

Taking Stock Towards Building a More Equitable, Non-communicable Disease-Ready Health Care System

Women Deliver 2023 Concurrent Program
17-20 July 2023

July 18, Tuesday, 13:30-15:00 | Session ID 17139
Kigali Convention Center (Room-MH 3.2), Rwanda

TASKFORCE
on Women and
Non-Communicable Diseases

Efforts to improve maternal and newborn health, demographic transitions, and changes in dietary and behavioural patterns around the world have seen non-communicable diseases (NCDs) become the main cause of mortality and morbidity for women, killing 18 million women annually. Women and girls face a triple challenge of reproductive and maternal conditions, infectious diseases and NCDs. Around the world, girls and women living with NCDs experience specific challenges in accessing prevention, early diagnosis, treatment, and care, particularly in low resource contexts.

This session will focus on the burden and impact of NCDs among women and girls in low and middle-income countries (LMICs), particularly across the African region. The event will assess on-going advocacy efforts, leverage new research, and consider frontline experiences to identify opportunities and promising strategic

models that are being implemented to build a an integrated, equitable and sustainable health care system. Panelists will represent diverse sectors, including people living with NCDs who will share their lived experiences accessing health care and advocating for policy changes related to NCD prevention and control.

During the session, the audience will convene in discussion groups to explore barriers and opportunities for progress, including strategies to improve collaboration across the gender equity and maternal child health movements to build a more equitable, NCD-ready health care system in order to achieve the NCD targets. The discussion will guide advocacy plans of the Taskforce and identify priorities and collaborations that can be carried forward in the WHO/AFRO region ahead of the UN High Level Meeting on NCDs (2025).



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Speakers Bio



Beatrice Lydia Matanje

Beatrice is a Malawian Medical Doctor and Public Health specialist. With an M.Sc. in Epidemiology and a PhD in Global Health Implementation from the School of Medicine at the University of St Andrews, Scotland, Dr. Matanje has demonstrated exceptional leadership in the healthcare industry. She has successfully led a District Health System and established a national NCD program as a National Program Manager at Malawi's Ministry of Health. Dr. Matanje's expertise extends to integrating hypertension and cancer interventions into HIV programs. Currently, she serves as the Medical Director for Partners In Health/APZU, overseeing programs focused on integrating NCDs and HIV services.



Lea Kilenga Masamo

Lea is a Kenyan patient global health strategist and advocate, specializing in Sickle Cell Disease (SCD) and Non-Communicable Diseases in rural Kenya and globally. Through collaboration with governments, partners, and health system actors, Leah implements strategies and actions that promote good health and well-being for all. Her work includes initiating the award-winning 10003 Warrior Project, which led to the development of National Guidelines for the Control and Management of SCD in Kenya. Recognized as a Kenyan 'Hero' by H.E. President Uhuru Kenyatta, Leah serves as a One Young World Ambassador and a McKinsey & Company Next Generation Women Leader. She is also a member of the NCD Alliance 'Our Views, Our Voices' Advisory Committee.



Josyula K. Lakshmi

Lakshmi is a Senior Research Fellow at The George Institute. She has extensive experience in research, advocacy, and teaching interests in health promotion; disease and injury prevention; health system governance in a pluralistic medical society;

planetary health; physical activity; ageing; and research ethics. She holds a PhD in Health Promotion and Disease Prevention, and Gerontology. She has been engaging in research, teaching, and advocacy in health promotion, and health policy and systems research. She works on community-based studies and clinical trials in women's health, environmental health, and cardiovascular health.



Maud Mwakasungula

Maud is a health advocate focusing on the prevention and control of women's reproductive cancers, particularly breast and cervical cancers. She has played a pivotal role in developing national efforts to improve cancer prevention, treatment, and support for marginalized rural women and girls. Currently serving as the Executive Director of the Women's Coalition Against Cancer (WOCACA) in Malawi, Maud works to ensure equitable access to Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR), reproductive cancers, and other non-communicable diseases services. She is also the Chairperson of NCD Alliance Malawi.

Moderator's Bio



Diana Vaca McGhie

Diana is the Co-Chair of the Taskforce on Women and NCDs, a global coalition committed to addressing the intersection of gender and NCDs. With over 20 years of experience in leading non-profits, Diana currently serves as the American Heart Association's portfolio lead for global advocacy. She has a strong track record of implementing inclusive and equity programming, managing projects in over ten countries, and crafting public health policies based on data and implementation science. Diana holds a Masters in Public Administration from New York University and is an alumna of the WomenLift Health leadership program.

About Taskforce

The Taskforce on Women and NCDs is a group of leading organizations working together on a life-course approach to women's health through advocacy and technical guidance.

For more information, please visit www.taskforcewomenandncds.org