Zambia
NCD Joint programming mission, 5-9 December 2016

Key mission findings from 2016

1. The 2013-2016 Strategic Plan on NCDs and their risk factors will be updated in 2017.

2. The United Nations Resident Coordinator and the UN Country Team have prioritized NCDs and are committed to providing support to the Government in reviewing the current NCD plan, establishing a national NCD coordination mechanism, developing the business case for NCDs and engaging development partners to support the national NCD response.

3. The draft UN Development Partnership Framework for 2016-2021 includes NCD-related SDGs.

4. While policies are often in place, they are not fully translated into action. This is primarily due to the lack of enforcing relevant policies and laws.

Key recommendations

1. A national NCD coordinating committee (or equivalent) with membership by all ministries and chaired at the senior level (e.g. Vice President) should be established, with a subcommittee that provides a coordination platform for civil society, NGOs and academia.

2. The new national multi-sectoral NCD Action Plan for 2017-2021 should be developed with full participation of non-health ministries and non-State actors. The plan should prioritize a small number of highly cost-effective, evidence-based and feasible interventions. An NCD communication strategy to support the Action Plan should also be developed and implemented.

3. An investment case should be undertaken to show the burden of NCDs (with special focus on tobacco use effects).

4. A country wide STEPS Survey should be conducted and finalized in 2017.

5. Prevention of NCDs should be a core part of the school curriculum.

6. WHO-FCTC compliant Tobacco Products Control Bill (initially proposed in 2010) should be finalized and submitted to the National Assembly for adoption in 2017.

7. Excise tax on tobacco products should be increased year on year in order to reach the recommended level of at least 70% of the retail package price. Other measures in line with the provisions of the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control, which was ratified by Zambia in 2008, should also be enforced.

8. The Comprehensive National Alcohol Policy should be developed and submitted for approval to Cabinet as soon as possible.

9. The Government should develop and introduce a food safety bill to Parliament in 2017-2018 to promote reformulation of foods and meals to contain less sugar, salt and unhealthy fats.

“We are seeing that noncommunicable diseases are no longer a problem for older generations – the rising incidence of obesity, overweight and diabetes, particularly among the young is testament to that”

Mrs Janet Rogan, UN Resident Coordinator and UNDP Resident Representative in Zambia

Key adult NCD mortality and risk factors*

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Risk Factor</th>
<th>Value</th>
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<tr>
<td>Probability of premature mortality from NCDs</td>
<td>18% (2016)</td>
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<tr>
<td>22% of men and 2% of women (aged ≥15 years) smoke tobacco</td>
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<td>17% of adult men and 23% of adult women are insufficiently physically active</td>
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<td>4% of adult men and 4% of adult women have raised fasting blood glucose</td>
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<td>21% of adult men and 18% of adult women have raised blood pressure</td>
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<td>Pure alcohol per capita consumption: 4.8 litres per year (population 15+), 2016</td>
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<tr>
<td>98% of adult men and 97% of adult women eat insufficient amounts of fruits and vegetables</td>
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*Updated: July 2018
10. Raise awareness around physical activity and implement interventions that make physical activity easy and safe.

11. Review the status of implementation of the current national road safety strategy and strengthen its implementation. Consider drawing on WHO’s Save lives: a road safety technical package.

Adding value: actions taken following the mission

1. A whole-of-government Multisectoral Committee on the Implementation of the WHO-FCTC was formed in April 2017 to mainstream tobacco control policies across Government.
   - A Joint Needs Assessment for Tobacco Control was conducted in November 2017, by the Ministry of Health and the Convention Secretariat. The Joint Needs Assessment Report will be presented to the Ministry of Health by the FCTC Convention Secretariat in June 2018.
   - The Ministry of Health is in consultation with UNDP to undertake the Investment Case for Tobacco Control in Zambia.
   - There is a draft Tobacco Products Control Bill 2018 undergoing Consultation process. Provisions of the Bill have been aligned to the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (WHO-FCTC). The Bill is expected to be presented to Parliament in 2019.
   - Excise tax on importation of cigarettes was increased by 400% in 2017, necessitating a sharp increase in retail price of cigarettes. This increase is executed year on year in order to reach the recommended level of at least 70% of the retail package price. The policy measure is in line with Article 6 of the WHO FCTC.

2. Terms of Reference for an NCD coordinating committee have been drafted and await Permanent Secretary approval.

3. A consultant was identified to develop the zero draft of the new multi-sectoral plan on NCDs, using the WHO template. After zero draft all key stakeholders will be brought to discuss the plan. Final plan is expected by October 2018.

4. An NCD investment case was conducted in early 2018 and the report should be finalized and launched by the end of the year.

5. The first national STEPs survey was conducted from May 2017 to August 2017. The final report has been finalized and the results are now ready for dissemination in June 2018.

6. Zambia has adopted the Health in All Policies. In the submission from the Ministry of Education for Health in All Policies framework “revision of the curriculum to incorporate health issues such as Tobacco, hygiene, solid waste management, food safety and risk factors for NCDs” was a key feature.

7. The Comprehensive National Alcohol Policy was completed in 2017. It has been approved by Cabinet in 2018.

8. The Food Safety bill has been drafted and submitted to the Cabinet legislative committee. Following guidance from the Cabinet, the bill is undergoing further review and amendments and shall be presented to Cabinet by end of quarter 2, 2018.

9. A National Health Week has been introduced to promote wellness. The 2018 edition focused on physical activity. The campaign is led by the President and the First Lady, along with Provincial Ministers.

10. The Ministry of Health has acquired free national radio and TV broadcasting time for 2017 to raise the profile of NCDs.

11. The National Food and Nutrition Commission in conjunction with Ministry of Health have engaged a team of experts to explore regulations, laws and multisectoral policies that have the potential to improve nutrition across Zambia. Based on Zambia stakeholder insights, literature review, and WHO recommendations, NFNC prioritized 3 reforms for further analysis: 1.) Introduction of 20% excise tax on sugar-sweetened beverages (SSBs); 2.) Regulation on marketing of unhealthy foods to young children; 3.) Regulation on product placement in specific settings such as schools.

Next steps

1. Establish the high level national NCD committee.

2. MOH to develop and submit to the Cabinet Committee internal Position Papers on the 3 nutrition-related reforms suggested by the NFNC (SSB tax, restriction of marketing of unhealthy food to children, and the food placement restrictions) and to lead stakeholder engagement to build support. MÖH to lead public awareness campaigns to educate public on benefits of the new policies.

3. Strengthen enforcement of tobacco and alcohol control legislation and regulation.

4. Ensure that the National Tobacco Control Bill is adopted.

5. Launch the 2017 STEPS survey report.

*All data are rounded WHO crude country comparable estimates taken from the WHO Global Health Observatory who.int/gho/nclrd/en, accessed 18/6/2018, with the exception of rounded data for fruit and vegetables consumption, which is from the Zambia STEPS survey, 2008, accessed 18/6/2018. Additional information on the status of NCDs in Zambia can be found on the WHO NCD DataFinder app.