



29 September 2019 – WHO's country office in Iraq received an award at the United National General Assembly in New York for its contribution to NCD prevention and control under the category of outstanding United Nations country team.

Iraq's NCD programme won recognition for its efforts in:

- improving health outcomes;
- lowering exposure to NCD risk factors, and
- improving surveillance in the area of NCDs.

Activities conducted under the programme had included "Walk the talk" campaigns to encourage a healthy lifestyle and combat NCD-related risk factors, implementation of the Global

Youth Tobacco Survey, 2019, and revision and updating of Iraq law on tobacco products to increase taxes and implement recommendations of the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control.

In addition, the country has strengthened national capacity to develop an essential NCD health service package at the primary health care level, the cancer registry has been improved through adoption of the CAN Reg 5 programme, prevention and treatment of substance abuse strengthened, suicide prevention addressed and annual NCD "health days" celebrated.

Commenting on the award, Dr Thamer Al Hilfi, Technical Officer for NonCommunicable Diseases in Iraq said, "I am proud to be part of the WHO Iraq country team. This award is an honour to me and to our efforts in supporting the people of Iraq and the Iraq health system."

Dr Adham R Ismail Abdel Moniem, acting WHO Representative in Iraq stated, "We are so thankful to the United Nations Interagency Task Force (UNIATF) on the Prevention and Control of Noncommunicable Diseases for this incredible honour, and to Ministry of Health officials for working in partnership with WHO to address NCDs. Together we strive to achieve healthier communities through legislation and action on the ground.

WHO is the lead agency of UNIATF on the Prevention and Control of Noncommunicable Diseases in countries and provides coordinated United Nations system support to Member States to achieve NCD-related targets of the Sustainable Development Goals. Established in 2013 by the United Nations Secretary-General, the task force delivers high-quality technical support to drive multisectoral action in countries. In 2019, 15 agencies participated in the task force's joint programme mission in 30 countries, along with other development partners such as the Government of Japan, United States Centre for Disease Control and the United Kingdom.

WHO collaborates with the Ministry of Health, nongovernmental organizations, United Nations agencies and local communities in Iraq to develop ambitious national responses, by 2030, to reduce by one third premature mortality from NCDs through prevention and treatment as set out in the high-level meetings of the United Nations General Assembly on Noncommunicable Diseases in 2011 and 2014 which reaffirmed WHO's leadership and coordination role in promoting and monitoring global action to address NCDs.

### **Related link**

[UNIATF Awards 2019](#)

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