
More than 700 delegates from 66 countries expected to join the 2025 Global Forum in Rwanda

Idioma Inglés

A rich variety of sessions, including pre-conferences, high-level plenaries, and interactive gatherings in the Community Zone, await delegates to the 4th Global NCD Alliance (NCDA) Forum in Rwanda, 13-15 February. The Forum will welcome over 700 delegates from 66 countries, representing a truly multisectoral audience spanning governments, multilateral organisations, academia, the private sector, and civil society.

The Forum is strategically organised in Rwanda and Sub-Saharan Africa for the first time, reflecting the significant burden of NCDs in the region, as well as the leadership, innovation, and solutions emerging from many countries across the continent. It is also strategically timed, occurring just five months before the UN High-Level Meeting (HLM) on NCDs on 24 September, which represents the next major opportunity to secure increased political commitment for NCDs at the highest level.

The event, co-organised by the NCD Alliance and the Rwanda NCD Alliance, in collaboration with Rwanda Biomedical Centre (RBC) and the Ministry of Health, will probe multiple themes: inspiring leadership in addressing NCDs; how to mobilise sustainable financing to address the epidemic, and powering up communities to collaborate with governments and other partners in leading the response to NCDs.

Delegates can expect to be inspired by what's working, reenergised and motivated ahead of the HLM on NCDs, and return home from Kigali with new connections from across the globe.

Opening Ceremony to look ahead

The Forum kicks off with the Opening Ceremony at the Kigali Convention Centre on 13 February. Building on the video address from **Dr Tedros, WHO Director-General**, the Opening will emphasize the catalytic potential of leadership on NCDs towards the UN High-Level Meeting on NCDs and Mental Health (UNHLM) in 2025, and beyond. Other speakers will include Dr Monika Arora, NCDA President; Dr Joseph Mucumbitsi, Chairperson of the Rwanda NCD Alliance, and Dr Gina Agiostratidou, Program Director of the Leona M. and Harry B. Helmsley Charitable Trust, the

Strategic Partner of the 2025 Forum.

Four plenary sessions will address key themes. The Opening Plenary, **NCDs in the Africa Region**, will highlight the regional policy context on NCDs and health more broadly, and review progress to date in the region since the last HLM in 2018. It will be moderated by Dr Githinji Gitahi, Group CEO of Amref Health Africa and feature speakers:

- Lea Kilenga, Executive Director of the Africa Sickle Cell Organisation;
- Prof Claude Mambo Muvunyi, Director General of the Rwanda Biomedical Centre;
- Dr Kofi Mensah Nyarko, Regional Adviser NCDs at the WHO Regional Office for Africa, and
- Dr Mohammed Abdulaziz, Head of Disease Control and Prevention at the Africa Centres for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

2025: A critical year for NCDs

Plenary One will reflect on the global NCD response to date and look ahead to 2025, which marks a critical juncture – the end date of the current global NCD targets and the next HLM. Titled **2025 and beyond: Leadership in NCDs from grassroots to governments**, the session's confirmed speakers include:

- Princess Padmaja Kumari Parmar, Founder Friends of Mewar, Global Ambassador, Breakthrough T1D;
- Patricia Lambert, Chair of the Global Alliance for Tobacco Control;
- Ferdinand Sonyuy, Chair of the Secretariat of the Africa NCD Network;
- Katie Dain, CEO of NCD Alliance;
- Guy Fones, Interim Director, Noncommunicable Diseases Rehabilitation and Disability, WHO.

Plenary Two will examine why NCDs remain one of the most underfunded global health priorities, with a stark and persistent mismatch between the burden and global and domestic resource allocations. However, it will also discuss the growing evidence, consensus and momentum on the solutions and fiscal policies to bridge this gap. Titled **Bridging the financing gap: Sustainable investments, smarter financing for NCDs**, the session's speakers include:

- Jumana Qamruddin, Global Program Lead for Healthcare Delivery, World Bank;
- Pierre Cooke, Technical Advisor at the Healthy Caribbean Coalition;
- Dr Gladwell Gathecha, Acting Head of the Division of NCDs, Ministry of Health, Kenya;
- Ulrika Arehed Kagstrom, President Elect at The Union for International Cancer Control (UICC);
- Dr Ladi Hameed, General Manager of Roche Nigeria;
- Prof Linda Bauld OBE, Chief Social Policy Advisor for the Scottish Government.

Powering up communities is the title of Plenary Three. Designed to explore the role and vital importance of communities in advancing the NCD response, it will discuss good practice and opportunities to unlock the value of civil society and communities. This includes providing enabling environments and inclusive governance mechanisms, and promoting social participation. Speakers include:

- Vuyiseka Dubula, South African AIDS activist and Head of Community, Rights & Gender at the Global Fund;
- Edith Mukantwari, Lived experience advocate, Voices for Pen-Plus advocate, NCD Diarist, and Executive Director of the Africa Diabetes Alliance;
- Dr Ravi Ram, Executive Director, Madhira Institute, Director of Evaluation, Medwise, Co-chair WHO Civil Society Commission, Affiliated with the People's Health Movement;
- Radhika Shrivastav, Senior Director, HRIDAY, Governing Board member, Healthy India Alliance;
- Dr Joseph Kibachio, Medical Advisor for NCDs and Mental Health, WHO.

You find more details about the programme on [our Forum website](#) [1].

The Global Forum will be a truly unique event for the global NCD community. We look forward to welcoming delegates in Kigali. The Time to Lead on NCDs is now.

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