

## **CLOSING REMARKS:**

**Rubén Suárez** [revised by the author on October 10, 2003]

Let me just close this meeting by thanking the US Census Bureau for helping us to organize the Conference, the World Bank for supporting the case study from Peru and ECLAC and the Rio Group for their supporting and sponsoring Pedro's participation in this workshop. Also, I want to thank the panelists, discussants, chairs and the participants who helped us to advance in the discussions by including health dimensions in the measurement of poverty.

I will focus my closing remarks on two of the areas that we are planning to continue to work. The first one is to put together the proceedings of this Workshop. Thanks to your help by sending in advance, most of the papers discussed during the workshop are already available on the Workshop web-site; please check the keyword HAPL in the PAHO website. Also, we are planning to put in the Workshop website the transcripts of the presentations and discussions, as well as the overheads and/or power point presentations. We hope that having all this information available on the web will help us to keep alive the discussions and help us to advance some of the challenge issues in this field.

The second area is that we will continue to promote the development of country case studies like the one presented for the case of Peru. We would like to replicate some of the approaches used in the cases of the US and Canada using data from countries of the Latin American and the Caribbean. We will be looking for partnerships with some of the funding institutions, the World Bank and the Inter-American Development Bank to see where we can do more research in this area.

Also, I would like to announce that as a follow-up to this activity, we will be organizing a conference on Health Adjusted Poverty Lines in Latin America and the Caribbean. To prepare this conference we will be promoting the development of country-case studies on different types of adjustments to the existing measurements of poverty being used in the countries (deducting health expenditures from resources, including health needs; including health insurance needs, etc.). We would like very much to have a wider array of examples on the impacts on the measurement of poverty of different

adjustments. While we are aware of several of the methodological problems we have been discussing in this workshop, I think the policy issues of the discussion about the role of health in the alleviation of poverty are extremely important. They are important because it may change the focus of the discussion on health sector reform policies in Latin America and the Caribbean. It may help us to move the agenda of health sector reform as a mechanism to make national health care systems more efficient, to the reforms of national health care systems as a poverty reduction instrument. I invite our colleagues from the Inter American Development Bank and the World Bank to join PAHO in supporting country studies and in organizing the next conference on health adjusted poverty lines in Latin America and the Caribbean.

Finally, I would like to thank the staff and consultants from our health economic group, as well as the staff from different PAHO support units for their extraordinary cooperation in the implementation of this activity. Thank you.