

United Nations Task Force on noncommunicable diseases adding value to WHO's Fourteenth General Programme of Work

The World Health Organization's (WHO) Fourteenth General Programme of Work (GPW14), [Global Health Strategy for 2025–2028](#), outlines WHO's vision for advancing health equity, building resilient health systems, and accelerating progress towards health-related Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

The [UN Inter-Agency Task Force on the Prevention and Control of Non-communicable Diseases](#) (Task Force) fosters collaboration between WHO and 45 UN system agencies to help countries address NCDs and mental health through multisectoral approaches that align with broader national development priorities. Thirteen¹ Task Force members are specifically named in GPW14.

The Task Force's work is fully aligned with GPW14's five principles and approaches.² The table below provides examples of how the Task Force supports the delivery of the GPW14 six strategic objectives.

'Partnerships are integral to WHO's work and how it influences the global agenda. The UN reform and Lusaka agendas have given added focus to streamlining efforts of international partners and aligning with national priorities'

'WHO will engage its expanding network and partner engagement mechanisms, especially at the country level and within the United Nations system, in support of the national priorities [in line with] WHO's role in bringing greater coherence and coordination on health matters to the United Nations and global health ecosystems'

'Multisectoral and multistakeholder approaches will be co-designed and implemented across the life course, including through cost-effective policies that are based on the right to health, legislation and regulatory measures, in order to reduce major risk factors for NCDs, communicable diseases, violence and injuries, mental health conditions and poor nutrition, and to address rehabilitation needs and healthy ageing.'

GPW14, 2025–2028

GPW 14 Strategic Objectives	Examples of Task Force activities
1. Respond to climate change , an escalating health threat in the 21st century	Advocates for scaling up UN and government action on environmental risk factors to health, including air pollution, sustainable urban planning and climate change challenges faced by Small Island Developing States
2. Address health determinants and the root causes of ill health in key policies across sectors ³	Develops tools to engage and highlight the impact of NCDs and mental health across government sectors and across UN agencies

¹ Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations; The Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria; the International Agency for Research on Cancer; the International Committee of the Red Cross; the International Labour Organization; the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS; the United Nations Children's Fund; the United Nations Development Programme; the United Nations Environment Programme; the United Nations Population Fund; Unitaids; the World Bank; and the World Food Programme.

² GPW 14 principles and approaches: (i) expand and enhance partnerships, community engagement and intersectoral collaboration; (ii) respect and empower national leadership, structures and processes; (iii) maintain a relentless focus on delivering measurable impact at country level; (iv) scale up the primary health care approach to advance UHC and health security; and (v) advance gender equality and the right to health to overcome barriers to health and well-being for all.

³ Including Outcome 2.2: priority risk factors for NCDs, violence and injury, and poor nutrition, reduced through multi-sectoral approaches.

	• Supports countries evaluate and develop NCD and mental health multisectoral national action plans • Conducts UN joint missions to support UN Country Teams in delivering technical assistance to governments as they seek to develop and implement national NCD responses • Supports UN joint programmes to address NCD risk factors, such as reducing alcohol consumption (SAFER), transitioning away from tobacco farming (Alternative Livelihoods), strengthening multisectoral governance (NCD2030), and implementing regulatory and fiscal measures that promote healthy diets and physical activity (RECAP).⁴
3. Advance the primary health care approach and essential health system capacities for universal health coverage 4. Improve health service coverage and financial protection to address inequity and gender inequalities⁵	• Mobilizes resources through the Health4Life Fund to provide catalytic funding to scale up country multisectoral action for the prevention and control of NCDs and for improving mental health • Drives UN-wide efforts to embed a human rights-based approach at the core of NCD and mental health country response, critical for unlocking non-discriminatory access to health services • Supports the WHO Cervical Cancer Elimination Initiative through the UN Joint Action Group to enhance vaccination, screening and treatment • Promotes digital health solutions to improve access to and the quality of NCD and mental health services • Develops national investment cases to demonstrate the economic burden of NCDs and mental health conditions and drive further investment towards cost-effective health interventions
5. Prevent, mitigate and prepare for risks to health from all hazards 6. Rapidly detect and sustain an effective response to all health emergencies	• Collaborates with WHO on a call to action for mobilizing resources and a framework for integrating assistive technology and rehabilitation into humanitarian response • Provides a forum for UN agencies and development partners to share information and best practices in addressing NCDs and mental health conditions in humanitarian settings • Supports the integration of NCDs and mental health in national UN Cooperation Frameworks, including in countries with ongoing emergencies

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⁴ GPW14 says, 'The WHO Best-buys for NCDs, comprising 28 low-cost, highly effective strategies, form the basis for Member States policies to tackle NCD risk factors'. Almost all of these require whole-of-UN system commitment and action.

⁵ Including Outcome 4.1: equity in access to quality services improved for NCDs, mental health conditions.