

2013

ASSESSING NATIONAL CAPACITY FOR THE
PREVENTION AND CONTROL OF
NONCOMMUNICABLE DISEASES

GLOBAL SURVEY



World Health
Organization

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FOREWORD

There has never been a more opportune moment to strengthen national capacity to prevent and treat noncommunicable diseases (NCDs). In May 2013, the World Health Assembly endorsed the second *Global Action Plan for the Prevention and Control of Noncommunicable Diseases, 2013–2020*. This plan is articulated around six objectives related to NCDs and their risk factors and includes nine concrete realizable targets. Its overarching goal is that by collectively implementing the recommended actions, Member States, WHO and partners should strive to achieve a 25% reduction in premature mortality from NCDs by 2025.

As part of efforts to attain this, WHO conducts periodic monitoring of national progress in efforts to control NCDs, to help countries identify gaps in NCD prevention and control efforts, and to assist future planning.

In 2013, WHO conducted the fourth Global Country Capacity Survey (CCS) to review progress to date, identify possible gaps, highlight lessons learned, and recommend opportunities for improvement or replicability.

This report offers an overview of the situation in relation to national capacity to address NCDs and the progress made since the last review conducted in 2010. It also proposes some additional areas, not included in previous monitoring activities but related to NCDs and their risk factors, where greater focus could also help achieve progress towards the 2025 target. The report reveals that while progress has been made at country level, there is still a way to go to create the infrastructure, policies, and capacity within health systems to respond to NCDs and their contributing risk factors if we are to defy predictions and successfully halt their advance.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Noncommunicable diseases (NCDs) continue to claim too many lives too soon. It is estimated that NCDs are responsible for over 60% of global deaths, including a high percentage of deaths among people aged less than 70 years. This represents a major public health challenge for all countries, but especially for lower-middle- and low-income countries. NCDs pose a threat to economic and social development. Without concerted country-level efforts, they are predicted to increase over the next decade. Yet, NCDs are preventable and, through carefully targeted interventions, it is possible to treat or manage them among those already affected. Key to this is capacity: physical, human and at the policy level.

To assess the capacity of countries to respond to NCDs, WHO carries out periodic global country capacity surveys. The first of these was conducted in 2000. A second, intended to assess progress, was conducted in 2005 and a third was carried out in 2010. The fourth, and most recent, survey was conducted in early 2013. It was timed to coincide with the preparation by WHO of the second Global Action Plan for the Prevention and Control of Noncommunicable Diseases 2013–2020 (hereafter referred to as the second Global NCD Action Plan), adopted by the World Health Assembly in May 2013 (resolution WHA66.10). The survey asked countries to provide detailed information about their capacity to address NCDs. By conducting the survey at the start of the second Global NCD Action Plan, the intention was to assess country progress since the 2010 survey in order to determine their current strengths and weaknesses in terms of NCD infrastructure, policy response, surveillance and health systems response at

The 2013 NCD Country Capacity Survey (CCS) was conducted by way of an electronic questionnaire sent to NCD focal points or designated persons within the ministry of health or a national institute or agency in all 194 WHO Member States. The survey tool included questions on (1) public health infrastructure, partnerships and multisectoral collaboration for NCDs, (2) the existence of NCD-relevant policies, strategies and action plans, (3) capacity for surveillance to address NCDs and their risk factors at national level and (4) capacity for NCD prevention, early detection, treatment and care within the health system. The survey took place between January and May 2013. Completed questionnaires received by WHO were validated against databases held by the WHO Secretariat.

In all, 92% of countries (178) responded to the survey. To assess progress, the results were compared with those of the 2010 survey. The response rate to the 2013 survey was marginally lower than that of the 2010 survey when 96% of countries (185) responded. A total of 172 countries responded to both survey rounds providing a small enough difference to permit an effective comparison and allow an accurate picture of progress to emerge. Only minimal changes were introduced to the 2013 survey instrument to ensure that such comparisons could be made. Earlier comparisons with the 2000 and 2005 surveys are limited as the survey questions changed considerably and the response rate was substantially lower in the earlier rounds.

The analysis of results revealed that in 2013 some 94%

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