
ASSESSING NATIONAL CAPACITY FOR THE
PREVENTION AND CONTROL OF
NONCOMMUNICABLE DISEASES

REPORT OF THE 2010 GLOBAL SURVEY



**World Health
Organization**

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Foreword

There has never been a more important time to strengthen national capacity to prevent and treat noncommunicable diseases (NCDs). In September 2011 the UN General Assembly convened a high level meeting to focus on NCDs. The *Political Declaration*¹ from this meeting highlights a set of actions for countries to scale up their actions to address the burden of NCDs affecting their populations. Paragraph 41 of the *Political Declaration* outlines the importance of strengthening national capacities to address and effectively combat noncommunicable diseases, particularly in developing countries, and notes that this may necessitate increased and sustained human, financial and technical resources. Such actions are in line with the *2008–2013 Action Plan of the Global Strategy for the Prevention and Control of NCDs*, endorsed by the World Health Assembly, which recommends critical actions for Member States to accelerate their progress towards preventing and controlling NCDs.

This report reviews the current situation in relation to national capacity to address NCDs and the progress made at country level over the past decade. It highlights that, while progress is being made, there is still much work to be done to create the infrastructure, policies, surveillance and health systems response that will allow NCDs and their contributing risk factors to be successfully contained and reversed.

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¹ Political declaration of the High-level Meeting of the General Assembly on the Prevention and Control of Non-communicable diseases [A/66/L.1]. Available at: http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A%2F66%2FL.1&Lang=E.

Executive summary

Noncommunicable diseases (NCDs) are currently responsible for over 60% of global deaths. This burden is one of the major public health challenges facing all countries, regardless of their economic status. NCDs threaten economic and social development and, without concerted efforts at country level, are predicted to increase in the coming decade.

To assess the capacity of countries to respond to NCDs, in 2010 WHO conducted a global country capacity survey (CCS) – the 2010 NCD CCS. The survey gathered detailed information about progress made in countries to address and respond to NCDs, and assessed their current strengths and weaknesses related to NCD infrastructure, policy response, surveillance and health systems response. This periodic monitoring of national progress helps in identifying gaps in prevention and control efforts and assists with future planning.

The 2010 NCD CCS was undertaken by sending a written questionnaire, during 2009 and 2010, to NCD focal points or designated colleagues within the ministry of health or a national institute or agency in all 193 WHO Member States. Upon receipt of the completed questionnaires, additional validation on a number of survey item responses was carried out by the WHO Secretariat. A further round of consultation and updating with Member States was undertaken during July 2011. The final completion rate was particularly high – 96% (i.e. 185 countries). The results from the 2010 survey were compared with results from an earlier survey conducted by WHO in 2000 to assess changes in capacity and response over this 10-year period. In the 2000 survey, fewer Member States responded (163 countries) and the questionnaire was less comprehensive, allowing for only a limited number of questions to be compared across the two surveys.

Analysis of responses from the 2010 survey showed that 89% of countries reported having a unit, branch or department in their ministry of health with responsibility for NCDs. Eighty per cent (80%) of countries reported that funding is available for NCD treatment and control and 81% had funding for NCD prevention and health promotion. Major sources of funding for NCDs included government revenues (84% of countries), international donors (56%), health insurance (39%), and earmarked taxes (20%). Ninety per cent of countries (90%) have at least one agency, institute, academic centre or other government department that supports the ministry of health (or equivalent) in their NCD efforts.

Ninety-two per cent of countries (92%) have developed at least one policy, plan, or strategy to address NCDs and/or their risk factors. However, many fewer reported that such policies were operational or funded. While 92% of countries have at least one policy, only 79% have at least one operational policy and only 71% have at least one operational policy with dedicated funding.

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