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Global Health and Cardiovascular Disease

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The epidemic of non-communicable diseases (NCD), including cardiovascular diseases (CVD), is the largest the world has ever known. In 2011, global heads of state joined together at the United Nations High Level Meeting to focus on NCDs – the first time the UN focused on a health issue since the HIV/AIDS epidemic in 2001. We are faced with the ambitious target of reducing premature mortality from NCDs by 25% by 2025. In our increasingly interconnected world, we must learn from challenges, celebrate successes, and share strategies in our fight against NCDs.

Starting with this issue of *Circulation*, international health leaders will share their insights on the global burden of cardiovascular disease from different perspectives. Within this 12-article thematic review series, authors will describe critical elements relating to the global burden of CVD from several perspectives to present an overview of the field. The first several articles will focus on the epidemiology of CVD risk factors and of CVDs – including those specific to people living in extreme poverty. Next, a series of articles will focus on healthcare delivery strategies in regions in which the American Heart Association is becoming increasingly engaged: Brazil, China, India, and Africa. The following several articles will evaluate issues of health systems such as resource-effective strategies, access to essential CVD medicines, and the use of mobile health and other technologies. A global health ethics approach will be taken to evaluate the social determinants of cardiovascular diseases. To conclude the series, leaders will review the translation of the large body of evidence into effective, holistic, and forward-thinking international and national policies to drive action and reduce the global burden of CVDs.

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