



NCD ALLIANCE KENYA (NCDAK)

“Coordinating stakeholder efforts for effective prevention, control and management of NCDs in Kenya”

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MEDIA RELEASE

20 NOVEMBER 2018, [NAIROBI] –

President Uhuru Kenyatta was among the over 20 heads of state and governments who attended the 3rd United Nations High-Level Meeting on Non-communicable Diseases held in New York on 27 September 2018.

“We commend, PRESIDENT UHURU KENYATTA for showing his interest and commitment to NCDs in Kenya and acknowledge his comments on the need for more financial resources in developing countries and called on the international community to consider creating a catalytic fund for NCDs. We now call on him to follow up on talk with action. There’s no time to waste, every day people continue to die and suffer needlessly in Kenya due to lack of adequate and assertive action on NCD prevention and management.

NCDs account for 27% of deaths before the age of 70 in Kenya, and public health advocates are looking to President Uhuru Kenyatta to go further and aim higher, now counting him among world leaders who demonstrated that the HLM was crucial as a pivotal moment for curbing the enormous burden of cancer, diabetes, cardiovascular disease, chronic lung disease and mental health disorders on people and communities.

“Our people are dying, people of all ages are sick and struggling to live long, comfortable, healthy lives. So much of this suffering from non-communicable diseases is avoidable, and while steps have been taken in Kenya, we are still waiting for more - for policies and investment that will make a difference in the lives of millions of Kenya’s people. We need more than stepping up, we need committed leadership.” said Dr Eva Njenga, Chairperson, NCD Alliance Kenya,

During the HLM, Ministers, Presidents and Prime Ministers also referred to challenges and barriers they had encountered to implementing NCD prevention and control policies, such as stretched and lacking domestic financial resources, and uncooperative private sector and industry interference in policy making. However, advocates were disappointed with the lack of innovation and ambition which they say is what is most needed for governments to prevent avoidable death and disability from these typically chronic conditions.

A statement signed by over 350 global organizations, including NCD Alliance Kenya, people living with NCDs and experts, criticized the weak stance on accountability for commitments already made, absence of ambition and strengthened commitment to financing mechanisms.

An independent report from WHO, The Lancet, Imperial College London and NCD Alliance evaluating government, multinational and donor progress on NCD prevention and control found that *In Kenya mortality from NCDs among both men and women has stagnated or increased*. Kenya is one of the countries not making enough progress - and it is estimated that at this current rate of progress, Kenya won't achieve the SDGs target for NCDs by 2030 meaning many more lives needlessly lost.

“We find it alarming that not only is Kenya off track to meet the targets, but that it doesn’t need to be! In Kenya 30,900 lives could be saved by further embracing this set of evidence-based policy options. Just think of the mothers, fathers, children, friends’ lives being squandered by negligence.” said David Makumi, vice chair of NCD Alliance Kenya

A policy area where Kenya could be doing much more is on [alcohol policy](#) or [promoting physical activity](#). Kenya could do a great deal to reverse alcohol-related NCDs and other harms to health and development by implementing Best Buys to meet WHO and Global Goals targets to reduce harmful use of alcohol and premature mortality from NCDs by 2013.

“Governments have made, and failed to keep, numerous commitments to address the rise in NCDs. Despite multiple commitments for NCDs, including the 2011 UN Political Declaration on NCDs and the inclusion of NCDs in Agenda 2030; action at global and country levels has been insufficient and uneven. Globally, progress is off track to meet 2030 Sustainable Development Goal Targets.” said Katie Dain, CEO of the NCD Alliance.

In follow up to the 3rd UN HLM on NCDs, civil society advocates are calling on governments - and particularly Heads of State and Government - to lead on prioritising health across all sectors of government and society, and ensure the HLM is not a missed opportunity to end preventable death, disability and suffering everywhere. And advocates are giving stakeholders - including Governments - a heads up: we will be monitoring implementation and progress.

“Kenya has had enough of the suffering from NCDs - so much of it avoidable, so many of the drivers of these diseases in the hands of governments. We, together with civil society allies, stand ready to support the Government in this most important quest to deliver on the right to optimal health of our people.” concluded Dr Eva Njenga, Chairperson, NCD Alliance Kenya

Sincerely,



Dr. Eva Njenga,
Chair, NCD Alliance of Kenya

ENDS

NOTES FOR EDITORS:

NCDs, sometimes referred to as chronic or long term conditions, are not transmissible from person to person, and include cancers, diabetes, cardiovascular disease, chronic lung disease and mental and neurological conditions. A large proportion of NCDs are preventable, with main modifiable risk factors including tobacco use, harmful use of alcohol, unhealthy diets, physical inactivity and pollution. NCDs are responsible for 70 percent of global deaths, while millions of people live with these chronic conditions, many with inadequate and inequitable access to the care and treatment they require.

CONTACTS FOR FURTHER INFORMATION:

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