NATIONAL PRE-RESSCAD MEETING BELIZE

PREPARATION FOR THE XXV RESSCAD 27 October 2009

The George Price Centre for Peace and Development Belmopan

Opening

Dr. Michael Pitts, Director of Health Services, welcomed participants, noted the resolutions from the January 2009 RESSCAD and stated that Belize fully subscribed to them. This meeting would identify progress to fulfilling the resolutions, gaps, and needs. He noted that the Ministry of Health (MOH) needed to engage with partners including PAHO/WHO, Department of Environment, Social Security, UNICEF, and others. In addition, Belize needed to focus on prevention and control of Non-communicable Diseases (NCDs), especially given the challenges with nutrition. Other key areas were the International Health Regulations (IHR); management of pharmaceuticals, including their purchasing; and consideration of precursor chemicals for illicit drugs, such as ephedrine and potassium permanganate. The resolutions thus addressed many important areas, and this report card would set the stage for what would be done next year, and inform the meeting of Ministers (RESSCAD) in November 2009.

Participants included technical officers and program managers of the Ministry of Health, regional health staff, representatives from the Department of Environment and the Belize Cancer Society, and Technical Advisors from PAHO/WHO Belize.

Ms. Lorraine Thompson (PAHO/WHO Technical Advisor) shared information on the purpose of RESSCAD, the preparation process for the RESSCAD fora such as FOCARD, CISSCAD, and INCAP, and the objectives of the meeting. She noted that the RESSCAD fora have their own meetings, reports of which are fed into the RESSCAD. She also noted that the Pre-RESSCAD, traditionally a face-to-face meeting, will be a virtual meeting, scheduled for 29 October, 2009. The RESSCAD will be in Managua 17-18 November 2009

Objectives

- To discuss and report on the progress in Belize toward the achievement of the nine XXIV RESSCAD resolutions, and
- To prepare a country report on implementation of the resolutions, to be forwarded to the RESSCAD organizers.

Results

The participants reviewed each resolution and commented as shown in the following table.

Acuerdos	Avances del Acuerdo	Observaciones
ACUERDO HON-XXIV-RESSCAD-1 Agenda y Plan de Salud de Centroamérica y República Dominicana • Elevar a la Cumbre de presidentes del SICA • Elaborar el Plan de Salud de CA y RD	 Belize continues to participate in the development of the Health Plan for CA and DR, through its active participation in the COTESAS and relevant processes. Recommendations to the RESSCAD: Request COMISCA to submit the Health Agenda to SICA, for presentation to the next presidential summit. Support COTESA to finalize the Health Plan for CA and DR. Recommendations to the PRE-RESSCAD: Provide the English translation of the Health Plan for CA and DR. Provide information on the time table for the next Presidential Summit. 	 Translation of the draft Plan into English will be critical for sensitization of various stakeholders and presentation to Cabinet. Belize needs to know the timetable for presentation of Agenda and Plan to Presidential Summit. A roadmap for further action in Belize is to be developed, and must include approval from Minister of Health and Cabinet of the Health Agenda, and sensitization of stakeholders.
 ACUERDO HON-XXIV-RESSCAD-2 Nutrición y Salud Implementación de planes los planes nacionales a través de la Iniciativa Regional de la Erradicación de la DN Crónica Infantil. Vigilancia del estado nutricional y monitoreo de resultados de distintos proyectos. Envió de informes periódicos sobre la aplicación del Código internacional de los Sucedáneos de la Leche Materna 	 Micronutrient supplementation is given to pregnant women, lactating women, children, adolescents, and females 10-49 years; a nutrition surveillance manual has been drafted; and there is growth and development promotion at community level and in health facilities. There have been advances in the food and nutrition security strategy; the Belize nutrition surveillance system is in development; there are projects addressing nutrition, e.g. iron and folic acid distribution in Toledo; and surveys have been done (Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey, MICS, Living Standards Measurement Survey, LSMS, and height census done in May 2009), and the results used for decision making National Commission on Food and Nutrition Security provides oversight of surveillance, as well as prevention and mitigation during emergency and crisis situations. A Breastfeeding Committee exists at each health 	

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	facility; 3 hospitals have been certified as Baby Friendly; legalization of International Code of Marketing of Breast Milk Substitutes is in process, through the breastfeeding policy, the Baby Friendly Hospital initiative, the breastfeeding manual, and the participation of the private sector. Recommendation to the RESSCAD: 1. Encourage UN agencies working in the subregion, INCAP, and the Pan American Alliance on Nutrition to continue supporting national plans and projects in food and nutrition security.	
ACUERDO HON-XXIV-RESSCAD-3 Cumplimiento del Reglamento Sanitario Internacional • Poner como tema prioritario el RSI en otras agendas del sector • Ejecutar oportunamente el TCC entre países	 The IHR have been promoted as part of sensitization forums on influenza pandemic for stakeholders. Belize has identified an IHR focal point, the Office of the DHS, and has been working with partners, especially PAHO/WHO, to address core capacity requirements. Intersectoral collaboration is critical for appropriate detection and response. Self-assessment of core capacity requirements completed 6-7 Nov 2008; self-assessment of communicable disease surveillance in Belize using an approved instrument completed June 2009; plan of action to address capacity gaps completed also in June 2009. There has been close collaboration among sectors from the start of the process, and are fulfilling WHO and regional requirements, and in time, for the most part. The legislative aspect of the TCC project is being given priority by Belize. Recommendation to the RESSCAD: Encourage the countries of the CA subregion to review existing legislation to support the effective implementation of the IHR (2005). Request the creation of a sub-regional 	There needs to be legal review and modification of law to address the IHR, and additional support from the Attorney General's office is needed. PAHO/WHO is supporting review of the legal issues, and this should be done by the end of the year.

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	database/registry of ports of entry.	
ACUERDO HON-XXIV-RESSCAD-4 Prevención y control de enfermedades crónicas no transmisibles • Establecer la conformación de una sub comisión regional de Enfermedades crónicas no transmisibles • Establecer programas nacionales para la prevención y control integral de las ECNT • Solicitar asistencia técnica del INCAP y de OPS/OMS • Nombramiento de funcionarios para conformar comisión sub regional.	 Efforts have been made to diffuse the prevention and wellness concept nationally, including among health care workers. These are key components in contracts signed with Primary Care providers and National Health Insurance. There is a draft proposal for the establishment of a National Commission on Non-communicable Diseases (NCDs) – the aim is to establish it by the end of 2009. There are terms of reference in the proposal and there will be intersectoral representation, involving government ministries and civil society. There has been development and review of protocols – Prevention and Management of Obesity, Diabetes and Hypertension in Belize, based on protocols from the Caribbean Health Research Council (CHRC); there is a Committee comprising Social Security, MOH, PAHO/WHO, others; protocols based on Caribbean Health Research Council materials. Training in the protocol will start later this year. Belize celebrated Caribbean Wellness Week 12-16 September 2009. Focusing Resources in Education and Nutrition Development (FRIEND) Project was launched in Corozal, strengthening links between MOH and Ministry of Education, to strengthen the nutrition curriculum and preparing children from an early age. Also Belize Triathlon Challenge: 3-month period to eat healthier and do more physical activity – executed by the Triathlon Committee, with PAHO/WHO's technical cooperation. Implementation of Caribbean regional surveillance project, looking at diagnosis and gap analysis of NCD national registers and information systems; design the regional NCD surveillance system and its components; and development of health protocols. At level of CA, Belize is participating in the Regional 	 These diseases are priorities for the MOH – diabetes, hypertension, cancers, HIV – emphasizing the wellness approach. Belize is also supporting the CARICOM Port of Spain 2007 Declaration on NCD prevention and control. Focus on looking at integrated approach to protocols, to address continuum of care. This is a feature of integrated delivery systems, which is a priority for both the MOH and PAHO/WHO – team approach, holistic approach to the patient.

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	 Bulk Procurement Initiative, aimed at reducing price of drugs through bulk purchasing, including those for NCDs. Health education and research on lifestyle also supported – behavioural and cultural aspects. Proposals for research have been submitted by persons outside the country – one has been approved and is being implemented in the south of the country – capacity of health systems to respond to community needs. 	
	Recommendations to the RESSCAD: 1. Encourage UN agencies working in the subregion, to continue mobilizing resources in support of national NCD prevention and control plans.	
 ACUERDO HON-XXIV-RESSCAD-5 Agua y saneamiento y el FOCARD-APS Fortalecer los vínculos entre los ministerios de salud y secretarias de salud y las instituciones rectoras del agua Solicitar a COMISCA el respaldo político al CONCARD-APS, para elevar la estrategia de regional de saneamiento a una Cumbre Presidencial Informe sobre situación de los desechos sólidos, domésticos, industriales y hospitalarios (será presentado en la RESSCAD XXV). 	 Department of Environment (DOE) works with MOH to monitor water quality, especially microbiology and nutrients such as phosphates and nitrates. Also monitors for heavy metals in specific circumstances, and for turbidity. All Water Boards trained country wide, through collaboration with Social Investment Fund, DOE, MOH. DOE monitors industrial wastewater and with larger industries, also encourages them to monitor the rivers. Earlier this year, domestic legislation was established that deals with monitoring domestic sewage. DOE monitors entire coast of Belize City, testing for various nutrients and different bacteria. MOH working with Ministry of Natural Resources, Bureau of Standards and Belize Water Authority to look at standards for the water industry; Works with Belize Electricity Company Limited for the monitoring of Macal River for mercury. Recommendations to the RESSCAD: Promote intersectoral collaboration for the 	 FOCARD-APS initiative in Belize has not reached its full potential, since a decision regarding who will lead the national effort is pending. DOE has challenges regarding resources, especially human resources No plans at present to expand coastal monitoring to areas other than Belize City, due to resource constraints.

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	protection of water sources. 2. Promote the review of legislation that would support the protection of water sources. 3. Promote research on the effect of agricultural pollutants on water sources.	
ACUERDO HON-XXIV-RESSCAD-6 Plan subregional de prevención y control del cáncer Creación de comisión técnica subregional del cáncer Coordinación con comisión de enfermedades crónicas Ejecución del programa de capacitación OIEA- OPS/OMS Fortalecimiento de sistemas de información. Definición de necesidades (insumos y tecnologías) y su gestión ante la cooperación nacional e internacional.	 Belize Health Information System and the Cancer Registry provide information on cancer. Latter started by Belize Cancer Society and registration forms are available at all sites dealing with cancer patients. Mortality and hospitalization data compiled and available annually; draft manual for cancer surveillance developed, to be completed by end of this year or early 2010. Belize Cancer Centre was established in Dangriga a year ago, and has seen about 120 patients. The Cancer Society will implement a 2-year cervical cancer control project January 2010-2012 among women aged 25-64 years. Recommendations to the RESSCAD: Request PAHO to mobilize resources in support of national cancer plans. 	 Only 30% of reporting sites submit forms with information on cancer. Cancer morbidity reporting remains a challenge and MOH and Cancer Society plan to actively collect information. Most deaths from prostate cancer, followed by digestive organs, and cervical or lung competing for 3rd place, over the period 2004-2008. In 2008, 163 persons died from cancer; persons aged 65+ were affected most often. Need to focus on cancers of the breast, prostate, and colon as well and there is need to develop a national cancer strategy, that includes better networking and collaboration among the facilities that treat cancer.
 ACUERDO HON-XXIV-RESSCAD-7 Comisión técnica subregional de medicamentos Reconocer la reserva de participación de Guatemala en todo lo relativo a al proceso de negociación de la compra conjunta de medicamentos Aprobar el Programa Sub Regional de Fármaco Vigilancia Aprobar las bases que regirán la negociación de la compra conjunta 	 Belize participated in the technical commission and the development of the regional policy. A consultation on the strategy for procurement took place in early 2008, and comparisons were made with procurement through PAHO/WHO's mechanisms and the regional mechanism, so that a final decision has not yet been made. Recommendations to the RESSCAD: Encourage Belize to approve the Central American sub-regional pharmacovigilance program. 	 A firm commitment to the policy recommendations of the subregional commission is pending. There has been no active participation in the drug surveillance program. Analgesic medications for palliative care are not included in the CA subregional program; this might need to be considered. However, the Central Medical Stores purchases controlled drugs directly from suppliers. Belize purchases most of its drugs from suppliers in CA, and would probably benefit more from participating in a Central American joint purchase agreement. Belize is also part of the CARIFORUM pharmacovigilance initiative, and will need to reconcile

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		its participation and gain synergies from both.
ACUERDO HON-XXIV-RESSCAD-8 Desarrollo de los recursos humanos • Que los Ministerios de Salud y de Seguridad Social nombren los funcionarios nacionales para conformar la Comisión Técnica Centroamericano de RRHH	 The Belize focal point for the CA Technical Commission for Human Resources is Dr. Robert Tucker, Acting Director of the Policy and Planning Unit. Data base management project implemented in collaboration with PAHO/WHO to provide an inventory of Belize's human resources for health (HRH), so facilitating future planning for HRH. Meeting of the Belize HRH Observatory to develop a 2009-2015 Strategic Plan was held in October 2009, in the framework of the Toronto Call to Action. The draft expected results have been developed. Recommendation to the RESSCAD: Provide support to the subregional HRH initiative. 	 Plans are to seek Ministry of Health, Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Public Service, and Cabinet approval for an HRH Unit and HRH Strategic Plan by mid-2010. Belize will inform the sub-regional Technical Commission on Human Resources for Health of the designation of the focal point, Dr. Robert Tucker.
ACUERDO HON-XXIV-RESSCAD-9 Elaboración de un plan subregional de salud para los pueblos indígenas	Belize will contribute to the process of development of a subregional plan for indigenous populations.	 Belize is planning a consultation on indigenous people's health, in collaboration with PAHO/WHO, before the end of 2009.
 Elaborar un plan subregional de salud para los pueblos indígenas Solicitar a OPS asesoría técnica para elaborar el plan 	Recommendation to the RESSCAD: 1. Request support from UN agencies for the implementation of national consultations on	
 Fomento de convenios de cooperación técnica entre los países 	indigenous health.	
TEMA(S) DE INTERÉS PARA EL PAÍS	Recommendation to the RESSCAD: Consider inviting an observer from CARICOM to participate in the RESSCAD to facilitate closer ties between SICA and CARICOM.	