ANNUAL REPORT
2021
The Defeat-NCD Partnership Annual Report 2021

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The results and key achievements presented in this report are the collective efforts of all partners working to support the implementation of respective national NCD strategies and costed action plans.

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The Defeat-NCD Partnership

The Defeat-NCD Partnership is a practical response to the widespread call for action on non-communicable diseases (NCDs).

We are a public-private-people partnership, that envisions universal health coverage for non-communicable diseases.

We assist 90 low-resource countries to scale-up sustained action on NCDs. These include all countries that have low- or lower-middle income status, as well as others that are more prosperous in nominal income per capita terms but still need considerable help because their development status is heavily constrained by weak technical, human resource, and institutional capacities.

Our four key action pillars

Our practical work is organised around four interconnected pillars that constitute a comprehensive service package to tackle the most common gaps and constraints that challenge low-resource countries.

1. NCD National NCD Capacity Building
   The overall objective of Pillar 1 is to ensure that partner countries have essential institutional capacities, structures, systems and financing in place to tackle NCDs in a sustained and sustainable manner.

2. NCD Community Scale-Up of NCD Services
   The overall objective of Pillar 2 is to bring more of the necessary prevention and management of NCD services directly to more people who need them.

3. NCD Affordability and Accessibility of Essential NCD Supplies
   The overall objective of Pillar 3 is to enable the consistent provision of affordable essential NCD medicines, diagnostics, and equipment in low resource countries.

4. NCD Financing for Country-Level NCD Programming
   The overall objective of Pillar 4 is to establish a long-term sustainable financing model for NCD programming in low-resource countries.

Our efforts are aimed specifically at SDG 3.4, the reduction by one-third of premature mortality from non-communicable diseases through prevention and treatment, by 2030.

Efforts from the partnership help towards achieving other SDGs and their respective targets

- SDG 3.8 Achieve universal health coverage
- SDG 3.C Substantially increase health financing and the recruitment, development, training and retention of the health workforce in developing countries
- SDG 3.D Strengthen the capacity of all countries, in particular developing countries, for early warning, risk reduction and management of national and global health risks
- SDG 5 Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls
- SDG 10 Reduce inequality within and among countries
- SDG 13 Build knowledge and capacity to meet climate change
- SDG 17.3 Mobilize additional financial resources for developing countries from multiple sources

The huge under-funding of healthcare in low-middle income countries (LMICs) means that many of the poorest families incur catastrophic expenses for health and become trapped in a never-ending cycle of illness and poverty. The Defeat-NCD Partnership
Foreword from Dr Tedros Adhanom, Director General, World Health Organization

The COVID-19 pandemic has exposed many of the inefficiencies hindering sustainable, functional healthcare systems that can effectively address today’s major killers - non-communicable diseases. 2021 saw the launch of the Global Breast Cancer Initiative, the Global Diabetes Compact, and new hypertension guidelines, among other guidelines and standards issued by WHO.

It is of major importance to have the support of The Defeat-NCD Partnership translating WHO’s guidance into practical support to low-resource countries to scale-up their work on NCDs and progress towards achieving SDG 3.4.

This includes our ongoing joint work in programme countries; the implementation of research grants for NCD prevention and control jointly launched in 2021; and establishment of a practical mechanism for pooled procurement of more affordable and quality assured NCD supplies, currently being rolled out in the first countries.

I am pleased that in 2021 The Defeat-NCD Partnership has worked on solutions for better forecasting and market shaping to contribute to better quality, more equitable, affordable, and improved universal health coverage for NCDs.

With our continued engagement and collaboration, WHO reiterates its strong support for The Defeat-NCD Partnership and its much-needed services across the 90 low resource countries and beyond.

Foreword from Mr Nikhil Seth, United Nations Assistant Secretary General and Executive Director of the United Nations Institute for Training and Research

It is established that people with non-communicable diseases are most at risk for severe COVID-19 disease. The Defeat-NCD Partnership is committed to the goal of reducing premature mortality due to NCDs by one-third by 2030. However, the challenges facing health systems because of COVID-19, makes this mission more difficult to achieve.

One way of overcoming some of the challenges and constraints posed, is leveraging artificial intelligence and digital health. UNITAR has been hosting The Defeat-NCD Partnership for the past three years and we are grateful for the Partnership’s support in helping UNITAR to deliver on SDG 3 in a more practical manner. With strong demand from countries, the Partnership is addressing a lifesaving, critical need which is only expected to grow if not addressed urgently.

Having successfully delivered strong results across its pilot countries, The Defeat-NCD Partnership is now well positioned to scale-up and roll-out its work across its four interconnected pillars, and progress to the Partnership’s next stage of growth.

As a long term strategic partner, UNITAR will continue and strengthen the collaboration with the Partnership specifically on training, research, and capacity building activities across its four pillars of work. I look forward to continue to support the mission of The Defeat-NCD Partnership through my participation on its advisory committee.

Message from Dr James Hospedales, Chair of the Executive Committee, The Defeat-NCD Partnership

With the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, the past twelve months saw good achievements by The Defeat-NCD Partnership to relieve some of the suffering of patients with non-communicable diseases. The COVID-19 pandemic is temporary while climate change is a far bigger challenge, with people living with NCDs being very vulnerable, the Partnership is evolving to take this on board.

The Executive Committee members (Hirak Biswas, Lavanya Ram Iyer, Sanae Karmass, Mohan Murti, and myself) are very proud to see the progress achieved by The Defeat-NCD Partnership. The demand on services across its four pillars of work has been very strong and the support provided by the United Nations Institute for Training and Research over the past three years has been much appreciated.

During this period, the Partnership has scaled-up its technical assistance and support to programme countries, undertaken training and capacity building activities, and established The Defeat-NCD Partnership’s Essential NCD Supplies Facility. We are servicing the strong demand from countries for their direct procurement needs of NCD supplies and have successfully addressed the fulfillment requirements on the supply side through the engagement of requisite procurement agent services.

It is timely to see the next evolutionary stage of The Defeat-NCD Partnership, beta-established in 2018 as an independent non-profit international organisation headquartered in Switzerland. This will help the Partnership to better deliver on its call to action, particularly some of the innovations it is bringing to improve the prevention and control of NCDs.

We express our gratitude to the United Nations for hosting The Defeat-NCD Partnership since 2018 and look forward to the continued collaboration.

Introduction from Mr Mukul Bhola, Chief Executive Officer, The Defeat-NCD Partnership

The Defeat-NCD Partnership has continued serving countries during an unprecedented period of challenges and change: a global pandemic, which is further compounded by political instability across several geographies, and related adverse effects on economies and supply chains across the world.

The urgent need for continued quality care for people living with NCDs has not diminished as the result of a challenging year behind us, but rather increased. So too has the Partnership’s work and commitment to ensure equitable access to affordable NCD services and supplies across low resource countries.

I would especially like to thank Boehringer Ingelheim and The Leona M. and Harry B. Helmsley Charitable Trust for their support, and acknowledge the earliest pledges and contributions since 2018 from the Government of Denmark, the European Commission, Roche, Novo Nordisk, and Novartis.

The unwavering commitment of our long-standing and new supporters, and the dedicated teams working in NCD departments across our programme countries have led to the results in this report, which I am pleased to present.

It is only through such innovative public-private-people partnerships and collaboration that we will make strong headway together to protect the most vulnerable and achieve universal health coverage for NCDs.
**The Defeat-NCD Partnership programme country focus**

A 14.1% increase in the number of NCD patients presenting in health facilities was achieved in 2021 compared to 2020:
- Hypertension 6.7%
- Diabetes 22%
- Cancers 141%
- Asthma 10%

In addition, willingness to present in health facilities increased with a 52% increase in the severe forms of NCDs admitted in health facilities in 2021 compared to 2020:
- Hypertension 3.5%
- Diabetes 58.2%
- Cancers 162%
- Asthma decreasing by 3%

Policy work with the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare advocating the uptake of HPV vaccination as a major evidence-based step toward reaching the WHO’s global strategy to accelerate the elimination of cervical cancer.

The Indian states of Madhya Pradesh, Jharkhand, and Goa requested support for implementing cervical cancer screening and HPV vaccination programmes.

Three state officers are co-located with, and in support of, the national health mission for the roll-out of the programmes in collaboration with our implementing partner, Transforming Rural India Foundation.

**Ecuador**

NCD Supplies

**The Gambia**
Cardiovascular Diseases
Diabetes
Cancer
Chronic Respiratory Diseases

The Gambia is currently reviewing the national NCD policy and has commenced in March 2021 the process of developing a new 5-year NCD strategy and costed action plan with technical support from The Defeat-NCD Partnership. This is designed to set clear NCD interventions with expanded service packages to be provided by the different levels of the health system with its aim of accelerating the country’s progress to achieving the global targets.

Dr Ahmadou Lamin Samateh
Minister of Health
Government of The Gambia

**Rwanda**
Cardiovascular Diseases
Diabetes
Cancer
Chronic Respiratory Diseases
Injuries and Disability

Launch of the national NCD strategy and costed action plan for the prevention and control of NCDs in Rwanda

Dr Daniel Ngamije
Minister of Health
Government of Rwanda

**India**
Cervical Cancer

During emergencies

Policy makers have seen the importance of having a strong health system and we should use this momentum to mobilise additional resources to invest for a resilient health system that can address NCDs and other diseases during health emergencies.

**Myanmar**
Cardiovascular Diseases
Diabetes
Cancer
Chronic Respiratory Diseases
Mental Health

There is a need to build a strong, resilient health system which can resist disruption of key health services during a pandemic and can guarantee continuity of care, especially for NCDs.

Policy makers have seen the importance of having a strong health system and we should use this momentum to mobilise additional resources to invest for a resilient health system that can address NCDs and other diseases during health emergencies.

Dr Ahmadou Lamin Samateh
Minister of Health
Government of The Gambia
2021 AT A GLANCE

The COVID-19 pandemic affected NCD service delivery globally and shifted the focus away from NCD programming. National institutions’ capacities to operate as normal were hampered, and travel restrictions affected abilities of both national and international partners to provide services.

The Defeat-NCD Partnership continued however to provide technical assistance and support, across its four pillars of work, to its existing programme countries, in Rwanda and Myanmar, and initiated programming in three additional countries, The Gambia, India, and Ecuador.

The political instability following the military coup in Myanmar in addition to the dire situation caused by the high rates of infections of COVID-19 led to massive losses in the progress achieved by the NCD country programme.

The Defeat-NCD Partnership efforts were directed more towards advocacy for the continuity of NCD services, the inclusion of NCD care in the humanitarian response and the prioritisation of NCD patients in COVID-19 vaccination.

The Defeat-NCD Partnership
Essential Supplies Facility

The focus during 2021 was to establish and launch the services of the Defeat-NCD Partnership Essential Supplies Facility.

The Essential Supplies Facility is established to overcome the major constraint in the global fight against non-communicable diseases, the reliable availability and affordability of medicines, diagnostics, and equipment. Without this being tackled, scaling-up the screening and management of NCDs, as part of the aspiration for universal health coverage will be much more difficult.

The key objectives of the Defeat-NCD Partnership Essential Supplies Facility are:

- To create a competitive environment serving the interests of both buyers and suppliers.
- To ensure that the underlying technology is easily scalable at a global level.
- To provide transparency of process that helps to build mutual trust and confidence.

The expected NCD drugs and diagnostics market size in LMICs is as follows:

Total Market size

94229Mn

1Mn

International Financing Corporation (IFC) has recently launched an initiative with the Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency (MIGA) to support public banks globally for trade financing.

It plans to expand the programme to support import financing of essential medical supplies through its partnership with The Defeat-NCD Partnership Essential Supplies Facility

Ms Makiko Toyoda
Head, Global Trade Finance Programme, International Finance Corporation, World Bank Group

Community volunteers providing urgent care to vulnerable NCD patients in Myanmar

Dr Bente Mikkelsen
Director, Non-Communicable Diseases in the division of UHC/Communicable and Non-Communicable Diseases, The World Health Organisation

"During this time of crisis, drug prices are increasing and most people living with non-communicable diseases don't have access to essential treatment and supplies and suffer complications as a result. I hope that essential NCD aid can reach conflict areas."

U Hla, 70 years old, Myanmar
Cardiovascular diseases are the major causes of morbidity and mortality globally and across The Defeat-NCD Partnership programme countries. Cardiovascular diseases have established behavioural, social, and environmental risk factors and have been one of the disease focus areas addressed by programme countries during 2021.

CVDs in The Gambia

The National Multi-Sectoral Strategy and Costed Action Plan for the Prevention and Control of Non-Communicable Diseases in The Gambia has CVDs as a core focus across all 6 strategic objectives. Although the plan has not been launched yet, larger focus on NCDs, including CVDs has been achieved.

CVDs proportional mortality

Key Achievements

- Development of the new national NCD policy.
- Development of The Gambia tobacco control strategy.
- Development of the first physical activity action plan.
- Development of the nutrition policy integrating the management of dietary risk factors related to non-communicable diseases.
- Development of the NCD risk factors Stepwise survey protocol for The Gambia.

CVDs in Rwanda

It is estimated that 1,188,142 people between the age of 15 and 64 are living with hypertension in Rwanda.

More than 15,000 children in schools were educated on prevention, symptoms, treatment of sore throat and rheumatoid heart disease.

5,564 children were screened across 21 schools in Rwanda. 57 were found to have abnormal heart conditions that need close follow-up.

Key Achievements

The National Strategy and Costed Action Plan for the Prevention and Control of Non-Communicable Diseases in Rwanda has CVDs as a core focus across all 4 strategic objectives. Significant progress was achieved in the implementation of these objectives by all partners implementing this action plan, including:

- NCDs and environmental health chapters are incorporated in the training manual for School Health and Nutrition Programme of the Ministry of Education.
- The Multisectoral National Strategic Plan for Tobacco Control in Rwanda was finalised.
- Celebration of World Stroke Day on 29 October 2021 in collaboration with Stroke Action Rwanda.
- Reintroduction of “Car Free Day” after a prolonged COVID-19 pandemic.
- Development of literature review report for establishing alcohol policy in Rwanda in collaboration with the Manchester Metropolitan University.
Diabetes Mellitus (DM)

Diabetes Mellitus has been the focus of global health advocacy and efforts during 2021. WHO launched the Global Diabetes Compact which seeks to reduce inequity in access to diagnosis and treatment, ensuring that everyone can access care in primary health settings. It will also support the prevention of type 2 diabetes from obesity, unhealthy diet and physical inactivity.

The Defeat-NCD Partnership’s participation at the stakeholder consultations during 2020, allowed the integration of the Partnership’s programme country experience into the compact.

Diabetes Mellitus (DM) Proportional Mortality

Key Achievements

- 6 clinics have been providing diabetes and other NCD care in The Gambia over the past 3 years.
- 25 NCD clinics have been approved to scale-up services and cover the entire geography of The Gambia.
- Public-private-people partnerships to provide diabetes and other NCD community screening was established for the first time in The Gambia in 2021.

DM in The Gambia

Price of diabetes medication in US$ across 37 countries

Key Achievements

- Reactivation of diabetes community screening activities during “Car Free Day” events.
- Developing the proposal on decentralised type 1 diabetes management to primary health centers in Rwanda and its implementation plan.
- 85 awareness and educative training sessions on diabetes self-management to 1336 patients and to 916 household members of diabetes patients were conducted by Rwanda Diabetes Association, in addition to supporting 700 type 1 diabetes patients with cash and in-kind donations.

It is estimated that 396,800 people are living with Diabetes in Rwanda.

It is estimated that 18,100 people are living with Diabetes in The Gambia.
Cancer

Cancer is a major challenge facing health systems globally. It causes major physical, financial, and emotional distress and suffering for patients and their families. In addition, cancer requires specialised training, skills and capacities which most health systems in low resource countries do not have.

In Rwanda

- A public awareness campaign on cancer was launched targeting the most common cancers including cervical, breast, colorectal, and prostate cancer.
- Celebrated breast cancer awareness month with the Breast Cancer Initiative for east Africa with survivors support group meeting and sensitisation campaign.
- Training of 19 nurses and doctors on performing clinical breast examination and perform VIA using acetic acid for cervical cancer screening.
- Training of 17 data managers on cervical cancer and breast data reporting.
- Cervical and breast cancers early detection and treatment of precancerous cervical lesions with thermal ablation had been decentralised to 63 health centers and 9 hospitals while treatment of advanced lesions with LEEP are available in 9 hospitals.
- 107,654 women were screened for cervical cancer.
- Community Based Health Insurance benefit packages in Rwanda was expanded to include chemotherapy, screening for cervical and colon rectal cancers, and prostheses.

In The Gambia:

- A comprehensive mapping of current practices, stakeholders, resources, capacities, and referral channels was conducted.
- A national consensus for the establishment of a cancer specialised center including its the location has been agreed upon within the teaching hospital.

Price of cancer palliative medication in US$ across 33 countries
The Defeat-NCD Partnership Essential Supplies Facility

A major constraint in the global fight against non-communicable diseases is the reliable availability and affordability of medicines, diagnostics, and equipment. Without this being tackled, scaling-up the screening and management of NCDs, as part of the aspiration for universal health coverage will be much more difficult.

Therefore, with the repeated call to action for the establishment of a mechanism that helps countries, especially the poorer ones, to get value-for-money in their NCD procurement, alongside ensuring quality and continuity of supplies, led to the establishment of The Defeat-NCD Partnership Essential Supplies Facility.

Gaps in the current supply chain system

- Poor forecasting and supply chain
- Inadequate health systems
- Lack of regulatory harmonisation
- Inconsistent national essential medicine lists
- Uncertainties in financing

The Defeat-NCD Partnership Essential Supplies Facility started operating in November 2021, providing access to affordable, quality-assured, essential NCD medicines and supplies to countries through pooled procurement bundled with end-to-end supply chain support, financial assistance, forecasting, advocacy, technical support, and consulting services.

The Defeat-NCD Partnership Essential Supplies Facility makes the provision of essential NCD supplies simpler and more cost-effective. With market-sizing and price-tracking studies conducted in countries, the Facility will correct current market failures due to information imbalances and create a competitive environment that serves the fair interests of both buyers and suppliers, while bringing transparency to the process.

By leveraging market dynamics, such as pooled purchasing power, the Facility is achieving lower prices, improving quality control, contributing to standardisation, and more effective supply chains.

Benefits for purchasing organisations

- Cost savings for purchasing organisations from discounts on bulk orders due to pooled procurement
- Forecasting and inventory management support provided by the Defeat-NCD Partnership Marketplace team
- Quality assurance of delivered NCD medicines and supplies through pre-shipment inspection, lab testing and batch sampling prior to and upon delivery
- Administration, supply chain, and financial management support for procurement of essential NCD medicines and supplies
- Increased transparency of the process and auditability through electronic order management system
- Availability of flexible financing options to support uninterrupted supply of non-communicable diseases products
**Advocacy: Our major events in 2021**

**Addressing Non-Communicable Diseases During the COVID-19 Pandemic**

The Islamic Development Bank plans to support procurement of essential medicines and supplies for all member countries in collaboration with The Defeat-NCD Partnership Essential Supplies Facility through trade-financing.

Mohammad Mirzaei Kahagh, Senior Partnership Specialist, Islamic Development Bank

The High-level panel discussion attracted 457 participants across 46 countries.

**Uninterrupted Health Services for NCDs during the COVID-19 Crisis**

High-level panel discussion on the margins of the 74 World Health Assembly 2021.

The session was attended by 351 participants from 48 countries.

**In our Precision Lung Cancer Awareness Meet**

more than 128 health professionals learned the latest developments in precision medicine.

**Rajesh Tope, Minister of Public Health and Family Welfare, Government of Maharashtra, India’s most urbanised and industrialised state, emphasized his commitment to “reducing the nearly 8% growth in cancer mortality by increased screening and affordable cancer care.” The minister then called upon The Defeat-NCD Partnership to join forces to save lives lost to cancer and work together on a campaign to eliminate cervical cancer in the state of Maharashtra.**

**Live interview with Al Jazeera Mubashir**

targeting an audience of more than 40 million people to increase awareness about NCDs and advocate for early detection, equal access to treatment, and increased funding.

**The Stroke Conclave**

brought together more than 340 health professionals who shared their experience and learned unique strategies for successful stroke care.

**World Diabetes Day**

An event for the celebration of World Diabetes Day in The Gambia.

Live interview with Al Jazeera Mubashir targeting an audience of more than 40 million people to increase awareness about NCDs and advocate for early detection, equal access to treatment, and increased funding.
Advocacy: Our major research and publications in 2021

Exposing the Intersection Between NCDs and COVID-19:
Lessons and Opportunities from Emerging Data
A report by The Economist Intelligence Unit for The Defeat-NCD Partnership

The research report can be accessed [here](#).

Market demand for non-communicable disease drugs and diagnostics: availability and affordability gaps in lower middle-income countries
Access our research [here](#).

Saving Lives with the HPV Vaccine
Statement by Mr. Mukul Bhola, Chief Executive Officer of The Defeat-NCD Partnership, Dr. Daniel Ngamije, Minister of Health of Rwanda, and Dr Ahmadou Lamin Samateh, Minister of Health of The Gambia

Implications of non-communicable diseases care policies on COVID-19 disease management
Access our research [here](#).

People with NCDs are being singled out by COVID-19. The world can prevent these deaths, through empowering people, widespread, well-developed, and properly supported public health services that need to be led by governments.

David Nabarro, Co-Director of the Institute of Global Health Innovation at the Imperial College London, Strategic Director of 4SD, and Special Envoy of WHO Director-General on COVID-19.

“Between availability, affordability, and quality” How can the world close the gap in cancer care

An Op-ed by Mr Mukul Bhola, Chief Executive Officer of The Defeat-NCD Partnership and Dr Ahmadou Lamin Samateh, Minister of Health of The Gambia on the occasion of World Cancer day 2022.
Our expanding reach and partners

Following the successful implementation of the programme across Rwanda, The Gambia, and the progress made in Myanmar before the military coup, The Defeat-NCD Partnership programmes are being rolled out across 3 states in India, Ecuador, Bhutan and the Caribbean region as part of the initial 2022 scale-up countries.

During the visit of Dr Ximena Garzón Villalba, Minister of Public Health of Ecuador to Geneva, an MoU was signed to help Ecuador scale-up their NCD programme and access the support of the Defeat-NCD Partnership Essential Supplies Facility.

Dechen Wangmo, the Minister of Health of Bhutan and the President of the 74 World Health Assembly, during her visit in Geneva, requested the support of The Defeat-NCD Partnership to scale-up NCD prevention and control in Bhutan and to help Bhutan overcome the lengthy NCD procurement process and access quality-assured, fairly-priced NCD supplies.

The Defeat-NCD Partnership country programme in Ecuador will provide technical assistance through a public health expert, a health economist and a supply chain specialist during 2022.

The Ministry of Public Health of Ecuador is one of the first countries availing the services of the Defeat-NCD Partnership Essential Supplies Facility in order to procure the annual national demand of quality-assured, fairly-priced, essential NCD supplies.

In partnership with the Global Non-communicable Disease Platform of the World Health Organization, the Alliance for Health Policy and Systems Research, hosted by WHO, we are scaling-up action on implementation research to help provide answers on how to improve the use of proven NCD prevention and control-related evidence and existing initiatives, plans, policies, and interventions. The goal of this Call for Proposals is to provide incentive grants to build the capacity of young researchers, based in low- and middle-income countries to carry out implementation research for NCD prevention and control, and to generate knowledge to support the scale-up of proven cost-effective interventions. More than 100 research applications were received with 23 eligible proposals longlisted for evaluation by the Selection Committee, composed of representatives from The Defeat-NCD Partnership, the Global NCD Platform, relevant WHO technical departments, the Alliance for Health Policy and Systems Research, and TDR. Up to 10 proposals shall be shortlisted for final review and approval by the Senior Advisory Council chaired by the WHO Deputy Director-General and include the CEO of The Defeat-NCD Partnership, Global NCD Platform, relevant departments at WHO HQ, an external expert from the Sechenov First State Medical University, and Alliance for Health Policy and Systems Research. The selected research proposals will be announced and awarded the research grants in 2022.

We collaborated with Manchester Metropolitan University and Cambridge Judge Business School for the implementation of research projects in support of our programme.

We shared inspiring stories of incredible people living with non-communicable diseases around the world.

We are collaborating with the Islamic Development Bank to scale-up NCD screening, treatment, and care across low resource countries, in addition to the collaboration to support their procurement of NCD supplies through trade-financing.
We help low-resource countries to tackle today’s most significant global health challenge: premature death, sickness, disability and the associated social and economic impacts from non-communicable diseases. The Defeat-NCD Partnership includes governments, multilateral agencies, civil society, academia, philanthropies and the private sector.

Join us

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