

STATEMENT OF THE INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT LAW ORGANIZATION

SIDE EVENT: "FRIENDS OF THE UN INTER-AGENCY TASK FORCE ON THE PREVENTION AND CONTROL OF NCDs: SUPPORTING MEMBER STATES TO ACHIEVE THE NCD-RELATED SDG TARGETS"

September 23, 2019

New York

Delivered by Irene Khan, Director-General, IDLO

Excellencies, distinguished delegates,

Friends and colleagues,

The International Development Law Organization is the only intergovernmental organization that works exclusively on the rule of law and sustainable development. We are a founding member and active participant of the Inter-Agency Task Force.

When one thinks of non-communicable diseases (NCDs), the rule of law does not immediately come to mind. In reality, however, the legal environment, the regulatory capacity, effective governance institutions as well as the legal empowerment of people to claim their rights play an extremely important role in furthering policies and strategies to address NCDs. That is why IDLO is actively involved on the issue of NCDs.

We believe SDG 16 on peaceful, inclusive societies, access to justice, and effective, accountable institutions and SDG 3 on equal access to health for all people are closely linked.

That is why at the beginning of this year, IDLO together with the World Health Organization and IDRC of Canada with support from Switzerland and the OPEC Fund for International Development, launched an initiative to develop the legal capacity of five countries in East Africa and South Asia to introduce regulatory and fiscal measures and build a supportive legal environment to improve diets and encourage physical activity.

We recognize that governments have a crucial role to play in addressing NCDs, but we know that governments alone cannot influence people to make healthy choices and avoid harmful products. Other stakeholders, including civil society, academia, and the private sector should also be engaged.

Therefore, as part of our initiative on NCDs, we are reaching out to civil society organizations in multiple ways, as equal partners, in roundtable dialogues with governments, as community educators and as advocates for under-represented parts of the population affected by NCDs such as women, youth and marginalized groups.

This week IDLO and WHO are organizing a training workshop on the law and healthy diets in Kenya. Workshops in Tanzania and Uganda will come later this year, and next year in Bangladesh and Sri Lanka. We will also support multiple national dialogues with governments and other stakeholders to promote healthy diets and physical activity.

Legal capacity and legal empowerment are key components of a multidimensional, multisectoral approach to address NCDs. Many governments need support to strengthen

their capacity to incorporate the rule of law as positive ingredient in their strategies to address non-communicable diseases. We stand ready to extend our support to them.

Thank you.

The International Development Law Organization (IDLO) enables governments and empowers people to reform laws and strengthen institutions to promote peace, justice, sustainable development and economic opportunity.