwide Trade in COVID-19 Medical Products: traces trade flows for products such as personal protective products, hospital and laboratory supplies, medicines and medical technology https://www.wto.org/english 	<p>Webpage established on non-exhaustive list of trade-related measures taken by WTO Members updated daily. Majority of measures are trade facilitating (94), while 72 measures considered trade-restrictive. https://www.wto.org/english/tra_top_e/covid19_e/covid19_e.htm</p>	<p>WTO with other IGOs 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>restrictions on trade in food</p> <p>https://www.wto.org/english/news_e/news20_e/igo_26mar20_e.htm</p> <p>6 April: <u>WCO-WTO Statement</u> to facilitate trade in essential goods such as medical supplies, food, and energy</p> <p>https://www.wto.org/english/news_e/news20_e/igo_06apr20_e.htm</p>			<p>h/news_e/news20_e/rese_03apr20_e.htm</p>		
17. IDLO	<p>www.idlo.int/news/policy-statements/statement-director-general-idlo-jan-beagle-rule-law-based-response-covid-19</p> <p>www.idlo.int/news/policy-statements/statement-director-general-idlo-jan-beagle-world-health-day-2020</p>	More to say on activities in the coming days and weeks.				

18. ITU	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)	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)			Secure data exchange between health care providers. Providing recommendations for governments, reimbursement, architecture certifications and processes required to to set up platforms for the integration of the health services and also for the seamless data flow between between these applications. So, in the light of COVID-19, restarting to reorient some of these products, including an inventory of the mobile solutions against COVID-19. The AI for Good Webinar Series https://aiforgood.itu.int/webinar/
19. UNESCO	For UNESCO's support for educational responses to COVID-19, see https://en.unesco.org/covid19/educationresponse/support				