

WHO Regional Committee Analysis/Summary

At the 2012 WHO Regional Committees, the prevention and control of Non-communicable diseases (NCDs) was a high agenda item given the fact that the building blocks of the NCD Framework are currently being developed under the guidance of WHO. With the Afro-Region consultation scheduled in mid-November, the WHO organised a special workshop on NCDs within the African region ensuring that all regions would have had the opportunity to contribute to the development of the Global NCD Action Plan, the Global NCD Monitoring Framework with targets and indicators as well as track progress made on NCDs since the adoption of the Political Declaration in September 2011. The NCD Alliance had coordinated representation at each regional meeting and the Afro workshop to ensure a strong civil society voice was present at any discussion on the NCD framework. Including representation, on behalf of the four federations, the NCD Alliance representatives delivered a statement highlighting the main asks on behalf of the Alliance for the Framework.

SEARO Regional Committee Meeting

At the SEARO Regional Committee meeting, a [resolution](#) on Non-Communicable diseases, Mental Health, Neurological Diseases was adopted outlining the regions priorities concerning NCDs. In regards to the Global Monitoring Framework with targets and indicators, the Member States acknowledged 'the need for development of standard indicators and targets to monitor the progress.'¹ In addition to this, they recognised the importance of developing a framework for both regional and national levels. At the national level, the strategies and plans to address NCDs should be developed with country specific indicators and targets taking into account the global consultations.

The resolution encourages Member State participation in all the following processes on developing the NCD Framework including the consultations and meetings of the WHO Governing Bodies on the global monitoring framework and the formulation of the global targets and the Global NCD Action plan. It urges Member states to advocate for global targets to address all four major risk factors—tobacco, unhealthy diet, physical inactivity and harmful use of alcohol as well as 'targets relating to health outcomes and health systems response.'² Member States have been tasked with integrating NCD policies and programmes into their national development agenda and by 2013 to develop and strengthen multi-sectoral plans for the prevention and control of NCDs.

SEARO's adoption of the NCD resolution during their regional committee showcases the need to support Member States in the development of the global monitoring framework as well as provide guidance in the development of specific country NCD action plans. With the formulation of the global NCD framework, it will provide the foundation necessary for individual Member States to adapt to its own national context.

EURO Regional Committee Meeting

The EURO Regional Committee Meeting resolution on the Global Monitoring Framework for Non-Communicable diseases focused on developing a framework that would not overburden Member States in their abilities of monitoring therefore calling for a limited number of indicators.

The resolution emphasized the need to select indicators indicative of the current monitoring capacity in Member States to not increase the reporting burden on them. It called for a 'systematic and science-based

¹ http://www.searo.who.int/LinkFiles/RC65_r5.pdf

² http://www.searo.who.int/LinkFiles/RC65_r5.pdf

approach³ to the selection of indicators for the common risk factors. The region acknowledged the need for health system indicators to help monitor the capacity of health systems, 'including health promotion, disease prevention, treatment and rehabilitation.'⁴ It also stressed the important of addressing health inequities and determinants in the development of the framework.

The EURO region finds it necessary to ensure that the targets and indicators that make up the monitoring framework are measurable and achievable. Their focus on the measurability and achievability is essential however it should not overshadow the need for a comprehensive monitoring framework which might require more indicators than the limited ones suggested by the EURO Member States.

PAHO Regional Committee Meeting

The PAHO region has been the most forthcoming region in addressing the NCD epidemic. In the [resolution](#) presented at its regional committee, it recognized that in the past five years, there have been a number of new policy developments and strategic initiatives on NCDs at national and regional level. One of the major initiatives is the launch of the Pan American Forum for Action on NCDs, a platform to facilitate multi-sectoral partnerships and serve as a model for national-level platforms.

With its track record of progressive policies for NCDs, the PAHO region proposed an NCD strategy for 2012-2025 at the committee meeting. The proposed strategy encourages a 'multi-sectoral, all of society approach that includes the government, the private sector, academia, and civil society.'⁵ With the adopted strategy, the future action will be to develop a Regional Plan of Action by 2013 following the adoption of the global action plan and the global monitoring framework on NCDs.

The seven core principles to guide strategy include the integration of NCDs and risk factor into national and regional development and economic agenda, an all of society approach, an emphasis on health promotion, education and prevention, consideration of a life course approach, reorientation of health system based on chronic care, and the application of the best available evidence.

Besides the adoption of the proposed strategy, the resolution urged Member States to prioritize NCDs and to include them in health and development plans, establish and strengthen monitoring/evaluation systems for NCD policies and programs and interventions to reduce the prevalence of risk factors, increase protective factors and improve coverage.

The PAHO region has witnessed the rise of NCDs within in its countries and has been an advocate for the integration of prevention and control policies for NCDs for many years. With the proposed strategy including the commitment to develop a regional action plan will ensure that the global NCD framework will be adapted at a regionally level allowing for country specific targets and indicators.

WPRO Regional Committee Meeting

At the WPRO Regional Committee Meeting, the progress so far on NCDS was reviewed and called for a multi-sectoral action and development of targets and indicators for NCD prevention and control.

Discussions on potential targets and indicators focused on curbing smoking, cutting alcohol and salt intake, lowering blood pressure, preventing heart attack and stroke, improving rates of cervical cancer screening and eliminating industrial produced trans-fat from the food supply.

³ http://www.euro.who.int/__data/assets/pdf_file/0011/173549/RC62-01-Decision-NCD-ENG.pdf

⁴ http://www.euro.who.int/__data/assets/pdf_file/0011/173549/RC62-01-Decision-NCD-ENG.pdf

⁵ http://new.paho.org/hq/index.php?option=com_docman&task=doc_download&gid=18607&Itemid=270&lang=en

Including the above, a regional training for NCD Surveillance has been called for December 2012 in Seoul Korea, to support the development of national targets.

EMRO Regional Committee Meeting

The EMRO region proposed a [resolution](#), The Political Declaration of the United Nations General Assembly on the Prevention and Control of Non-Communicable Diseases: Commitments of Member States and the way forward. The document highlights areas of actions required by all governments including the request by the Political Declaration to establish by 2013, a multi-sectoral national plan to address NCDs. The resolution acknowledged the accelerated epidemic in the region and the need to begin to discuss concrete approaches to alleviate the health burden.

The resolution urged Member States to begin following through on their commitments made in the Political Declaration, including an emphasis on surveillance, prevention and health care. It proceeded to document the commitments made and what the countries in the region are expected to deliver upon.

AFRO Regional Workshop to address NCDs

The AFRO Region held a regional workshop to address NCDs under the theme of Uniting against NCDs: The time to act is now. It reviewed the implementation of the current 2008-2013 Global Action Plan for the Prevention and Control of NCDs, while developing a framework for implementing commitments made on NCDs with a focus on the future global action till 2020 and the global monitoring framework. The meeting was attended by representatives from ministries of health, research and academic institutions, development partners and civil society

The workshop acknowledged the lack of prioritizations of these diseases within the region because of limited data, inadequate implementation of various strategies and insufficient resources for a public health system.

The workshop explored the strategies needed to address NCDs within the context of African nations. There was overall agreement for a strategy to reduce risk factors with the improvement and encouragement of health options. It called for multi-sectoral partnerships that included both government and the private sector given the resource constraints in African countries. There was strong support to ensure adequate access to medicines and technologies recognizing the gap that their nations have in treating and care for people with NCDs.