



WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION

Assessment of National Capacity For Noncommunicable Disease Prevention and Control

The Report of A Global Survey

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FOREWORD

Noncommunicable diseases (NCDs) are the leading causes of death and disability and appear to have been so for at least the last two decades of the 20th century. Disease rates from these conditions are accelerating globally, advancing across regions and social classes. The high current burdens of NCDs are highlighted by the estimates provided by the World Health Report 2000, which indicate that these disorders together contributed to almost 60% of global mortality (31.7 million deaths) and 43% of the global burden of disease in 1999.

The World Health Organization has recognized the global threat posed by these diseases and has declared the prevention and control of NCDs a priority in its programme of work. A global strategy for the prevention and control of NCDs was developed in 1999 and endorsed by the World Health Assembly in May 2000. As part of the implementation of the global strategy, an assessment of national capacity for NCD prevention and control was carried out by the Management of Noncommunicable Diseases (MNC) Department at WHO headquarters in close collaboration with other departments in the Noncommunicable Diseases and Mental Health (NMH) Cluster and the six WHO regional offices. The project was initiated in October 2000 and has been co-ordinated by Dr Ala' din Alwan who until October 2001 was the Director of MNC. Dr Alwan was assisted by Dr A. Mandil and Dr D. Maclean. A questionnaire was developed and mailed to all 191 WHO Member States. The information obtained from completed questionnaires was augmented by a series of key informant interviews carried out with a sub-sample of senior officials of Health Ministries. The purpose of this report is to present the findings and conclusions of this survey.

It is hoped that the information presented in this report will stimulate discussion concerning the policy options and priorities for appropriate technical

support for NCD prevention and control on the part of the international community, particularly for low and middle-income countries given the rapidly developing epidemic of NCDs in these countries and the limited resources and infrastructure available to deal with these problems.

I would like to take this opportunity to express my appreciation to the survey respondents from Member States, and our colleagues at Headquarters, Regional Offices and WHO Representatives who freely gave of their time and assistance to this survey. I would also like to thank the international non-governmental organizations who were involved in reviewing the draft of the report and provided valuable input. The World Heart Federation (WHF) has been particularly active in this area; WHF's work on assessing capacity in cardiovascular disease prevention was a very useful reference to us during the planning phase of this survey.

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ABBREVIATIONS

AFR	African Region
AMR	American Region
CHW	community health worker
CVD	cardiovascular diseases
EMR	Eastern Mediterranean Region
EUR	European Region
GNI	gross national income
IMR	infant mortality rate
IOM	Institute of Medicine
MNC	Management of Noncommunicable Diseases
MOH	Ministry of Health
NCDs	noncommunicable diseases
NCDPC	noncommunicable disease prevention & control
NGO	non-governmental organization
PHC	primary health care
SEAR	South East Asia Region
WHO	World Health Organization
WHR	World Health Report
WPR	Western Pacific Region

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