26 February 2015

RE – Discussion papers on NCDs and development cooperation agendas

Dear Sir/Madam

It is my pleasure to provide the attached papers and summaries as input into the Dialogue process. Over the past five years, the Nossal Institute for Global Health and partners have developed a series of papers concerning the emerging NCDs agenda in low and middle income countries, with a particular focus on a) the role of NCDs in the aid agenda, and b) the health systems responses that are needed to address this epidemic and its risk factors.

We would particularly like to draw your attention to the following papers:


This paper addresses many of the questions posed by the Dialogue process in detail. It provides an overview of the nexus between NCDs and poverty, the ways in which the NCDs and aid agendas intersect, and current evidence regarding the effectiveness of NCD interventions. It then provides original case studies on the emergence of and responses to NCDs in Tonga and Myanmar, and contributes to thinking around potential entry points for aid stakeholders including donors and NGOs to address NCDs in low and middle income countries.


This paper provides an update on the global NCDs agenda, and in particular the actual and potential place of NCDs in Australia’s aid program. It seeks to broaden understanding of the range of interventions and sectors needed to address NCDs; and calls for the development of comprehensive, funded NCD Strategies by donors that reflect the diversity of existing and future approaches.


This paper explores the ramifications of the emergence of NCDs for health systems, and provides a four-stage framework for understanding the necessary health systems responses: political commitment and addressing health systems constraints, developing public policies in health promotion, and disease prevention, creating new service delivery models and ensuring equity in access and payments. The paper offers a ‘tool’ for assessing national progress on addressing the integration of NCDs in to health systems. In terms of the current Dialogue process, this report is particularly useful as a tool for understanding links between health systems and NCDs, and for guiding donor investments. This paper, and the case studies based on the application of the tool in two countries outlined below, are particularly valuable as they provide options for scaling up NCDs interventions at a systems level that would contribute more broadly to the strengthening of health systems, thereby helping avoid competition with other health and development priorities.
This paper applies the health systems / NCDs framework outlined above, with reference to Fiji. It includes a detailed overview of NCDs in Fiji and of the country’s efforts to address them. It is particularly useful as a tool to guide scale up of NCD activities by domestic governmental and non-governmental stakeholders, and by international donors and NGOs. Many of the themes encountered are applicable in other Pacific island contexts.


This paper applies the health systems / NCDs framework outlined above, with reference to Bangladesh. It is one of few publicly available documents to address the issue of NCDs and health systems in Bangladesh, and is of particular use to donors and other development stakeholders wishing to understand and engage in the prevention and control of NCDs in Bangladesh and the South Asian region. Given that the epidemiological transition is less advanced in Bangladesh than Fiji, this paper provides a useful counterpoint to the Fiji case study.


The Australia India Institute Task Force on Tobacco Control was convened by leading public health and tobacco control experts from Australia and India. Drawing upon experiences in Australia, this report is a compendium of evidence concerning the suitability of plain packaging of tobacco products as a public health intervention in India. This report is a significant contribution to the field of tobacco control in India, and serves as a model for technical assistance and research that can be invested in by donors to contribute to population level change and build capacity and awareness.

Please don’t hesitate to contact me if I can be of further assistance.

Yours sincerely

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