

Reviewing Progress on the Prevention and Control of NCDs in the Americas: Preparing for the 3rd UN High-level Meeting on NCDs

11-12 April 2017 Ottawa, Canada

MEETING SUMMARY

CARMEN NETWORK

National NCD program managers and coordinators from 29 countries/territories in the Americas, together with representatives from PAHO/WHO discussed progress by the Member States in meeting the four time-bound NCD commitments and next steps as they prepare for the 2018 UN High-level meeting on NCDs.

Objectives of the CARMEN Network Meeting

- 1** To review the country status, obstacles and needs regarding regional and global NCD commitments.
- 2** To showcase successful NCD initiatives and resources that can support countries to achieve these commitments.
- 3** To strengthen existing partnerships and the regional network on NCD prevention and control.
- 4** To review the process to prepare for the 2018 UN High-level Meeting on NCDs.

29 countries/territories

represented from the Region of the Americas:

Antigua & Barbuda, Barbados, Canada, Belize, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Grenada, Guatemala, Guyana, Honduras, Jamaica, Mexico, Paraguay, Peru, Puerto Rico, St. Kitts & Nevis, St. Lucia, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Suriname, Trinidad & Tobago, Uruguay, USA and Venezuela

CURRENT STATUS

- The Region of the Americas is making progress in establishing national NCD targets, national NCD plans, implementing risk factor policies, and strengthening health services for NCD management, but there are significant gaps in meeting all commitments;
- Five countries (Brazil, Canada, Chile, Costa Rica, and Colombia) have fully achieved the NCD process indicators;
- An additional 14 countries have established national NCD targets and indicators and 17 countries have created national NCD plans;
- Very few countries have implemented the “Best Buys” interventions.

More information about country progress with the NCD commitments can be found [here](#).

Agenda and presentations of the CARMEN network meeting in Ottawa can be found [here](#)

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE DISCUSSIONS

Multisectoral NCD policies and plans are feasible: Multisectoral NCD policies and plans are feasible: Intersectoral approaches are necessary to prevent and control NCDs. These can be facilitated by creating multi-sector NCD commissions, meeting with relevant senior government officials and providing evidence about the impact of NCDs. Civil society engagement on NCDs is essential, in order to anticipate and mitigate industry interference and conflict of interests. Representatives from Mexico, Peru and Trinidad & Tobago showcased their experiences in this regard.

Experiences to tackle obesity: Legislation and regulation are important levers to promote healthy eating and prevent/reduce obesity. Several countries in the region have successfully established front of package nutrition labelling regulations, taxed sugar sweetened beverages, and placed restrictions on sales of foods and beverages in schools. Canada showcased their “Healthy Eating, Healthy Living and Healthy Minds” initiative.

Policy interventions needed to reduce harmful use of alcohol: The region faces high levels of alcohol drinking among adolescents and adults drink at higher levels than most regions of the world. Alcohol advertising, sponsorship and promotion are intense and unregulated, and there are significant gaps in alcohol policies to restrict access and availability.

Experiences in reducing NCD risk factors: Costa Rica, Uruguay and Chile are among the countries that have implemented the NCD “Best Buys” policy interventions, and these experiences were showcased in the meeting. Uruguay faced interference from the tobacco industry, and won the international dispute brought by the Philip Morris tobacco company.

Cardiovascular disease risk reduction approaches in primary care settings: Barbados initiated the implementation of the Standardized Hypertension Treatment Program with CDC and other partners. Chile, Colombia and Cuba have implemented demonstration clinic sites for cardiovascular disease risk reduction. Experiences were shared about applying a simple, standardized and evidence- based treatment algorithm; increasing availability and access to a set of core, high quality medications; establishing a clinical registry for patient monitoring and performance evaluation of the health care organization; as well as enhancing teamwork and shared responsibilities in primary care, along with patient empowerment and community participation.

Strengthening capacity for NCD and risk factor surveillance: Country capacity to monitor NCDs and their risk factors can be improved. A Global Monitoring Framework (GMF) on NCDs/RFs was adopted by countries in 2013. The GMF is comprised of 25 indicators and 9 targets to be achieved by 2025. There are 4 main sources of information: mortality information systems, cancer registries, health information systems and population-based surveys. Strengthening these data sources and the sources for risk factor surveillance will enable countries to monitor the global and regional NCD targets and indicators.

Canada
“Healthy Eating, Healthy Living and Healthy Minds” Initiative. Info [here](#)



PRIORITIES IDENTIFIED

- Achieve the four time-bound NCD commitments: There are many gaps in the achievement of commitments set for 2015 and 2016 by Member States. Achieving these commitments is an urgent priority.
- Implement and enforce existing NCD risk factor legislation and regulations, and strengthen regulatory capacity for risk factors.
- Improve surveillance to ensure periodic, standardized, systematic and sustainable data collection on NCDs and risk factors.
- Develop and implement evidence-based NCD management guidelines and improve health provider capacity in NCD management.
- Counter private sector interference, which is hampering NCD prevention and control efforts.

ACTIONS TO BE IMPLEMENTED AT COUNTRY LEVEL

- Establish multi-sector NCD commissions for NCD prevention and control.
- Amplify advocacy efforts, working multisectorally, to raise political awareness for NCD and risk factor prevention and control.
- Develop and implement food-labelling policies and build on successful country experiences (e.g. Chile, Trinidad & Tobago).
- Explore ways to apply tobacco control policy experiences to address other risk factors.
- Generate economic impact studies on NCDs and risk factors.
- Implement NCD and risk factor surveys (e.g. STEPS, GTSS, GSHS).
- Adapt and implement the [WHO PEN package](#) of NCD interventions, including training primary health care providers on NCD prevention, screening and early detection, treatment and control.

SUPPORT REQUESTED FROM PAHO/WHO

- **Exchange of experiences through the CARMEN network:** Facilitate technical cooperation between countries and promote best practices on NCD policies, plans and programs, as well as share experiences on managing industry interference and conflicts of interest.
- **Advocacy:** To engage and commit governments across all relevant sectors to make NCD prevention and control a higher priority.
- **Capacity building on:** How to engage sectors outside of health, effective laws and regulations to reduce risk factors, NCD economic studies, and NCD health service interventions.
- **NCD surveillance:** Support countries to implement NCD and risk factor surveys and registries.
- Analyze country specific data on the **economic impact of NCDs and risk factors.**
- Support countries by promoting access to NCD medicines through the PAHO **Strategic Fund.**

PAHO/WHO tools and resources on NCDs ([CARMEN network online forum](#), guidelines, online courses) can be found [here](#)

NEXT STEPS

- Prepare and disseminate the **comprehensive report** of the meeting to CARMEN network members (May 2017)
- CARMEN network **subregional and country webinars** to:
 - Follow-up on the 4 time-bound commitments and regional plan of action (June-July 2017)
 - Validate data and report back on the *Country Capacity Survey 2017* (June- September 2017)
 - Discuss specific support to countries' priorities and actions on NCDs through PAHO regional and country offices
- Participate in the [Carmen Network online forum](#) for continuous discussions, exchange of information and experiences among countries in the Americas.

