

Non-Communicable Diseases (NCDs) in Humanitarian Settings: The Key Advocacy Asks



OUTCOMES OF THE IFRC GLOBAL BOOTCAMP MAY 2025

We call on governments before, during and after emergencies – whether acute or protracted, and whatever the cause – to:

- 1 Uphold and accelerate implementation of all existing global, regional and national commitments on NCD prevention and control.
- 2 Prioritise sustainable financing for prevention and control of NCDs, including mental health conditions.
- 3 Break down silos and bring together stakeholders to deliver a coordinated emergency response, including NCDs.
- 4 Strengthen meaningful community involvement to ensure continuity of NCD care.
- 5 Ensure access to resilient primary health care for NCDs, including mental health and psychosocial support.
- 6 Ensure and protect supply chains to maintain uninterrupted access to essential NCD services, medicines and supplies.
- 7 Improve health information, monitoring systems and research on the NCD burden, service delivery and effective models of care.

These advocacy asks were cocreated, consolidated and agreed by over 60 experts – representing Member States, the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) network, UN agencies, international NGOs, academic institutions and philanthropic organizations – at a meeting held at the IFRC Headquarters, Geneva, Switzerland.

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NCDs in an era of polycrisis: the context for the asks

Today, over 120 million people have been forced to flee their homes, driven by an ever-growing number of emergencies, including conflict, violence, natural and climate disasters, and health system collapse. Many of these crises are interlinked, protracted and multigenerational: the average length of time spent as a refugee is now 20 years, and people displaced within their own countries remain so for an average of 10 years.

A parallel crisis is that of non-communicable diseases (NCDs), which account for almost three-quarters of all deaths worldwide. Annually, over 80% of deaths among those aged under 70 are among people in low- and middle-income countries. Living in a humanitarian setting acts as a magnifier of NCD risk, and mental health and psychosocial wellbeing is inextricably linked to NCD outcomes.

In these settings, it is therefore essential to implement flexible and people-centred approaches to NCDs, along the entire life-course and continuum of care before, during and after emergencies. This will build the resilience of individuals, families, communities and health systems to new and ongoing emergencies, enabling all to thrive.

**Too often, however, NCDs are not prioritised in
emergency preparedness, response and recovery.
These advocacy asks were cocreated to address this key challenge.**

Urgent and timely: consolidating key advocacy asks

Over 60 experts from Member States, the IFRC and its network, UN agencies (including the World Health Organization), the International Organization for Migration and the UN Refugee Agency UNHCR), international NGOs, academic institutions and philanthropic organizations worked together over the course of a month, initially online and culminating in a two-day, in-person, intensive 'advocacy bootcamp', held in May 2025 at the headquarters of the IFRC in Geneva. A wide range of expertise was extensively canvassed to prepare the asks. There was strong consensus as to the core priorities, which cover policy, health equity, access, and continuity of care for all. The bootcamp was convened by the IFRC as part of implementing its NCD Vision and Framework 2030, with the aim of translating operational realities into high-level advocacy. Grounded in the auxiliary role to public authorities and the community-based reach of its network of 191 National Societies.

The resulting compelling set of advocacy asks, presented here in brief, points the way to dramatically improving the lives of people living with or at risk of NCDs in humanitarian settings.

This advocacy is both urgent and timely. 2025 is a crucial year for global NCD policymaking, as a High-level Meeting on the Prevention and Control of NCDs and the Promotion of Mental Health and Wellbeing will be held during the United Nations General Assembly in September.

Looking ahead: clear direction for the future

All those involved in developing the advocacy asks hope that they will be a strong basis for governments and civil society to use to inform negotiation on the Political Declaration for the UN High-level Meeting. However, the relevance of the asks extends much further: they look ahead to the 2030 horizon of the Sustainable Development Goals and beyond.

**Full implementation of these advocacy asks would enable
millions more people to live healthier, happier lives
before, during and after emergencies.**

