



## CASE STUDY

### Program evaluation of an international public health and epidemiological mechanism

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#### About the Mechanism:

- A regional mechanism composed of multiple international health and economic agencies under the auspices of the United Nations and US Federal Government
  - Employs multiple working groups that engage in reporting of epidemiological data in the Latin American and Caribbean region and with outreach to regional- and country-level entities and governments.
  - Goal of the organization is to coordinate the implementation of a global strategy for improving women, children, and adolescent health outcomes via the informing and development of health policies at the regional and national levels
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#### Aims of the Evaluation:

- Understand how to better utilize the interconnectedness of the stakeholders associated with the mechanism
  - Evaluate the alignment and efficacy of activities and deliverables of the various working groups
  - Characterize stakeholders' individual and collective vision for the future of the mechanism
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#### Methodological Approach:

- Responsive evaluation and monitoring approach with an a focus on structural rather than outcome evaluation



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- Use of archival data and reports, executive committee meeting minutes, and semistructured interviews to conduct narrative case stories and thematic analysis

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### Evaluation Outcome

- The case study narratives and thematic analysis revealed that, conceptually, all members of mechanism were aligned in terms of the mechanism's direction for the future and that, from a data reporting point of view, they are successful. However, it was revealed that dissemination of that data reporting to regional- and country-level stakeholders was not effective.
- The most important recommendation of our evaluation report focused on the streamlining of the mechanism's structure and decision-making process. It was recommended to emulate the governance structure of similar public health mechanisms which involves a rotating executive chair who acts as a *primus inter pares*. It was also recommended to have representation from each agency in the mechanism's three working groups to leverage the specialization of each agency.

Representatives of this mechanism reached out to Precision for support with evaluating the operations and output of the mechanism. Given the complexity of the activities and structure of the mechanism, Precision engaged in several weeks of exploratory planning to understand the Client's goals for the evaluation process. It was determined that it was not necessary to evaluate



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the if the desired health outcomes at the regional or country level were met, but rather to evaluate the efficacy and operations of the complex structure of the mechanism.

The mechanism is governed by an executive board of representatives from 10 agencies that are funded either by the United National or the US Government. The executive board then oversees the activities of three working groups: a data analytics and report group, a policy creation group, and a dissemination group. The situation that was presented to us involved determining an optimal evaluation plan that involved understanding the operations of the 10–agency executive board, the operations of three working groups, and the decision–making pipeline from the executive committee to the three working groups.

After engaging in exploratory consultations and data reviews, it was determined that the mechanism had a wealth of health reports and meeting minutes that could be used to understand how the decision–making process impacted the output of the three working groups. The second element of the evaluation involved interviews with executive committee members and members of the working group. In consultation with the Client, three evaluation aims were developed, to wit:

- Understand how to better utilize the interconnectedness of the stakeholders associated with the mechanism
- Evaluate the alignment and efficacy of activities and deliverables of the various working groups
- Characterize stakeholders' individual and collective vision for the future of the mechanism

To ensure that responses that are relevant to the above three aims were elicited, Precision worked with the Client to develop a detailed interview protocol, which



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was developed using seminal resources on program evaluation and qualitative interviewing.

To analyze the data, state-of-the-art qualitative analysis methods and software were implemented. The use of qualitative methods was novel to the Client. Being a public health and epidemiological mechanism, members were already experts in quantitative reporting methods, but given that the mechanisms wanted to evaluate stakeholder perceptions and the nature of the interestedness the mechanism, a qualitative methodology was the most optimal pathway.

The results and recommendation of Precision's evaluation report allowed the Client to engage with their stakeholders and create a Vision 2.0 for the mechanism. Given the richness and productiveness of the mechanism's data reporting, the Precision's evaluation was able to assist the client in taking steps to streamline their governance and organization so that connections could be made with regional- and country-level players thus allowing the mechanism to realize one of its goals of effectuating public policy changes based on their data reporting.