



NCHS International Statistics Programs

Bilateral and Multilateral Collaborations

About NCHS

The National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS) is the nation's principal health statistics agency, providing data to identify and address health issues. NCHS compiles statistical information to help guide public health and health policy decisions.

Collaborating with other public and private health partners, NCHS uses a variety of data collection mechanisms to obtain accurate information from multiple sources. This process provides a broad perspective on the population's health, influences on health, and health outcomes.

International activities at NCHS

NCHS collaborates with countries around the world and participates in a wide range of international initiatives. These programs consist of cooperative ventures on analytical and methodological issues, technical assistance, consultation, training, information exchange, and liaison with multinational agencies. Additionally, NCHS sponsors and hosts international meetings and symposia in order to foster the sharing of scientific information. Through these efforts, NCHS seeks to improve the availability and advance the quality and comparability of health data in the United States and other countries.

Three fact sheets describe international statistics activities at NCHS. In addition to this fact sheet on bilateral and multilateral collaborations, fact sheets on "Collaborations with the United Nations and Other International Organizations" and "Washington Group on Disability Statistics" are available from the NCHS website.

Bilateral collaborations

Bilateral activities foster goodwill, strengthen partnerships between collaborating countries, and offer opportunities for comparing data. NCHS' bilateral collaborations include:

Interchange with Statistics Canada

The collaboration between NCHS and Statistics Canada began in 1999. These two agencies have statistical programs with much in common, including the collection of vital statistics and the conduct of national health population surveys. Since the collaboration was formed, the agencies have held an annual 2-day "interchange" to share information about common health-related interests, activities, challenges, and achievements.

NHANES–ENSANUT collaboration

The U.S. National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey (NHANES) and the National Health and Nutrition Survey in Mexico (ENSANUT) have begun a collaboration to share information about sample design and survey planning, and to conduct joint analytic projects. ENSANUT in Mexico and NHANES in the United States have similar histories, objectives, and designs, although operationally they differ in some ways. Both surveys include anthropometric measure and questionnaires, including dietary interviews, in addition to other components.

U.S.-México Border Health Commission

The U.S.-México Border Health Commission was created in July 2020 as a binational health commission with the mission to provide international leadership to improve health and quality of life along the U.S.-México border.



One of the major activities of the Commission is the Healthy Border program, a binational initiative that focuses on the public health issues prevalent among border populations. NCHS has assisted the Healthy Border program since its inception, providing the statistical support required for the identification of health issues, setting of targets, measuring program accomplishments, and producing Healthy Border reports.

Multilateral collaborations

These collaborations, which benefit from the input of a variety of countries, help set standards to improve data collection and analysis. NCHS' multilateral collaborations include:



International Collaborative Effort (ICE) on Injury Statistics and Methodology

An NCHS-initiated collaboration, ICE on Injury Statistics and Methodology provides a forum for injury researchers to exchange ideas and collaborate on the development of standards for injury data collection and analysis to improve international comparability of injury statistics. The organization's goals are to provide high-quality data to better assess the causes and consequences of injury, differences in injury occurrence over time and place, and the most effective means of injury prevention and control. Over the past 20 years, researchers from more than 40 countries have participated in collaborative projects or attended ICE on Injury Statistics and Methodology conferences.



International Group for Indigenous Health Measurement (IGIHM)

The United States, Australia, Canada, and New Zealand all have significant indigenous populations with similar health problems, and they share deficiencies in indigenous health data. These issues led health researchers; representatives of national statistical agencies, including NCHS; and representatives of indigenous groups to form an international group in 2005 to improve health status measurement of indigenous populations. Several meetings have brought IGIHM members and other experts together to share findings regarding indigenous health status, propose improvements in measurement methodology, and consider related issues, such as social determinants of indigenous health.



Global Program for Civil Registration and Vital Statistics Improvement



The International Statistics Program (ISP) at NCHS has initiated a vital registration improvement effort in countries around the world, thereby contributing its

expertise to enhance health-related data collections. An example is the Global Program for Civil Registration and Vital Statistics Improvement. With funding from the Centers for Disease and Control and Prevention's (CDC) Center for Global Health, the CDC Foundation, and Bloomberg Philanthropies, this program has established country demonstration projects to improve civil registration and vital statistics (CRVS) programs in Kenya, Malawi, Morocco, Mumbai (India), and Zambia. These projects employ a variety of tools and activities, including recent advances in mobile technology, to address the unique combination of system deficiencies and barriers found in each country. As part of this program, NCHS collaborates with various regional offices of the United Nations and World Health Organization on related CRVS activities.

In addition, ISP recently launched a new CRVS global training course that is available online at https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/isp/isp_fetp.htm. The curriculum combines internationally accepted principles and recommendations for national CRVS systems with a fully customizable framework that allows the course to easily incorporate country-specific civil registration policies, customs, and administrative processes. It can be administered anywhere in the world providing training to country civil registrars, public health professionals, and policy makers.

