

TACKLING THE LEADING CAUSES OF DEATH IN THE AMERICAS: LAUNCH OF THE INTER-AMERICAN TASK FORCE ON NCDs

17th June 2015, Washington DC

Talking points panel questions

Dr. Ferdinando Regalia, Inter-American Development Bank

1. Opening question to all panelists

It is widely accepted that no one organization can adequately address the enormous burden of NCDs and their risk factors. This Inter American Task Force on NCDs is a strategic and significant union of leading agencies in the Region, coming together to harmonize efforts and have a greater impact on NCDs. But the question for each of the institutions represented on this panel is why have you decided to establish this Task Force, and what are your expectations of its impact on country's efforts to prevent and control NCDs?

- For the IDB, the establishment of the Inter-American Task Force on NCDs represent an invaluable opportunity to foster **greater exchange of information** and **collaboration at the strategic, analytical and operational level** among the organizations on the Inter-American system and associated international institutions and agencies, in support of the efforts that our Regional Member States are carrying out to prevent and control NCDs.
- Each member of the Task Force brings to the table unique strengths and know-how that can greatly contribute to the **political** and **technical** support required at the regional as well as at country level to accelerate progress towards prevention and control of NCDs.
- As IDB, we feel privileged to join this Task Force. We are confident we will be able to provide a solid contribution to the work of the Task Force in benefits of Member States through:
 - The institutional commitment reflected in our recently Updated Institutional Strategy;
 - The support we are already providing to the health and nutrition sector in 21 out of 26 regional member countries which allows us to maintain a permanent dialogue with health authorities and an up-to-date knowledge of local contexts;
 - Our large portfolio of activities in sectors either than health, yet key for the response to NCDs, and a growing internal capacity to respond to our clients' needs for support in intersectional interventions;
 - Our simultaneous dialogue with Finance and Sector authorities, which constitutes an advantage when addressing fiscal and sector financing issues;
 - Our strong commitment to foster public and private partnerships and to engage with non-state actors;

2. Question to the representative from the IDB:

As the development banks on this Task Force, how can the loans provided to countries be leveraged to support creating enabling environments for healthy living and have a positive impact on NCDs?

To respond to this question allows me to give you some concrete examples of work we are currently carrying out (through a wide array of instruments such loans, technical assistance, etc.) to support regional member countries in their efforts to prevent and control NCDs.

As we re-affirmed today, multi-sector policy responses to NCDs are critical. Yet, the health system plays a very important role in this response, and renewed focus, driven by equity concerns, on both primary and secondary prevention as well as on treatment is required. In many countries, IDB is supporting efforts to:

- Strengthen service delivery platforms (primary care – centered networks) that provide a continuum of care in a patient-centered way through government as well as non-state actors (NGOs, private sector). Examples: Argentina, various states and municipalities in Northern and North East of Brazil, to Nicaragua, El Salvador, Dominican Republic, and Trinidad and Tobago.
- Introduce innovative financing strategies that are trying to shift the allocation of budget resources to place greater emphasis on health promotion and primary, secondary prevention in particular, starting from a more timely screening for NCD risk factors. Examples: Argentina, Colombia, Dominican Republic, Panama, Honduras.
- Foster healthier behaviors with focus on the first years of life using cutting edge communication strategies (Examples: Guatemala, Peru, Colombia and Mexico) and through “nudges” associated to social protection programs (Jamaica and Bahamas).
- To make better decisions on what to spend public resources on based on clear health priorities (and NCDs are clearly the priority) and evidence of cost-effectiveness. This is critical given the pressure that health care expenditures are placing on LAC’s already constrained government’s budgets.

Beyond the health sector, as mentioned before, IDB supports a large portfolio of activities in sectors that are critical for a comprehensive response to NCDs. For example, we support:

- Improved public transportation options;
- Urban planning projects to improve public transportation options and facilitate cycling and walking and the inclusion of physical activity facilities
- Greener energy solutions and enforcement of environmental standards;
- Fiscal measures, for example to reduce subsidies for fossil fuels.