Multisectoral Trans-disciplinary Approach to Prevention and Control of NCDs in the Pacific

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Non-Communicable Diseases (NCDs) are the leading cause of death in the Pacific, accounting for approximately 75% of deaths every year compared to 70% worldwide.

Evidence from STEP surveys undertaken in selected PICTs revealed significant rates of NCDs (such as diabetes, hypertension and obesity) arising from key risk factors, mainly poor diet, physical inactivity, tobacco smoking and alcohol abuse. Research has shown that addressing major risk factors by improving diet, increasing physical activity, and controlling the use of tobacco and alcohol, can have a significant effect on lessening the incidence of NCDs, with as much as 80 percent of heart disease, stroke and Type 2 diabetes, and 40 percent of cancer prevented.

The current level of resources available at country and regional level are neither proportionate nor adequate to address this major challenge. The Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC) joined forces with the World Health Organization (WHO) developing the Pacific NCD Programme.

The Programme aims to assist, support and enable Pacific Island Countries and Territories (PICTs) to improve the health of their populations by establishing a comprehensive, multisectoral and trans-disciplinary approach to combat NCDs and associated risk factors. It is part of the responds to calls for actions on NCD from the Pacific Ministers of Health meetings over the last five years, Global WHO Plan of Action for NCD, Healthy Island Vision and consultations with PICTs.

It also seeks to harmonize and coordinate the efforts of both implementing partners and donors, sharing resources, minimize duplication and build on the comparative advantages of SPC and WHO working together under the concept of "ONE TEAM TWO ORGANISATIONS FOR 22 COUNTRIES AND TERRITORIES". It embodies the 3 ones principles or the Paris and Rome declaration and adapt them into the Pacific context.

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