



Statement by the International Development Law Organization (IDLO) at the

79th World Health Assembly, 18-23 May, 2026

Agenda Item 12.1 Follow-up to the political declaration of the high-level meeting of the General Assembly on the prevention and control of noncommunicable diseases

Thank you, Chair

The Political Declaration on noncommunicable diseases recognizes that preventing and controlling NCDs requires whole-of-government, multisectoral action. In this regard, IDLO wishes to emphasize that effective implementation of NCD-related commitments depends on strong, coherent, and enforceable legal frameworks across sectors.

Three elements are key.

First, **laws and regulations are among the most cost-effective tools for NCD prevention.** Evidence-based legal and fiscal measures addressing unhealthy diets and physical inactivity can reduce population-wide risk at scale.

Second, effective NCD responses depend on strong national institutions. Building the capacity of institutions across sectors, including health, justice, finance, education, and local authorities, is essential to turn laws and policies into coordinated action and lasting results.

Third, inclusive participation in developing legal frameworks is essential to support accountability, implementation, and public trust in NCD responses. Civil society, communities, and academia should be empowered to meaningfully contribute to policy design, implementation, and oversight.

IDLO's collaboration with WHO in supporting countries to strengthen national approaches to promote healthy diets and physical activity shows that legal and policy reforms are most effective when combined with national ownership, data for accountability, social participation and inclusive multisectoral engagement.

IDLO remains committed to working with WHO and Member States to advance the rule of law to tackle NCDs.

Thank you