

Countries' capacity to monitor Noncommunicable Diseases and Risk Factors in the Americas

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Conflictos de interés: Los autores declaran no tener conflictos de interés alguno.

Editorial

Surveillance is critical to provide the information needed to measure the prevalence and incidence of noncommunicable diseases (NCDs), their risk factors (RFs) and outcomes; to design policies and programs for their prevention and control, and to measure the impact of these policies and programs. Tracking NCDs and RFs remains a challenge because the surveillance systems established in many countries are still oriented towards monitoring transmissible diseases, and lack the capacity to comprehensively gather the information needed to orient policy-making for NCDs and Rfs.

The 2011 United Nations High-level Meeting (UNHLM) on NCDs called on countries to strengthen their national capacity for surveillance and monitoring systems. Additionally, the World Health Organization, with the collaboration of its Member States, developed a comprehensive Global Monitoring Framework (GMF). The GMF, which includes a set of nine global voluntary targets and 25 indicators, provides overall direction for countries to collect data and is an entry point to monitor NCDs and RFs. Also, the PAHO Regional Plan of Action for NCDs and the Strategic Plan aligned with the GMF, are also tailored to address specific issues relevant to the Americas.

The major sources of information used to produce the GMF indicators (approximately 70%) are population-based surveys, such as the STEPS surveys. The reality in the majority of the countries of the Americas is that current surveys do not cover all of the areas which should be monitored, and they are not integrated into national surveillance systems that are able to produce information in a periodic, systematic, standardized and sustainable way. Supporting countries to fulfill the UNHLM commitment in monitoring and evaluation is a key step in advancing agenda for NCD and RF policies and interventions in the Region.

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