

Non-Communicable Diseases (NCDs)

Overview and challenges

More than 41 million people die annually as a result of Non-Communicable Diseases (NCDs), equivalent to 71% of all deaths globally. Diabetes is one of the four main types of NCDs, and a growing health challenge that hits the poorest hardest. Today, nearly 350 million people in low- and middle-income countries (LMICs) live with diabetes and 77% of these do not receive adequate care. That number is expected to grow to 450 million by 2030, putting immense pressure on healthcare workers and healthcare systems.

Challenges in India

NCDs now account for the majority of deaths in India. India alone is home to a staggering 77 million people living with diabetes, making it the second country with the highest number of diabetics in the world after China. What is more, 1 in 2 people living with diabetes in India are unaware of their condition, and awareness of diabetes and diabetic management in rural areas is especially low.



Our Partners

Novo Nordisk is a leading global healthcare company, with the purpose of driving change to defeat diabetes and other serious chronic diseases such as obesity, and rare blood and rare endocrine diseases.
World Diabetes Foundation is a leading global funder of diabetes prevention and care projects in low- and middle-income countries.



ENSURE HEALTHY LIVES AND PROMOTE WELL-BEING FOR ALL AT ALL AGES



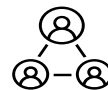
NON-COMMUNICABLE DISEASES

Access to care, awareness, and prevention of NCDs, particularly for poor and vulnerable populations.



HEALTHY PREGNANCY

How can we strive for improved access to antenatal care in pregnancy, skilled care during and after childbirth, especially during the first 1000 days?



DIABETES CARE ECOSYSTEM

How might we build an ecosystem of diabetes care and management for the rural population to reduce the burden of NCDs as a whole?



HEALTH PROMOTION

How can we improve prevention and healthy lifestyles through awareness and easing of access to information, especially in LMICs and among children and youth?



STIGMA

How can we combat stigma on diabetes, leading to lower barriers for individuals to seek out care and manage their mental and physical health?



DIGITAL HEALTH

How might we leverage digital health tools to boost access to care, health promotion and outcomes, e.g., improved medical diagnosis and personalized care for NCDs?



POLICY

How might we advocate for policies that decrease preventable deaths from NCDs by e.g., stimulating investment or campaigning for protection of the vulnerable?

Figure 1 - Subthemes of the NCDs Track

Additional thematic information and guidance:

The thematic track on *SDG 3 - Good Health and Well-Being* will focus solely on Non-Communicable Diseases (NCDs). NCDs are reaching alarming proportions as a rapid epidemiological transition has led to a shift in the burden of disease to NCDs.

Cardiovascular diseases are behind most NCD deaths, followed by cancers, respiratory diseases, and diabetes. In fact, these four groups of diseases account for over 80% of all premature NCD deaths. The main risk factors for non-communicable diseases are unhealthy diets, physical inactivity, exposure to tobacco smoke or harmful use of alcohol.

The case of diabetes

Diabetes is a chronic condition that occurs when the body cannot produce enough insulin or effectively use the insulin it produces. It is driven by a complex interplay of socioeconomic, demographic, environmental, and genetic factors. But why focus on diabetes?

- **Diabetes is one of the fastest growing health challenges of the 21st century.** 1 in 10 adults are living with diabetes. That is 537 million people; a number that is expected to continue growing every year.
- **Diabetes hits low- and middle-income countries (LMICs) the hardest.** 3 in 4 adults with diabetes live in LMICs, a trend that grows as the Global South deals with rapid urbanization. Yet, many healthcare professionals in LMICs lack the skills and resources to prevent, diagnose and treat diabetes. Critics point to a need not only for improved treatment, but also for increased awareness of the disease and preventive measures in the population.
- **Almost half of the adults living with diabetes are undiagnosed, and almost 90% of them live in LMICs.** This is largely due to socio-economic inequalities in accessing quality health and a lack of awareness around diabetes care and prevention. Ensuring that all individuals and communities receive the health services they need without suffering financial hardship, is crucial to tackle this disease.
- **1 in 6 live births are affected by hyperglycaemia in pregnancy.** Undiagnosed diabetes can cause severe problems in cases of gestational diabetes – a form of diabetes that develops during pregnancy. If gestational diabetes goes undiagnosed and is not treated, there is a higher risk of complications for the baby, including hypoglycemia and breathing difficulties.
- **1.2 million children and adolescents below 20 years have type 1 diabetes.** This is one of the most common chronic diseases in children, with India having the second-largest population of children living with diabetes. The number of young people with type 1 diabetes increases annually.

The diabetes epidemic calls for an urgent need to mobilize stakeholders and develop innovative, sustainable, and scalable models for prevention and access to NCDs care. Through a dedicated track at UNLEASH India, talented youth can spark and accelerate sustainable change to tackle the burden of NCDs in India and beyond.

Additional challenges suggested

Here is a list of suggested challenges within this theme that are both urgent and important:

- How can country-level youth innovation support the WHO Best Buys interventions?
- How can we better track and monitor women with high-risk pregnancy to prevent and reduce future diabetes case?
- How can we provide cost-effective patient-centered screening for poor and vulnerable populations to increase the rate of early diagnosis of lifestyle induced NCDs?
- In what way can we inform population groups with limited access to resources on NCD about NCD diagnosis, prevention, and access to care, for example the urban poor?
- How can we empower children and youth to live healthy lives?
- How can we influence authorities and stakeholders to actively address and reverse obesogenic environments, ie. Addressing poor quality of food offered at schools, address heavy marketing of unhealthy food options to children and youth, address the fact that many cities does not provide sidewalks/bike lanes/ green areas to promote physical activity?
- How might digital applications enhance patient experiences, e.g., by easing access to data and therapists?
- How do we stimulate investments for awareness, researching and sharing knowledge on the crossover effects of the double burden of NCDs, e.g., the higher chance of developing tuberculosis disease or contracting a COVID-19 infection amongst diabetics?
- How might we pursue universal health coverage so that all people can have access to the health services they need?

Sources

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