



IOGT International Official Statement

Multi-stakeholder hearing, UN High-Level Meeting on UHC 2019

Session 3:

Multi-sectoral, multi-stakeholder actions, investments for UHC

29.04.2019

Thank you for the opportunity to address you on behalf of the members of IOGT International.

In the era of the SDGs, we are calling for a paradigm shift to achieve health and well-being for all.

It starts with a pivot to prevention of health risk factors, such as tobacco and alcohol, as well as a systematic strategy to curb health determinants, such as health harmful industries.

Preventing health problems from occurring or expanding represents by far the best approach to reaching health for all – especially considering the ever-increasing burden of health risk factors fueling both infectious diseases and the NCDs epidemic.

Secondly, shift to understanding health spending as investments, not expenditures. Consider the potential of addressing alcohol harm: Alcohol adversely affects 13 of 17 SDGs. Alcohol use is the number one risk factor for death in the age group 15 to 49 years – typically the most productive years of our lives. This can be modified and prevented. A \$1 investment in the alcohol policy best buys generates a return of \$9. Committing to such actions means investing in human capital, community resilience and thriving economies.

And thirdly, domestic resource mobilization through health promotion taxation holds largely untapped potential. Already in 2010, the World Health Report said:



“Raising taxes on alcohol to 40% of the retail price could have an even bigger impact [than a 50% increase in tobacco taxation].

“Estimates for 12 low-income countries show that consumption levels would fall by more than 10%, while tax revenues would more than triple to a level amounting to 38% of total health spending in those countries. “

Alcohol taxation, like other health promotion taxes, is pro-poor, pro-sustainable development and pro-Universal Health Coverage.

These three elements of the paradigm shift we are calling for illustrate the potential of addressing health risk factors for building multi-stakeholder, cross-sectorial actions, mobilize resources and generate returns on investments to reach health for all and leave no one behind.

I thank you for your attention.

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