



17th St. & Constitution Avenue N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20006  
United States of America

Organization of American States

P. 202.458.3000  
[www.oas.org](http://www.oas.org)

# INTER-AMERICAN DRUG ABUSE CONTROL COMMISSION **CICAD**

Secretariat for Multidimensional Security

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## **CHALLENGES AND STRATEGIES IN ADDRESSING THE DRUG PROBLEM FROM A PUBLIC HEALTH PERSPECTIVE.** **SITUATION AND INITIATIVES OF COMISCA**

# **Panel: Challenges and Strategies in Addressing the Drug Problem from a Public Health Perspective. Situation and Initiatives of COMISCA**

## **ES-COMISCA**

**19 November 2014  
Guatemala City**



# Council of Ministries of Health of Central America and the Dominican Republic

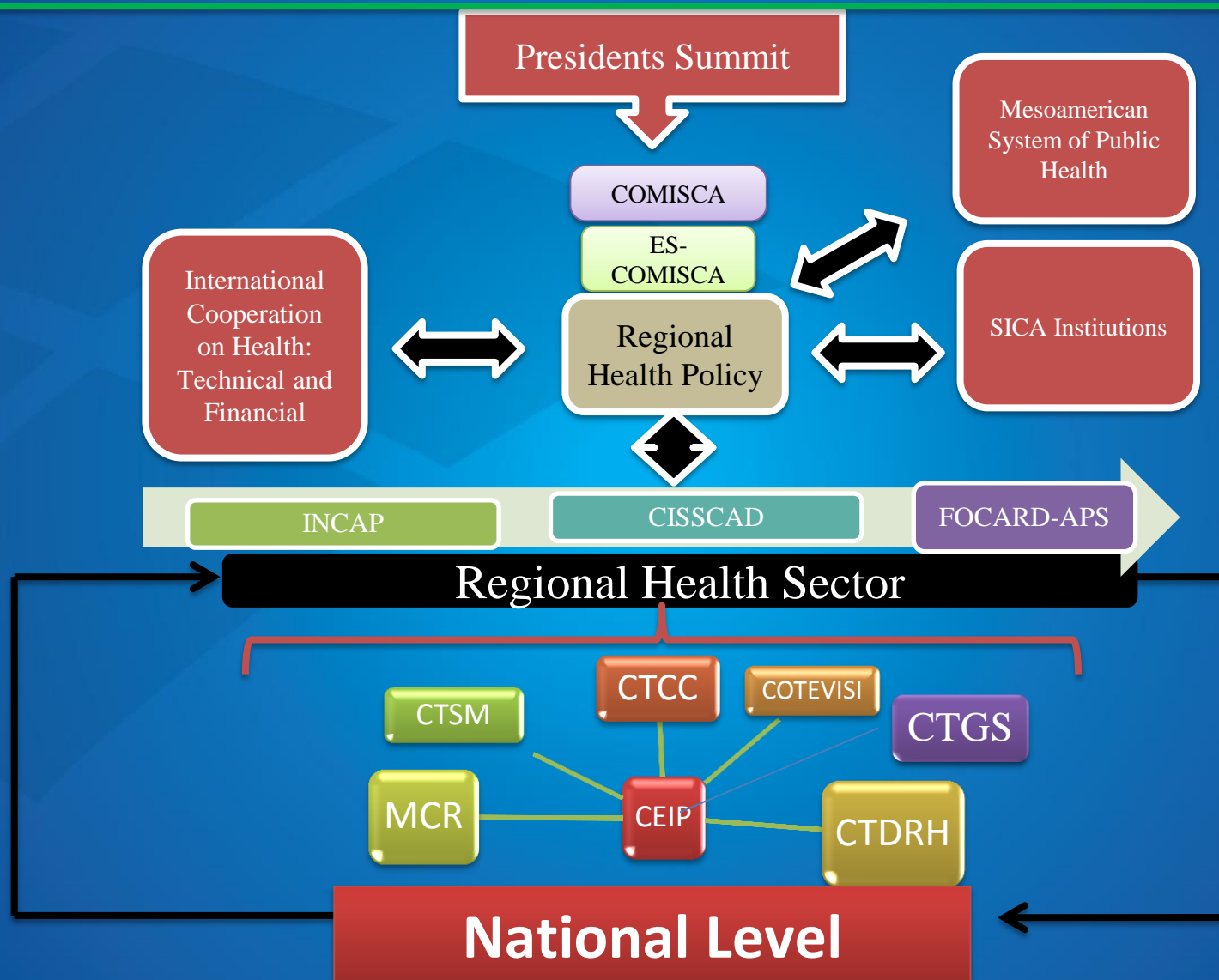
- Political structure of the Central American Integration System (SICA), which has a purpose of identifying and prioritizing regional public health problems.

# About the Executive Secretariat of COMISCA

- Represents the institutionalization of COMISCA in SICA
- Political Strategy Coordination structure, with technical administrative functions.
- Created on 10 September 2007, and began operating in 2009.
- Responsible for regional health processes

## Organization Map

### Regional and National Levels of COMISCA/ES COMISCA



# Institutional Context – Strategic Elements to Consider

- Regional integration is a relevant instrument *generating development policies for Central America.*
- To find a resolution to the common problems among all of the countries in the region.
- Actions that complement national actions, avoiding substitution and duplication.
- Procure communal benefits.

# Regional Context

- Focus on social detriments to health
- Economic development, population growth, health systems, public health costs, gaps.
- Demographic transition and epidemiological concentration. ET / ECnT Coexistence.
- Dynamic risk associated with natural phenomena.
- Criminal violence and phenomena associated with the population's quality of life.



# SICA Regional Health Policy 2015-2022

Approved September 2014.



## Orientation

Complementary

No substitution

No duplication

Inter-sectoral  
Approach to  
Health

Sustainable  
Actions in Health

## Guiding Principles

Universality

Quality

Integration and  
Inter-sectorial

Health as Human  
Right

## Objectives

### Dimensions

1. Process for Management of Health.
2. Health Capacities
3. Regional Cooperation for Development.
4. Regional Institutionalization

# Drugs as a Public Health Problem in Central America and the Dominican Republic

## Normative Framework and Policy Elements

- Framework Treaty on Democratic Security in Central America, Art. 10, on the principles: *“Democratic security is inseparable from human considerations. Respect for the essential dignity of human beings, improvement of the quality of life and the full development of human potential are required for all aspects of security.”*
- Central American Security Strategy (ESCA), in Component B on Prevention, Roman numeral V: Prevention of Drug Consumption

## Normative Framework and Policy Elements

Declaration from the XL Ordinary Session of the Heads of State and Government, celebrated in December 2012 in Nicaragua: *“To Instruct COMISCA to continue working on strategies to control tobacco use, alcoholism, cardiovascular diseases, diabetes, and chronic kidney disease that constitute a public health problem in Central America.”*



# Drugs from a Public Health Perspective

*In the field of applied sciences, in the area of action, public health seeks to identify the **health needs of a population** and its **determining factors**, such as the responsible organization for **comprehensive services** with a defined base population.*

*From a public health perspective, plan the development of interventions to change the environment as well as individual behavior, so that it complements the concept of “**human security**,” with the end of protecting and guaranteeing the three essential liberties for individuals and communities: the right to live without fear, the right to basic necessities, and right to live with dignity.*

*The lack of basic security manifests in seven key ways: economic, food security, sanitation, environmental, and physical, community and political integrity.*



# Health Human Resources

- Country Averages COMISCA (2011):
  - Total Population: 56,440,000
  - Doctors x 10.000:12.6;
  - Nurses x 10,000: 9.7;
  - Hospital Beds x 1000: 0.9

# Mental Health Human Resources

- The majority of reported and estimated personnel for Mental Health (as is also the case for budgets) are in psychiatric hospitals.
- Approximately: 1 to 2 % of all human resources in the Ministries of Health.
- Ministries of Health: Principal employer in the health system (Panama and Costa Rica: Social Security has an important role in providing health services).



# Economic Resources in Mental Health

- One out of four people need mental health care at some point in their life. However, many countries only allocate 2% of economic resources for health sector for mental health services. This estimate is also applicable to human resources dedicated to this specialization.
- The average annual cost of mental health on a global scale continues to be less than US\$ 3 per person. In lower income countries, the annual cost is only US\$ 0.25 per inhabitant (WHO Mental Health Atlas 2011)



# Results from the Sub-Regional Forum for Central America, and Mexico

“ A Public Health Perspective for  
Addressing the Drug Problem”

San Salvador, El Salvador  
June 2014



# Sub-Regional Forum for Central America - Mexico

1. To promote the implementation of different regional strategies for *comprehensive care* for the growing problem of psychoactive substance (drug) use *from a Public Health perspective*, ensuring adequate access to prevention, treatment, rehabilitation, and social integration, with the support of the General Secretariat of SICA, the Council of Ministries of Health of Central America, the National Drug Councils, and various hemispheric and regional specialized organizations, such as CICAD/OAS and PAHO/WHO.



# Sub-Regional Forum for Central America - Mexico

2. To strengthen mental health policies and strategies and *focus on social determinants* of health, like supporting comprehensive care for the drug use problem and its consequences.
3. To promote *scientific research and best practices* as a foundation for making decisions regarding comprehensive care for drug use from a public health perspective.
4. To strengthen the *Information and Registry Systems* for the collection and supply of statistical data and information related to the impact of the problem of drug use on Public Health.

## Sub-Regional Forum for Central America - Mexico

5. To urge Member States to incorporate *impact monitoring and evaluation* of the material actions of comprehensive care for drug use in their operational plans for the health sector.

6. *Manage financial support mechanisms* permitting the use of necessary funds for the implementation of addressing the drug problem from a public health perspective, including incorporating complementary modalities, such as the allocation of funds stemming from seized property connected to illegal activities related to drugs or taxes on alcohol or tobacco.



# Sub-Regional Forum for Central America - Mexico

7. To strengthen *intersectionality* for addressing drug use problems from a public health perspective.
8. To guarantee access and increased universal coverage of care services and drug treatment for different populations, with a special emphasis on at-risk populations and civil liberties, through the Comprehensive Networks of Health Services (RISS) and institutions responsible for Social Security.



# Sub-Regional Forum for Central America - Mexico

9. To strengthen coordination for the *development and training of human resources* for addressing the drug problem from a public health perspective.



# CICAD/OAS - COMISCA

Importance of training in international actions, as well as concentration on priority problems.

A widespread training program directed by the national health systems in the COMISCA member states.

The general project orientation will be towards training, while simultaneously building networks in the public health system





# CICAD/OAS - COMISCA

- Institutional Framework: Memorandum of Understanding. Conventions. Agreements COMISCA, RESSCAD.
- Design, planning, financing, and operation of a Regional CICAD-COMISCA Program, with its headquarters in COMISCA.
- Emphasis on the training and certification of human resources and establishment of care networks.





Nelson Guzmán Mendoza  
Director of Inter-institutional Cooperation and Relations  
ES-COMISCA

[nguzman@sica.int](mailto:nguzman@sica.int)



@secomisca



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**Guatemala City, 19 November 2014**

