



REGIONAL FORUM

ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT FOR THE UNECE REGION



Addressing Environmental Risk Factors for the Prevention and Control of Noncommunicable Diseases (NCDs)

1 APRIL 2025 | 13:15 - 14:15 CEST | ONLINE (WEBEX)





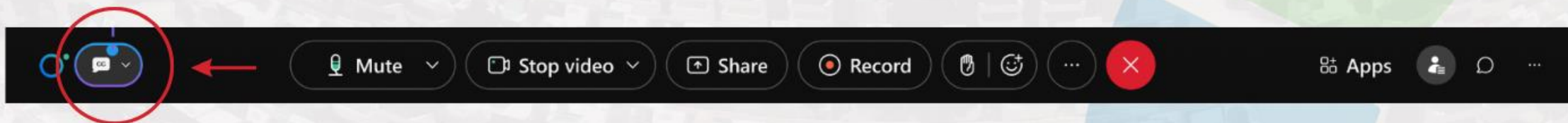
TECHNICAL INFORMATION

- Throughout the event, you may raise your questions in the Q&A box
- Automatically translated subtitles in many languages are available through the captions button on the bottom left of your screen
- The recording, summary and documents will be made available on the event's website



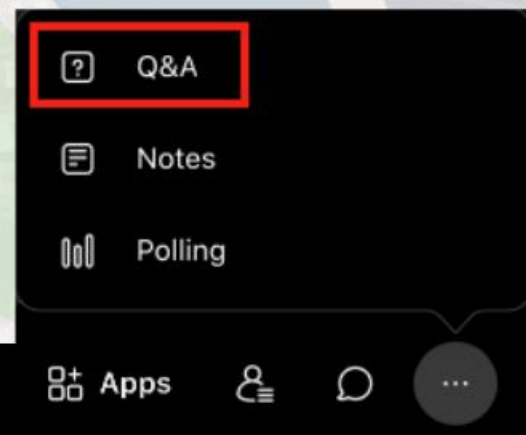


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#RFSD2025

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**Addressing Environmental Risk
Factors for the Prevention and
Control of Noncommunicable
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1 APRIL 2025 | 15:15 CEST

**Young People Driving
Transformation: Education for
Biodiversity and Sustainable
Development Goals in Action**



2 APRIL 2025 | 8:45 CEST

**THE PACT FOR THE FUTURE &
DECLARATION ON FUTURE GENERATIONS:
Unpacking the Opportunities to Engage
Young People in Policy & Decision-
Making Between Now and Up to 2030**





Addressing Environmental Risk Factors for the Prevention and Control of Noncommunicable Diseases (NCDs)



SPEAKERS



Nicholas BANATVALA



Head, Secretariat of the UN Inter-Agency Task Force (UNIATF) on the Prevention and Control of NCDs



Sascha GABIZON



Executive Director, Women Engage for Common Future



Génon K. JENSEN



Executive Director, Health and Environment Alliance (HEAL)



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Azerbaijan



Simon HERTELEER



Coordinator, UNECE ESD Youth Platform



Wondwosen ASNAKE



Policy and Partnerships Coordinator, Europe Office, UNEP | Moderator



Briefing on the preparations for the Fourth High-level Meeting on NCDs and of mental health



#NCDs

UN INTERAGENCY
TASK FORCE ON NCDs



@un_ncd

Fourth High-level Meeting of the UN General Assembly on the prevention and control of NCDs and the promotion of mental health and well-being



- 25 September 2025, UN HQ, New York.
- Follows on from 2011, 2014 and 2018 high-level meetings.
- *Equity and Integration: Transforming lives and livelihoods through leadership and action on NCDs and the promotion of mental health and well-being.*
- Opening segment, plenary segment, two multi-stakeholder panels and brief closing segment.
- Concise and action-oriented political declaration, agreed in advance by consensus through intergovernmental negotiations.

Progress on the prevention and control of NCDs and the promotion of mental health and well-being: Note by the Secretary-General

- Addressing the **social, commercial, environmental and economic determinants** of health is critical.
- **Air pollution** is another major contributor to the risk of NCD mortality, significantly increasing the risk of stroke, ischemic heart disease, lung cancer and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease.
- Of the **7 million annual deaths** related to air pollution in 2019, **85% were linked to NCDs**.
- In 2022, notwithstanding some progress in expanding access to clean fuels, **2.1 billion people still relied on polluting fuels and technologies for cooking**.
- Globally, while the annual average population-weighted concentration of **fine particulate matter** in urban areas has improved slightly since 2010, it remained alarmingly high in 2019 – more than **six times higher than WHO air quality guidelines limits** – affecting **99 per cent of the world's population**.
- **Few countries are on track to achieve target 3.9** of the Goals (reduce deaths and illnesses caused by air pollution).



Link to the report: <https://uniatf.who.int/governance/un-general-assembly>

- ❖ **HLM4 Panel 1:** Tackling the determinants of noncommunicable diseases and mental health and well-being through multisectoral and effective governance and collaborative action.
- ❖ **HLM4 Panel 2:** Reshaping and strengthening health systems and all forms of financing to meet the needs of people living with and at risk of noncommunicable diseases and mental health conditions.

‘The President of the General Assembly may invite parliamentarians, local governments, the heads or senior representatives of relevant United Nations entities, and international financial institutions, development partners, civil society, the private sector, academia, medical and scientific associations, Indigenous Peoples, representative organizations of persons affected by noncommunicable diseases and mental health conditions, persons with disabilities and community organizations to serve as speakers on the panels, taking into account gender balance, level of development, geographical representation and the representation of youth and older persons.’

Modalities resolution

Examples of what member states may consider including in the political declaration when it comes to air pollution

- Promoting and incentivizing **clean, efficient and expanded urban transit** (i.e. buses and trains), car share schemes and low-emission zones;
- **Reducing the open burning** of agricultural residues;
- Encouraging at the household level access to **affordable and less polluting fuels** (e.g. liquefied petroleum gas and renewables) and technologies (e.g. improved cook stoves) for cooking, heating and lighting.
- **Fiscal measures** such as taxes and subsidies

Interactive Multistakeholder Hearing



Date: 02 May 2025, 10 am – 6 pm

Venue: Trusteeship Council Chamber, UNHQ

Registration deadline: 31 March 2025

Platform for relevant stakeholders to **share perspectives, experiences, and best practices** while identifying challenges and proposing actionable solutions.

Interactive Multistakeholder Hearing

Participation

- NGOs with consultative status with ECOSOC, invited civil society organizations, philanthropic foundations, academia, medical associations, and relevant private sector entities.
- Broader communities, including women, children, youth, indigenous Peoples, people of African descent, persons living with NCDs and mental health conditions, persons with disabilities, and senior representatives from Member States.
- Observers from the General Assembly, parliamentarians, local government representatives, and relevant United Nations entities will also be involved.
- Outcome: Summary report ahead of the Fourth High Level Meeting

Interactive Multistakeholder Hearing

Format

- | | |
|---------------|--|
| 10:00 – 10:30 | Opening segment |
| 10:40 – 13:00 | Panel discussion 1
Tackling the determinants of NCDs and mental health and well-being through multisectoral and effective governance and collaborative action. |
| 13:00 – 15:00 | Lunch break |
| 15:00 – 17:30 | Panel discussion 2
Reshaping and strengthening health systems and all forms of financing to meet the needs of people living with and at risk of NCDs and mental health conditions. |
| 17:30 – 18:00 | Closing segment |

****The hearing will be webcast live on UN WebTV****

Find us on: <https://uniatf.who.int/>

Contact as at: unncdtaskforce@who.int



UN INTERAGENCY
TASK FORCE ON NCDs





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Non-Communicable Diseases and
Environmental Determinants



Women's rights & environmental determinants of Non-Communicable Diseases

Sascha Gabizon
Women Engage for a Common Future
International

Geneva, RFSD, 1 April 2025

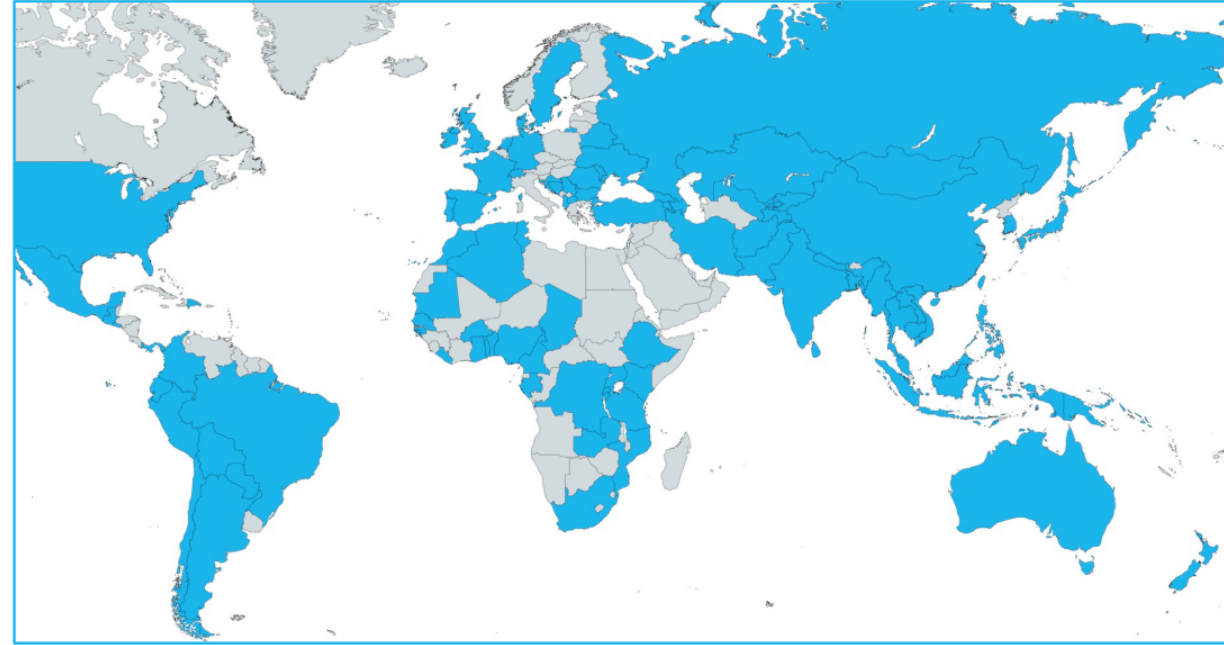


Introduction

WECF

Who we are

- **Eco feminists** - WECF is a network of over 250 ecofeminist organizations, active in 70 countries around the world.
- **Equality and Sustainability**- We envision a world in which gender equality has been achieved and all people live in dignity in a healthy, just, and sustainable environment
- **Women's leadership** – ensure priorities of women and feminists in all their diversities are reflected in policies and actions for our “**Common Future**”
- **Strategic coordination** with other civil society allies e.g the Women Major Groups to UNEP



Gender equality Women's rights & Non- Communicable Diseases

Women and NCDs?

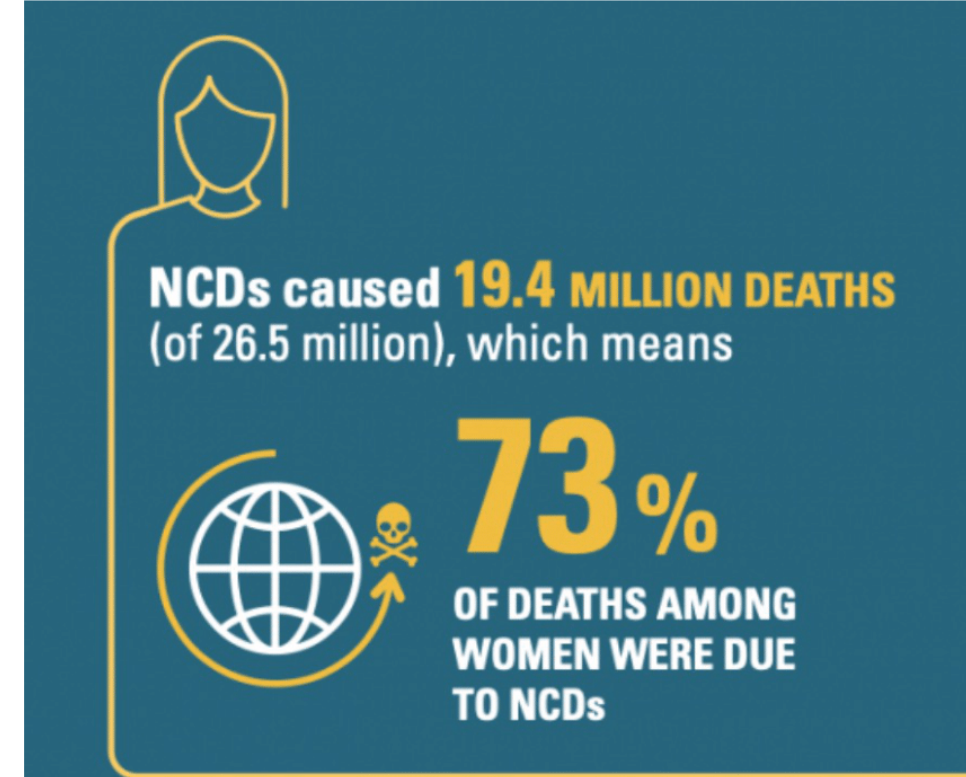
1 in 3 Women die from NCDs

19,4 million Women die annually; 73%

Reasons of death:

- CVD
- Respiratory diseases
- Cancer

Gender norms, resulting inequalities and other intersecting determinants, cause women and girls to experience a number of disadvantages that make them particularly vulnerable to NCDs, especially in low- and middle-income countries (LMICs).



Source: [NCD alliance](#) 2022

Gender Equality?

Women, globally:

- Represent half of the world population
- Do 2/3 of unpaid care work
- Are often invisible as informal workers
- Only own 1 to 2% of the global property
- Earn up to 80% less wages than men for the same position at the same job
- Only earn about 10% of the global income
- 33% experience (sexual &) gender based violence
- Less decision making power

= risk of economic and social vulnerability

= lack power to protect against harmful chemicals



Pollution and NCDs?

1 in 4 of death linked to environmental pollution

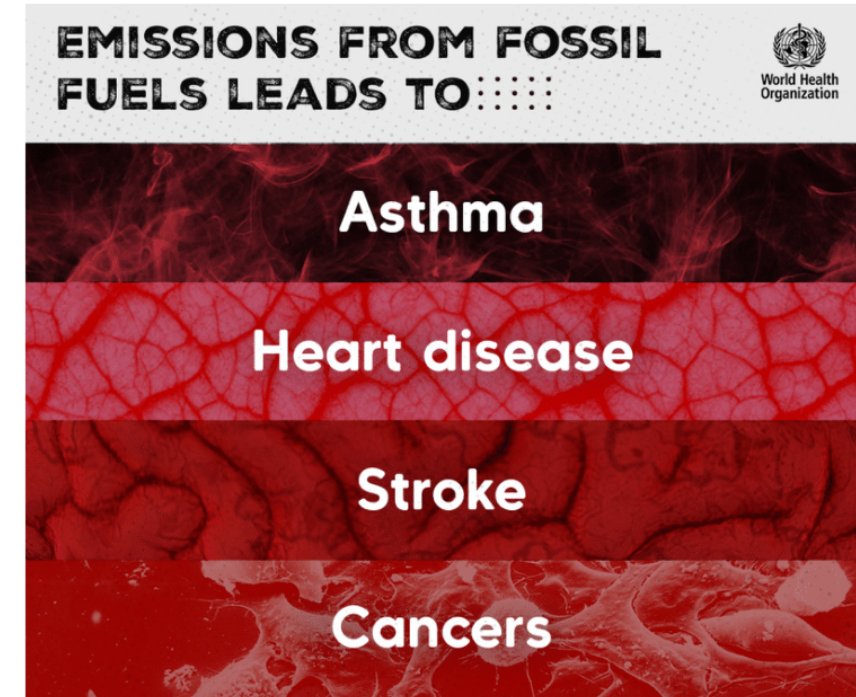
13.7 million of deaths: 24% of global fatalities

WHO:

Almost all diseases are influenced by unhealthy environments, with noncommunicable diseases (NCDs) including:

- heart disease
- chronic respiratory diseases
- cancers.

Climate change is exacerbating health risks



Source: WHO [World Health Organisation](#) 2025

Different impacts pollution

Gender roles

- **Care work** in majority placed on women
 - Children born pre-polluted: irreversible, lifelong illnesses / impacts
 - Exposure to chemicals cleaning products, cooking, household waste (burning)
- **Unprotected workplace exposure** to toxic chemicals
 - Women worker concentration: plastics, beauty salons, cashiers, textiles, semi-conductors...
 - Pesticide exposure, est. 90% flower industry workers women
 - Textile industry: up to 90% of women have a high chemical exposure (PFCs, flame retardants, dyes)
- **Gender-beauty** ideals
 - Women targeted by beauty products with chemicals
 - Skin-bleaching (mercury), hair dyes, nail polish, lipstick



Chemicals in products for women

Cosmetics:

- twice as much as men
- 25% women use 15 items per day average
- Contain up to 100 chemicals per item (e.g., formaldehyde, mercury, parabens)

Period products:

- Manufactured from up to 90% plastics including BPA and Phthalates

Consequences:

- Mountains of polluted waste and impacts on health

Policies needed:

- Ban harmful substances in products
- Transparency: obligatory, understandable declarations of ingredients (e.g., product passport)
- Fiscal benefits for non-toxic products



Chemicals impact women's health

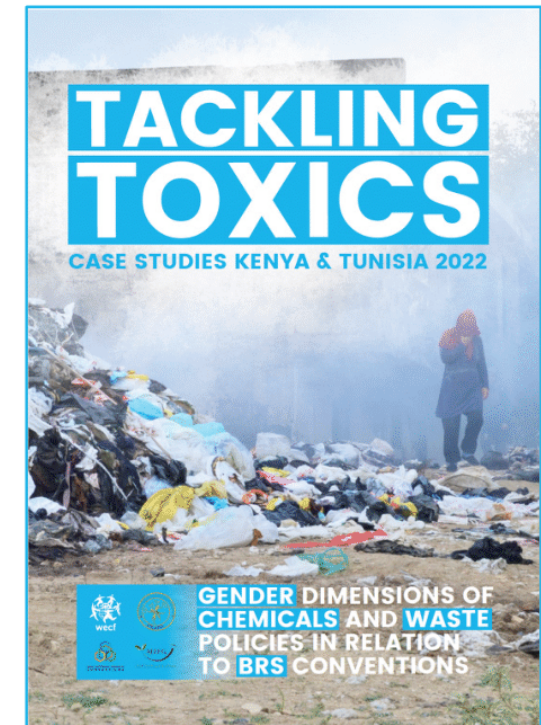
Women are differently affected by harmful chemicals

Biological factors:

- there are phases in women's physical development, where they are especially influenced by hormones. For example puberty, pregnancy, breastfeeding and menopause. The exposure through harmful chemicals can be especially high in this so-called sensitive phases.
- Women have thinner skin, they absorb chemicals easier. Also, women have more fat tissue and therefore probably store more environmental pollutants at mostly accumulate in fat tissue – as do most of the persistent organic pollutant

This must be taken into consideration in toxicology, risk assessment, protective measures and in chemical policy: currently this is not enough the case!

Exposure to flame retardants, phthalates, PFAS, pesticides, mercury can lead to:
→ Increased risk of diseases such as leukaemia, diabetes and reproductive disorders, premature births, miscarriages, low birth weight, neurological disorders





TACKLING TOXICS

**Documentary gender and chemicals
Kenya 2022**



Policy recommendations

Global phase out

A global phase-out of hazardous chemicals including:

- Highly Hazardous Pesticides (HHPs)
- Forever Chemicals such as PFAS and others; Persistent bio-accumulative toxins (PBTs), very persistent and very bio-accumulative substances (vPvBs), genotoxins, carcinogens, chemicals affecting reproduction, the immune and nervous systems,
- Endocrine disrupting chemicals
- Toxic metals such as mercury, cadmium and lead
- Hazardous nanomaterials
- All substances that undergo long-range transport (POPs etc.)

Core policy principles

- Precautionary Principle
- Right to know
- Polluter Pays
- No data - no market
- Mandatory Substitution



Informing consumers, women, girls, parents



INSTAGRAM

@WECF_INTERNATIONAL
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FACEBOOK

@WECF.INTERNATIONAL
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 [WECF.ORG](https://www.wecf.org)

Guidebooks against harmful substances



Protect your health-
Avoid toxic substances!

[Guidebooks](#)

TOXIC FREE PERIODS

ECO-FRIENDLY
HEALTHY
PLASTIC-FREE
PERIODS



**GIFTFREI
MENSTRUATION**

gesund
ökologisch
plastikfrei





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THANK YOU!



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