



## MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR

Vaccine-preventable diseases continue to plague the people of the Americas. We are succeeding in the battle against such threats as poliomyelitis, and continuing our efforts to maintain immunization and eradication initiatives. However, communicable diseases such as rubella and pertussis deprive our youth of their health and a prosperous future. The Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) is dedicated to spearheading efforts that encourage the continued growth and sustainability of immunization programs on the cutting edge of new information and technology.

In this context, I would like to introduce the latest tools for the eradication and control of vaccine-preventable diseases that threaten the Americas. It is my pleasure and privilege to present the Clinical Field Guide Series and Training Modules from the Immunization Unit of the Family and Community Health Area.

These revised technical documents provide updated techniques—with illustrations—to aid health workers in the control and eradication of poliomyelitis, neonatal tetanus, yellow fever, diphtheria, pertussis, tetanus, *Haemophilus influenzae* type b, hepatitis B, measles, and rubella. They have been written in the spirit of these guiding principles: cultivating a culture of disease prevention, reducing inequalities in health, and promoting technical excellence in immunization services. They include the latest information from the scientific literature, coupled with the experience of seasoned health professionals working in the field in the countries of the Americas. They aim to be highly practical and effective in promoting proven strategies. In essence, they represent the culmination of the experience of all health workers of the Americas.

Each guide provides a detailed approach to identifying, controlling and, if appropriate, eradicating the disease, as well as handling potential outbreaks. The guides also offer standardized methods and procedures for conducting surveillance and maintaining a practical database. The use of these guides in the field will help strengthen current prevention efforts.

In the spirit of PAHO's efforts to improve the health and well-being of our communities, I invite you to utilize these guides as essential tools in the fight against vaccine-preventable diseases.

—Dr. Mirta Roses Periago