

**United Nations Health4Life Fund: Catalyzing country action on non-communicable diseases and mental health through the United Nations' Health4Life Fund**

**Co-hosted by Kenya and Scotland during the 77th World Health Assembly**

**28 May 2024, 8.30-10.00 CET**

**Nations Business Center, 1 rue du Pre-de-la-Bichette, Genève**

Honorable ministers,  
Cabinet Secretary Wafula,  
Professor, Sir Gregor Smith,  
Excellencies,

Dear colleagues and friends, Good morning. I wish all of you a very happy International Day of Action for Women's Health. Of course, women's health requires an integrated approach across noncommunicable diseases, communicable diseases, mental health conditions and indeed all aspects of health.

Let me start by thanking the Government of Kenya and the Scottish Government for hosting today's meeting. And thank you too to the other distinguished Steering Committee members that spoke today.

It is really thanks to the Founding Strategic Partners, Kenya, Thailand and Uruguay that the fund is operational. Again, I recognize the announcement of funding that was made by the Scottish Government at the UN General Assembly last September.

It has been a pleasure to hear updates from countries that are preparing proposals for the first round of Health4Life funding.

Health4Life is alive.

I am excited to see the Fund is being led by the Global South: setting the strategic direction, encouraging partners to invest, and being willing to invest in the fund themselves. That is a true sign of commitment.

Thank you to the Philippines and to Mauritius for the leadership and commitment that you have demonstrated today. We are delighted to have you on board.

Civil society is critical when it comes to health and development. NCD Alliance and United for Global Mental Health are observers on the Steering Committee. And having Soroptimist International Africa Foundation as a partner amplifies global south solidarity.

Thank you, Alan, for moderating the first panel. We are delighted that WHO signed an agreement last week with Sovereign Sustainability and Development – the Secretariat of the G20 & G7 Health and Development Partnership, to drive forward the work of the Task Force and the Health4Life Fund.

Since my arrival in WHO, I have witnessed as Chair of the Steering Committee, representing Dr Tedros, the unrelentless work carried out by my colleagues across UNICEF, UNDP, and WHO, including of course the Health4Life Fund secretariat under the NCD Task Force.

Brainstorming together, pushing boundaries, listening to the real needs in countries, they have worked tirelessly to get us to where we are today: the first step of our collective action.

Health4Life is a breath of fresh air, offering the opportunity shake up and improve the way the UN does its work in countries, aligning our common agendas and above all, affirming country leadership.

This pooled fund exemplifies the aspirations of UN reform, allowing each agency to leverage their unique potentials and unlock new investment and identify spaces for new and innovative partnerships.

Yesterday we heard leaders call for more effective partnership and global health architecture that really delivers for countries. Here in the Health4Life Fund we have renewed commitment to multilateralism. Championed, as I said by the Global South.

As we move towards the fourth high level meeting for NCDs in 2025, we invite all of you here today to consider the ways in which your resources, your ideas, and your voice, can ensure that the Health4Life Fund can scale up to provide the catalytic support that countries are urgently in need of to deliver on their NCDs and mental health goals.

Continuing to fund the Fund is more urgent than ever if we want to reduce the toll of NCDs and mental health conditions on individuals, their families and their communities.

Thank you

