

# Aligning International Cooperation with National NCD Plans

**Dr. Daniel Lopez-Acuna**

Adjunct Professor  
Andalusian School of Public Health

Independent Public Health Expert

Former WHO Director of Country Cooperation and Collaboration  
with the United Nations System

**WHO GCM/NCD Working Group 3.2 on Aligning International  
Cooperation to National NCD Plans**

**Geneva, April 6 ,2016**

# Nature of the Paper

- Provides inputs for Working Group 3.2
- Provide “out of the box” food for thought to stimulate Member State discussions
- Informs WG 3.2 recommendations
- Elaborates on the disconnect between international cooperation and national plans
- Underscores that NCD International Cooperation priorities tend to go on different directions and this results in a lack of coherence and effective synergy

# The scope of the deliberations of WG 3.2 (Section I)

The paper suggest that the WG 3.2 centres its deliberations on:

- Suitability of NCDs national plans
- The nature of NCDs International Cooperation
- The mapping of actors and areas of NCD International Cooperation , especially at country level
- The analysis of the current financial flows of financial cooperation on NCDs
- Wether or not there are adequate national mechanisms of coordination of NCDs International Cooperation
- The political economy of the national NCDs agendas

# The urgent need to tackle NCDs with the support of International Cooperation (Section II)

- international NCD mandates and their corresponding frameworks and metrics **have been accumulating creating multiple layers that at times may result confusing for Member States.**
- National NCDs plans are quite heterogeneous and tend to be organized thematically by NCD pathologies.
- Cross cutting aspects of health systems in connection with NCDs prevention and control not always addressed.
- Not all the National NCD plans contain what they should
- Insufficient identification of gaps warranting the support of international cooperation.

# The fundamental tenets of Development Cooperation Effectiveness in connection with NCDs(Section III)

- Paramount Importance of the principles emanated from the Paris, Accra, Busan, and Mexico High Level Meetings on Development Cooperation Effectiveness as well as from the ECOSOC Development Cooperation Forum.
- International Cooperation in NCDs is very much peace-meal, oriented towards project implementation and reliant on resource mobilization.
- NCD challenges in today's world call for a revised paradigm of international cooperation.
- More emphasis needed on sharing of knowledge, policies, legislation and best practices, that favours platforms of cooperation among countries, that does away with an obsolete and ineffective donor-beneficiary model and that aligns international financial cooperation with the national investment on NCDs, supplementing it rather than replacing it.

# How to make International Cooperation more effective for advancing the NCD agenda at country level (Section IV)

- It is important to discuss the remit of the NCD International Cooperation.
- The challenge ahead is to build a more effective, more meaningful and more relevant process of NCD international cooperation
- The emerging needs and new demands warrant the development of a revised strategic direction.
- Need for an improved way of organizing the work of the International Cooperation stakeholders on NCDs while ensuring an optimal coordination.
- The United Nations Interagency Task Force, mandated by ECOSOC, has been a step in the direction
- However International Cooperation Stakeholders in the field of NCD not limited to the UN agencies and encompass many other actors.
- Global Coordination Mechanisms on NCDs prevention and Control is the most suitable platform to do it

# How to make International Cooperation more effective for advancing the NCD agenda at country level (Section IV) cont.

- NCD International cooperation is disperse, not optimally aligned with the need for producing institutional strengthening and capacity-building efforts in Member States.
- Not geared towards advocacy, policy, normative and collective action functions. Consequently its effectiveness is seriously hampered.
- Should do the necessary to advance the following functions:
  - Support to countries to respond to national and global development challenges associated with NCDS
  - Normative and technical support to countries
  - Mainstream NCDs components in development and humanitarian agendas
  - Partnership-building and stakeholder engagement
  - Support to South-South and triangular cooperation
  - Integrated policy advice/advocacy
  - Strategic innovation in development

# Desired impact of NCD International Cooperation expressed in terms of outcomes

- National capacities enhanced
- Norms and standards developed/adapted
- Monitoring and accountability mechanisms strengthened
- Delivery of health services improved
- Policy choices improved
- Stakeholder engagement leveraged
- Awareness increased

# How to overcome bottlenecks and barriers for aligning International Cooperation into National NCDs Plans (Section V)

- Alignment faces many difficulties and has to overcome three fundamental challenges:
  - The modalities and magnitude of International Cooperation on NCDs are not suitable nor commensurate with the challenges of advancing the NCD agenda.
  - Its atomization, lack of coherence, and competing favour dispersion and lack of alignment .
  - The national capacities for formulating the national NCD plans as well as the theory of change behind both the national NCD plans and the international cooperation strategy on NCDs, is far from optimal
- Need to coordinate NCDs International Cooperation, especially at country level, harnessing all partners, stakeholders and good will at national and local levels
- The framework utilized in harmonizing and aligning international cooperation in support to National Plans for the prevention and control of HIV/AIDS( “three ones”), could be extrapolated to the area of NCDs International Cooperation .

# A way forward for maximizing the alignment with National NCD Plans (Section VI)

- Need for improving the effectiveness of International Cooperation on NCDs and making it relevant for Member States.
- A prerequisite: a sound governance ,ownership and quality of the process of formulation and implementation of national NCDs plans.
- Much more work needed to arrive at a definition of greater clarity of purpose of the NCD International Cooperation
- GCM well positioned to play a catalytic role and to be the space for convening the different actors ,especially those having a true country expression of their work.
- GCM well suited to bridge the outcomes of this International Cooperation multi-stakeholder coordination process with the Member State policy decision making of the WHO governance process.
- International Cooperation on NCDs needs to go beyond the thematic and organizational silos approach.
- More than coordination or integration, we should speak about coherent joint action

## Concluding remarks

- The NCD International Cooperation needs to strengthen its relevance as well as the effectiveness and impact of its activities.
- It needs to become more coherent and efficient, especially at country level.
- It should rethink its functions and its organizational arrangements.
- It should transform its capacities to deliver.
- It should define suitable ways of enhance its ability to engage stakeholders to help attain the NCD related SDGs.

# Concluding remarks

- Mapping current efforts, functions and capacities of the NCD International Cooperation will inform on the gaps to be filled and the magnitude of the effort that lies ahead.
- Analysing major trends and suitability of National NCD Plans is an urgent task
- WHO GCM/NCD can provide an invaluable space for this.
- A critical dimension is the political economy of change.
- Pressure for change will have to come from the clear leadership and support of Member States, who will have to drive the process .