



PARALLEL SESSION 3.5

FRAMING NCDS TO ACCELERATE POLITICAL ACTION



| BACKGROUND

There are multiple competing frames involved in the governance of noncommunicable diseases (NCDs). These include: NCDs as a technical public health problem, with technocratic solutions (such as WHO's Best Buys); NCDs as an obstacle to economic growth; NCDs as an equity and human rights issue; NCDs as a development issue, central to achieving the SDGs; NCDs as an externality of transnational corporate practice, an 'industrial epidemic'; and NCDs as a multi-sectoral issue, requiring a 'whole-of-government', 'whole-of-society' approach. This typology of framing also links NCDs to existing global health agendas, such as those of health security, UHC and health systems strengthening. There are also additional risk factor and disease-specific frames, for example concerning obesity/diabetes, sleep deprivation and environmental exposures to pollution. No one frame yet has dominance, and there is currently a pluralistic approach to conceptualising NCDs and the response required to manage them. The response globally has been heavily criticised for its fragmentation - often seen as a major hindrance to progress, especially regarding the achievement of political traction. It is not clear how the different competing frames might be contributing to the fragmented response. However, it is clear that the commonalities and overlaps in the various frames and agendas could be better harnessed and any synergies realised to accelerate political commitment and action.

| OBJECTIVES

- Informed by the commissioned paper (provided by Chatham House), to provide an opportunity for participants to reflect on the framing of NCDs - a neglected topic in policy discussions thus far.
- To bring together actors and opinion-formers from across the NCD response spectrum, to discuss and debate how their different framings may be affecting progress, especially in terms of political action;
- Based on both the commissioned paper, and the discussions by participants, to make recommendations on how to accelerate political commitment.
- Via a targeted call for abstracts to increase the participation of younger and less well-known NCD experts, to bring fresh voices, and new ideas to the table.

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Speaker

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Rachel Thompson has a background in humanitarian work, international development and public health research. Rachel has previously worked with the Red Cross Movement and several NGOs, including significant time in the field in Africa and Asia. She has conducted research on a range of global health topics including family planning in Somalia, Kenya and India, malaria in Tanzania and the Greater Mekong Sub-region, the Ebola response in Sierra Leone, and universal health coverage in Ghana. At Chatham House she focuses on issues around healthcare in conflict, and non-communicable diseases, leading the Centre on Global Health Security's work in these areas. Rachel holds a Bachelor's degree in Anthropology and two Masters degrees in Development Studies and Public Health, all from the University of London.

