

NEXTGEN LEADERS WORKSHOP FOR NON COMMUNICABLE DISEASES

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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About 40 % of deaths in East Africa are currently attributable to non-communicable diseases (NCDs)—a group of diseases, which include cancer, diabetes, cardiovascular disease and mental illness. These conditions are expected to overtake infectious diseases as the leading causes of death in sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) over the next 20 years. People living with NCDs in SSA have up to three-fold higher mortality rates than similar European counterparts, largely due to disparities in care and preventative efforts.

Skilled leaders are urgently needed in East Africa who know how to respond to the devastating impacts of non-communicable diseases at community, national and international levels. The NextGen Leaders program, an initiative of the Young Professionals Chronic Disease Network (YP-CDN) and RTI International, seeks to build capacity and leadership among aspiring advocates and policymakers in the field of NCDs. The Young Professionals Chronic Disease Rwanda Chapter will be hosting the second NextGen Leaders workshop on NCDs from May 4-7, 2017 at La Palisse Hotel, Kigali under the theme ***Accelerating Advocacy & Accountability for Non-Communicable Diseases in East Africa.***

The NextGen Leaders program was launched in Nairobi in September 2016. Now, over 50 young leaders from across East Africa will gather in Kigali to learn skills and create strategies on advocacy, research and to build accountability of governments and other stakeholders for NCD prevention and control. Armed with new knowledge and networks, these NextGen Leaders on NCDs will prepare to change the course on NCDs within the region, now and for the future. For the first time, youth will organize a collective regional call for action on NCDs, with recommendations to their governments toward a United Nations meeting on NCDs in 2018, as well as their own commitments to reduce the world's leading killers. In recent years, Rwanda has achieved commendable progress on NCDs prevention and treatment, and thus, participants from across the region will have the opportunity to hear lessons learnt from the Rwanda Biomedical Center and Ministry of Health.

ENDS

Note to editors:

Young professionals and trainees in the health sector in East Africa will be equipped with skills to collaborate across sectors, learn research and policy skills, and how to communicate research to inform better health policies in their countries. Workshops, training materials, dedicated mentorship and practical experience placements within key NCD policy and research institutions will equip these emerging leaders with the tools to lead NCD research and policy initiatives, as well as provide opportunities for dialogue and learning across cities and countries. The diverse network of experts at RTI International and YP-CDN's strong reputation NCD policy influence worldwide, the NextGen Leaders program is uniquely positioned to provide training and opportunities to young talent to impact global NCD goals.