

**Statement at the Multi-stakeholder Hearing on the Prevention and Control of
Noncommunicable Diseases (NCDs) and the Promotion of Mental Health
United Nation, New York**

2 May 2025

***Reshaping and strengthening health systems and all forms of financing to meet the
needs of people living with and at risk of noncommunicable diseases and mental health
conditions.***

World Cancer Research Fund International expresses its concern that the world remains off-track to achieve SDG target 3.4 by 2030, and welcomes the recognition of insufficient progress made on the prevention and control of NCDs globally in the UN Secretary General's Report.

The three previous High-level Meetings on NCDs have failed to garner strong policy commitments, and lacked specific targets, timelines, financial commitments, or accountability mechanisms. This High-level Meeting is therefore a crucial moment to strengthen what was agreed to in the 2018 Declaration, and deliver on sustainable financing of NCDs and health systems strengthening.

NCD financing is a lifesaving investment. We urge Member States to scale up financial and technical contributions to match the global disease burden: NCDs cause 75% of global deaths, yet only receive 2% of development assistance, with low- and middle-income countries carrying the highest emerging rates of NCDs.

We urge Member States to mobilize investment in the prevention and control of NCDs, to help reverse increasing burden on healthcare costs, reduction in productivity, and weakening of economies. Speeding up implementation of and investment in cost-effective policy interventions like the WHO Best Buys yields positive returns, with every \$1 invested yielding at least \$7 in returns through better health, employment, productivity, and economic stability. For example, fiscal measures can simultaneously reduce NCDs, improve health outcomes and increase government revenues.

Investing in NCD prevention and control—including investing in primary healthcare, health systems strengthening, and universal health coverage—offers economic rewards in the short- and long-term, and means healthier, more resilient populations and health systems.

Further, World Cancer Research Fund International recommends Member States commit to investing in the implementation of National Cancer Control Plans that emphasize prevention actions and indicators, including primary prevention of modifiable risk factors and screening and diagnostics.

Cancer is the second most common cause of NCD-related deaths, and cases are rising sharply. Prevention is the most cost-effective way to address cancer: easing the burden on healthcare systems and budgets, while also reducing reliance on expensive, often out-of-pocket or

inaccessible treatments. Cancer control plans that prevention offer an effective, affordable and targeted strategy to reduce cancer incidence and improve outcomes.

World Cancer Research Fund International strongly urges Member States to utilize the opportunity of this year's High-level Meetings to establish strong commitments within the Political Declaration to adequately and sustainably finance the prevention and control of NCDs.

World Cancer Research Fund International also supports and endorses Union for International Cancer Control's High-level Meeting advocacy asks, and NCD Alliance's Call to Lead campaign, including suggested draft text for the Political Declaration.