



Call to action

following the Fourth High-level Meeting on NCDs, mental health and well-being

*We [Heads of State and Government and representatives of States and Governments] further **call upon United Nations agencies, regional and intergovernmental organizations, within their respective mandates, to support Member States through catalytic development assistance, including through the United Nations Inter-Agency Task Force on the Prevention and Control of Noncommunicable Diseases and the Health4Life Fund***

Paragraph 78. Political declaration of the fourth high-level meeting of the General Assembly on the prevention and control of noncommunicable diseases and the promotion of mental health and well-being.
https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/4095600/files/A_80_L34-EN.pdf

- The Health4Fund has USD 8 million committed, and USD 3 million disbursed by the end of 2025 to Lao PDR, Papua New Guinea, Rwanda, Sierra Leone and Zambia catalyzing national action. Current country projects span integrated NCD and mental health service delivery, sustainable financing and fiscal reforms, strengthened surveillance systems, regulatory action on key risk factors, and youth-led prevention – each addressing country-identified priorities, and are on track to impact the lives of 10 million adults and children at risk of and living with NCDs and mental health conditions.
- An additional USD 15 million would enable 5–7 additional country grants, strengthen South-South learning, and deepen catalytic reforms across the five thematic areas of the political declaration: (i) creating health-promoting environments through action across government; (ii) strengthening primary health care; (iii) mobilizing adequate and sustainable financing; (iv) strengthening governance; and (v) supporting research, strengthen data and public health surveillance, to advance evidence and monitor progress.
- Recognized as a model for pooled financing, the Fund reflects a shift toward more coherent, effective and country-driven cooperation — putting national leadership at the forefront and emphasizing sustainability of results.
- NCDs and mental health are among the top health priorities yet remain critically underfunded, including in existing global health and development. Around the world there is growing demand for support to unlock domestic financing, scale up integrated service delivery, strengthen data and surveillance systems, amongst other catalytic priorities.

How Funds are being used

Country level

First Grant Cycle

Rwanda is institutionalizing integrated mental health and NCD services across schools, workplaces, healthcare facilities, and refugee settings. In 2025, the country developed SOPs, training manuals, and complementary toolkits for integrated Mental Health and NCD care, laying the groundwork for nationwide capacity-building trainings in 2026, working collaboratively across multiple sectors to ensure that these reforms are embedded into the health system rather than piloted in isolation.

Zambia, prioritizing its significant youth population, is focusing on prevention reforms by strengthening fiscal and legislative frameworks to reduce youth exposure to NCD risk factors, while actively integrating mental health promotion for adolescents through psychosocial programmes, digital platforms, peer counseling, and behavior change campaigns. In October 2025, the H4LF project was launched in a national event chaired by the Permanent Secretary for Health, signaling institutional commitment to scale multisectoral reforms.

Second Grant Cycle

Lao PDR is reforming primary health care and national NCD systems to expand coverage for adults at risk across multiple provinces by scaling up primary health care readiness, establishing a national NCD surveillance system, and strengthening multisectoral action through a fully costed national plan.

Papua New Guinea, a SIDS country with significantly increased risk for NCDs among its population, is strengthening its national NCD response by enhancing surveillance, scaling up multisectoral action through an innovative jointly costed action plan, and institutionalizing youth-led community engagement.

Sierra Leone, one of the world's least developed countries with a severely constrained national budget for NCDs, is driving sustainable financing and governance reforms by making the economic case for scaling up prevention and treatment of NCDs, strengthening multisectoral governance, embedding NCDs into basic care packages in existing social health insurance funds and establishing a health promotion fund financed through health taxes.

South-South Cooperation Platform

In 2025, the H4LF established the South-South Learning Lab for Knowledge Sharing and Innovation. The Learning Lab aims to accelerate adoption of proven reforms across countries, reducing duplication and shortening policy-to-implementation timelines. To maximize the Lab's impact, the H4LF is partnering with the UN Office for South-South Cooperation, the lab has delivered across three main areas: (i) technical exchange; (ii) high-level advocacy; and (iii) knowledge production and agenda setting. In its first year, the lab has convened cross-regional exchanges linking NCD prevention to climate action, hosted a high-level dialogue on scaling investment, and – drawing on direct input from over 30 countries – produced a flagship synthesis charting a shared agenda for deeper implementation of national investment cases.

2026: a moment to align efforts and scale impact

The Fourth High-Level Meeting on NCDs held in September 2025 sought to align political ambition with country-led solutions to close the financing gap for NCDs and mental health. Member States:

- **Reaffirmed the Fund as a country-led financing platform** that responds to national priorities on NCDs and mental health.
- **Recognized the Fund in the Political Declaration** as a concrete example of aligned UN action that is delivering results — and ready to scale.

Now is the time to invest in the Health4Life Fund!

With political momentum secured at the Fourth High-Level Meeting, 2026 presents a unique opportunity to convert commitment into implementation. The Health4Life Fund offers a ready, tested mechanism to channel catalytic financing into country-led reform. Scaling now will determine whether ambition translates into measurable change. The next step is to scale.

In 2026, we call on Member States and partners to:

- Contribute to the Health4Life Fund in support of country-led NCD and mental health action.
- Commit multi-year financing to enable predictable, catalytic scale-up.
- Champion the Fund across UN and other intergovernmental processes as a One-UN solution delivering results.

Why the Health4Life Fund matters

NCDs and mental health conditions account for the majority of global mortality and disability, yet receive a fraction of development financing.

At the same time, there are growing calls for global health cooperation to be more effective, coordinated, and better aligned with country priorities. At a time when global health financing is under scrutiny, the Health4Life Fund offers a concrete model of aligned, pooled and country-led cooperation, in line with UN80 reform.

The Health4Life Fund is more than a financing instrument — it is a collaborative platform that brings together governments, civil society, and development partners around a shared vision for more resilient and sustainable systems for health.

Anchored by national leadership and aligned UN expertise, the Fund is already delivering catalytic investments — such as policy and financing reforms, multisectoral planning, and health systems strengthening. The Fund advances universal health coverage and accelerates SDG progress, supporting people of all ages—including children and young people—to thrive and contribute to stronger societies

The indivisible and interconnected nature of the SDGs has reinforced the imperative for more flexible and predictable funding. Inter-Agency Pooled Funds helps strengthen coordination and collaboration across entities of the United Nations development system—Antonio Guterres, UN Secretary-General

The Fund provides the best opportunity to support a One-UN response to NCDs and mental health toward country-led action. I urge Member States and development partners to contribute—Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, WHO Director-General

Through the Health4Life Fund, Rwanda intends to use schools as the best way (to reach) children even (for) mental health programmes—Minister Sabin Nsanzimana of Rwanda

Ultimately the cost of managing high blood pressure in a country comes down because you avoid the complications. We are confident that... the catalytic funding from the Health4Life partnership will help us to achieve this—Permanent Secretary Kennedy Lishimpi, Zambia

The Philippines actively participates in the UN Health4Life Fund and proudly serves on its steering committee, promoting sustainable financing and championing investment in NCDs and mental health, especially for low- and middle-income countries—Philippines Mission in New York

The Fund will support collaboration led by the Global South... and encourage solutions better adapted to those countries' health needs and priorities—Humza Yousaf, former First Minister of Scotland

While domestic funding has to be the mainstay of funding responses, development assistance is crucial for catalyzing ever more effective responses. We therefore urge Member States to commit to the UN Health4Life Fund—Andrea Feigl, CEO, Health Finance Institute

Health4Life Fund Steering Committee members

WHO (permanent co-chair), UNICEF (current rotating co-chair), UNDP governments of Kenya, Mauritius, Philippines, Scotland and Uruguay the NCD Alliance, United for Global Mental Health and the UN Multi-Partner Trust Fund Office



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The Health4Life Fund was established by WHO, UNDP, and UNICEF in response to multiple political mandates including: (i) the 2018 Political declaration of the third high-level meeting called on WHO to explore new financing mechanisms, the 2019 World Health Assembly resolution (WHA 72(11) that requested the WHO Director-General to identify voluntary innovative funding mechanisms, such as a multi-donor trust fund, for NCDs and mental health; and (iii) the 2021 ECOSOC resolution on the work of the Task Force (E/2021/L.35) that called for resources to support sustainable national responses to NCDs and mental health.

