

Partners

Development of Integrated Disease Surveillance Program (IDSP) in India: A successful IndiaCLEN-Government of India partnership

Disease surveillance is considered as the backbone of public health programs in India. It is important in the early detection of epidemics, monitoring of disease control programs and optimum allocation of health resources. It also provides information for evidence-based health care, and is an effective health advocacy tool.

The government of India has recognized the potential uses and advantages of disease surveillance. Thus it requested IndiaCLEN to be a partner in the development of an Integrated Disease Surveillance Program (IDSP) in the country. During the last two years, IndiaCLEN members participated in the developments of the following program components: Project Concept Document (PCD); Project Implementation Plan (PIP); User-friendly Manuals for the districts and their peripheries; and the Training Plan, Strategy and Training Manual.

A bottom-up approach was carried out by the network to develop the important elements of surveillance in IDSP. A number of state-based workshops were successfully conducted to understand the current surveillance activities. Crucial to the program and its components was the close coordination with state health officers, grass root level health workers in various states, officers of National Institute of Communicable Diseases, Indian Council of Medical Research, World Bank, World Health Organization and United States Agency for International Development .

The program expects to improve the communicable and non-communicable surveillance activities for a limited number of conditions of public health importance in the country. It will be a decentralized, district-centered, action-based system involving private and public health sectors in the rural and urban settings. It will integrate the surveillance related activities of existing vertical programs like the National Polio Surveillance Program (NPSP), Program on HIV/AIDS and Tuberculosis, Malaria and Leprosy Programs.

IDSP plans to integrate and strengthen surveillance activities particularly in administrative reorganization of the surveillance set-up. For example, sharing of information can take place at the district level. The program also aims to strengthen public health laboratories, optimally use information technology and enhance human resource development.

Implementation of the program will be conducted in phases with initial funding from the World Bank. Eight states will be included in the first phase. All 35 states in the country will be included in the program in the next two years.

IndiaCLEN will continue to be involved with the program in facilitating administrative reorganization for integration; strengthening laboratory, communication and computing facilities; participating in human resource development; helping with implementation in different states; and evaluating the program after implementation.

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