

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Technical Advisory Group (TAG)

To strengthen the policy dialogue on immunization among the key actors and agencies involved in the elimination effort, the Technical Advisory Group (TAG), formed in 1985 to help the PAHO Secretariat with polio eradication, will continue functioning as the leading forum to promote and debate the goals and strategies of the EPI, particularly those related to measles elimination by the year 2000.

The TAG will be composed of a core of eight experts in areas related to vaccines and immunization; additional experts will be identified to address special problem areas. TAG members will be appointed by the PAHO Director, who will consult with USAID and other regional ICC members before their appointment. PAHO/SVI will serve as the Secretariat for the TAG.

TAG meetings will be convened as required, usually once every two years to discuss progress and obstacles of EPI activities. The measles elimination target will be reviewed and the recommendations issued will be disseminated throughout the Region. The TAG will also review protocols and results, assist in the identification of research needs and oversee the progress of studies under way.

Members of the TAG will be appointed for a period of one year, with possible extensions. At least one member of the TAG should also be a member of the World Health Organization's Global Program for Vaccines (GPV) Scientific Advisory Group of Experts (SAGE). Furthermore, at least one member of the TAG should also participate in meetings with other agencies and organizations, to ensure proper coordination and exchange of information. Functions of the TAG are:

- a) Advise the PAHO Secretariat with respect to program priorities;
- b) Advise and guide the PAHO Secretariat concerning the optimal strategies and tactics to reach the overall goals of the EPI, the maintenance of a polio free status, and measles elimination in the Americas;
- c) Monitor the implementation of the Regional Plan of Action to accomplish the above-stated goals;
- d) Promote understanding and support for program goals among technical institutions, bilateral, multilateral and private agencies, as well as among political leaders;
- e) Participate in missions at the country level for program reviews and meetings; and
- f) Advise on the criteria, methodology and research needed before the certification of the elimination of measles in the Americas.