



## **REGIONAL TECHNICAL CONSULTATION: HARMONIZATION OF HEALTH ACCOUNTS AND THE NATIONAL ACCOUNTS SYSTEMS IN COUNTRIES OF THE AMERICAS**

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### **Background**

Since the mid-1990s, a large number of countries in the Region have produced diverse estimates of national health expenditure based on studies that are known as "*Health Accounts or National Health Accounts (HA/NHA)*". Some of these estimates have been prepared using a methodology known as National Health Accounts developed by health specialists from Harvard University (NHA-Harvard). Other estimates have been prepared following the guidelines for the development of national health accounts contained in a proposal for a System of Health Accounts designed by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (SHA-OECD, 2000). Some other estimates are based on methodological guidelines contained in the Guide to Producing National Health Accounts with Special Applications for Low-Income and Middle-Income Countries (2004), developed by health and health account experts through the "Partners for Health Reform Project" of the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), the World Bank, and the World Health Organization (WHO).

Despite these efforts to develop methodologies, little progress has been made in the continuous production of indicators of national health expenditure as a proportion of gross domestic product (GDP) or gross national income (GNI); of the public-private composition of expenditure; of expenditure on final consumption of individual and collective health goods and services; of the contributions of market and non-market producers to the production of health goods and services; of the types of goods and services by economic or functional classification; or of the value added of activities related to the production of health goods and services.

Concern for methodological consistency between national expenditure indicators derived from health accounts and the principal macroeconomic aggregates of the United Nations System of National Accounts (SNA 1993), along with concern about the national institutions responsible for developing national accounts, prompted several countries (Brazil, Chile, Costa Rica, and Mexico) to adopt the Satellite Health Account approach to the development of national health accounts. To support these initiatives, the Pan American Health Organization has promoted the preparation of a manual to develop satellite health accounts that facilitate the routine production of national health expenditure indicators within the framework of the countries' national accounts systems.

## Objectives

The objective of the Technical Consultation is to listen to the opinions of experts on national accounts systems in the Region about the possibilities of harmonizing the concepts, classifications, and estimation methods used under the different approaches to developing health accounts. Specific objectives of the Technical Consultation involve an examination of:

- The possibilities of harmonizing the concepts, classifications, and estimation methods of the approaches to national health accounts with the United Nations System of National Accounts (SNA 1993);
- The necessary steps to institutionalize the routine production of health-related economic and financial indicators in countries of the Region, and to promote the use of these indicators in the design, monitoring and evaluation of public policies for health and human development related to the Millennium Development Goals ;
- Recommendations for a common definition of health that can be used in international comparisons of national health expenditure indicators.

## Participants

National and international experts on the United Nations System of National Accounts (SNA 1993), professionals and international consultants involved in developing new proposals for national health accounts and satellite health accounts, and professionals and researchers from the countries of the Region with experience in the empirical application of these methodologies.

## Coordinators

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