ForumDCNTs, an intersectoral approach to address diabetes and other NCD challenges in Brazil, aligned with the UN's SDG 3.4

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Background

According to the World Health Organization, noncommunicable diseases (NCDs) account for 71% of all deaths globally, only diabetes is responsible for 5.1%. More than a third of them are premature and over 80% of these premature deaths occur in low-and middle-income countries. In Brazil, 74% of the deaths are caused by NCDs, and 41.1% by diabetes (IDF, 2017). The United Nations' Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 3.4 claims to reduce by one third this premature mortality by 2030. Although several **projects addressing NCDs issues exist in isolation, no neutral ground was available to facilitate sharing and collaboration between sectors to maximize results, leading to sustainable and scalable solutions.**

Aims

In 2017, a continuous Forum was constituted in Brazil to, guided by the **SDG 17, build capacity for cross-sectorial dialogue and partnerships to resolve NCDs threaten in Brazil.**

Method

The biannual convenings are attended by leaders and authorities from the health sector: 6 representatives from the public sector (Federal Ministry of Health, Municipal and State Secretaries of Health and Public Universities), 17 from the main health companies (pharma and medtech) and 33 from the main non-for-profit organizations. The convenings are split into morning and afternoon. While in one of the periods **specialists from the three sectors share lessons and best practices of successful multisectoral programs and policies to fight NCDs**; in the other period participants work in groups of interest to share topic lessons and plans, and **co-design or co-accelerate innovative strategies**. Among the content explored are: country data updates, **partnership building strategies, ROI, public health priorities, legislation and conflicts of interest, in addition to strategies for improving prevention and treatment of the main NCDs and risk factors**, such as: diabetes, hypertension, hypercholesterolemia, cancer, obesity, obstructive sleep apnea, and mental conditions. Moreover, the #ForumDCNTs announces events, opportunities for partnerships, case studies, access to resources to its members through a monthly newsletter, webinars, Facebook page, Twitter (@ForumDCNTs), YouTube channel, LinkedIn group and website: www.ForumDCNTs.org

Results

In the last and 4th convening, in April 2019, 77% of the 56 participants were returning participants, 61% of them had attended more than one previous convening. In addition:

- **96% declared that the convening promoted intersectoral dialogue and cooperation in health;**
- **77.4% were motivated by previous convenings to engage in multisectoral partnerships** (between the 1st and the 2nd convening this was observed had happened for 44% of the participants);
- 50% increase in the number of intersectoral projects in implementation phase, in comparison with the 3rd convening.

Monitoring of members' activities is ongoing to identify achievements and challenges, which is key for developing the agenda for subsequent meetings and providing appropriate resources.

Discussion

The ForumDCNTs has facilitated, for the first time in Brazil, the following achievements:

- NGOs uniting efforts towards common goals and participate as a team at the UN High Level Meeting on NCDs in 2018;
- **Public authorities committing with the sustainability of NCDs programs, proposed in conjunction with the private sector** (e.g. HealthRise Brazil);
- **Opportunity for the private and public sectors to participate in discussion with civil society** (e.g. sugary drinks and other foods taxation);
- **Foundation of an alliance for advocacy in cardiovascular (GAC);**
- **Incorporation of additional themes to already in progress programs** (e.g. mental disorders attention and hypercholesterolemia, hypertension and diabetes screening and referring).

Therefore, the continuation of the Forum is critical to ensure that the different sectors keep committed and collaborating to achieve SDG 3.4 in Brazil.