

How can the international health and development communities support HTA implementation at the country level?

A review of international cooperation and collaboration initiatives in the Americas

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Background

The global development agenda is focusing on strengthening health systems. One key area is the equitable, rational and efficient use of medicines, for which Health Technology Assessments (HTAs) are a reliable tool. Hence, international health and development organizations are pushing for HTA implementation in the Americas. The aim of this study was to explore the role of these organizations in advancing HTA implementation in the region.

Methods

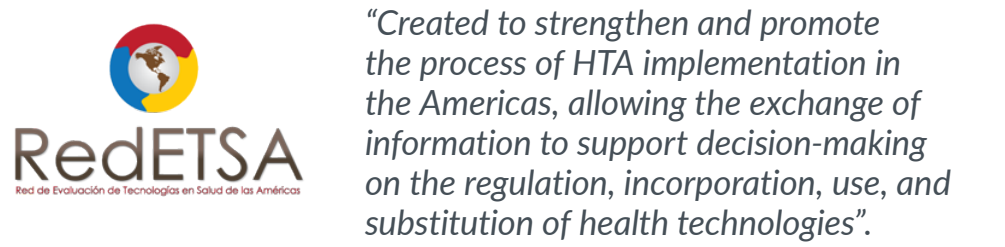
As one of the main objectives in the global development agenda is to strengthen health systems, we targeted the major international development organizations with a focus on health systems strengthening in the Americas: the Pan-American Health Organization (PAHO) and the Interamerican Development Bank (IDB). Desk research on official websites and press release articles was conducted to identify their involvement in HTA initiatives. A descriptive, thematic analysis was conducted on the information retrieved.

Results

We found that both the PAHO and IDB are engaging in initiatives to support HTA implementation in the Americas, particularly in South and Central America. A key joint initiative is the establishment of RedETSA (Red de Evaluación de Tecnologías en Salud de las Américas) in 2011 (Figure 1), which is the most

important HTA network in the Americas as per the number of members (Figure 2).

Figure 1: Objectives of RedETSA



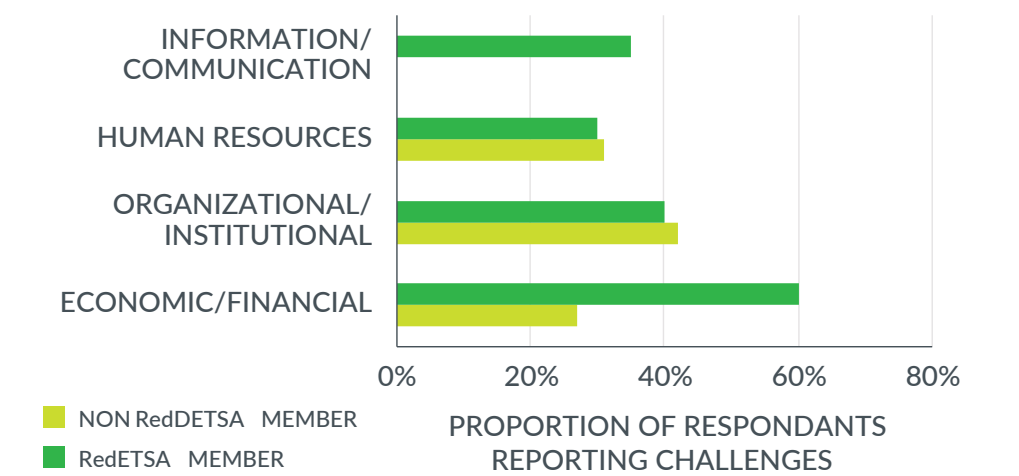
Both the PAHO and IDB have engaged in initiatives such as educational conferences and seminars, consulting, technical reports and roadmaps, to provide support and technical expertise to RedETSA members and activities.

Figure 2: Members of RedETSA



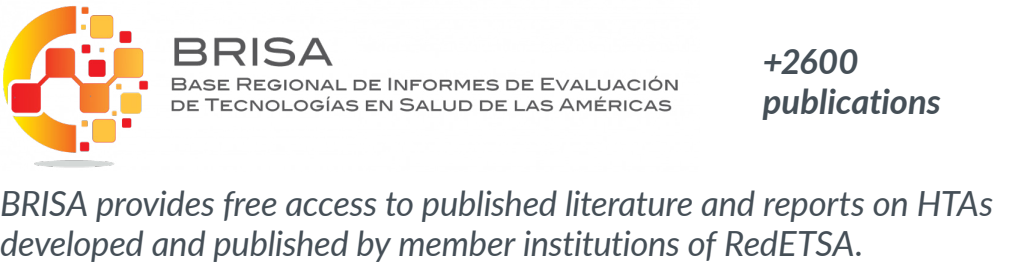
Following the establishment of RedETSA, the PAHO published a survey-based study (Lessa et. al) where RedETSA members reported overcoming challenges that have historically acted as barriers for HTA implementation, such as low HTA education and poor communication (Graph 1). Moreover, non-RedETSA members have reported additional financial/economic challenges compared to RedETSA members.

Graph 1: Main barriers in the decision-making process of HTAs in the Americas



Communication and education barriers have been addressed in part by allowing members to learn from shared HTA experiences facilitated by RedETSA, including the regional database for HTA reports in the Americas (BRISA) (Figure 3).

Figure 3: Objectives of BRISA



Conclusions

International health and development organizations are supporting HTA efforts in the Americas by reducing implementation barriers in the region and promoting knowledge transfer through collaborative initiatives. These HTA efforts help advance health system strengthening that align with global development efforts. Manufacturers should monitor regional and global HTA initiatives, engaging with related stakeholders and considering the impact of HTA regional collaboration on their global launch strategies and related preparedness activities.

REFERENCES

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² Pichon-Riviere, A; Drummond, M; García, S; Augustovski, F.(2021) Application of economic evidence in health technology assessment and decision making for the allocation of health resources in Latin America: Seven key topics and a preliminary proposal for implementation (IDB Technical Note 2286). Available at: <https://publications.iadb.org/es/aplicacion-de-la-evidencia-economica-en-la-evaluacion-de-tecnologias-sanitarias-y-la-toma-de>

³ PAHO official webpage: <https://www.paho.org/en/topics/health-technology-assessment>

⁴ RedETSA official webpage: <https://redetsa.bvsalud.org/>

⁵ BID official webpage: <https://www.iadb.org/en>

⁶ BID Webinar transcript: La experiencia de RedETSA en el fortalecimiento de las ETS en la region de las Americas. Available at: <https://criteria.iadb.org/sites/default/files/2020-07/CRITERIA-TW-REDETSAPdf>

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