

# TRAINING PROGRAM IN INTERNATIONAL HEALTH

## I. DESCRIPTION OF THE PROGRAM

### **A changing world context**

Recent decades have seen political, social, economic and cultural changes occurring at an accelerated rate. The process of globalization has intensified. The introduction of new technologies, the ever-increasing blurring of boundaries between nations, the opening of markets, the liberalization of national economies, and the consolidation of social and integration processes have all placed new and pressing demands on countries and on the State.

These processes have profound implications for the health of populations, their national and international health policies; in essence, the very notion of what constitutes health and its determinants. The growing mobility of people, goods and services has accelerated the transfer of health risks between populations. At the same time, the relationship between health and socioeconomic development has become increasingly intertwined and complex. More so than ever, it is necessary to have a 'global perspective' in order to understand the interrelationship between these processes at the local, national and international levels.

These trends pose new challenges for international cooperation in development and, even more specifically, in health. Both the technical capacity of the countries in the Region as well as the access to information have grown enormously in recent years. The number, diversity, and influence of actors involved in health and development has increased. New concerns about the development of human security and the promotion of equity have been added to the traditional mission of solidarity with and assistance to the most vulnerable countries. At the same time, there is a new urgency to discussions on global governance and global public goods.

### **The necessary training of leaders**

Within this context, the Training Program in International Health of the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) aims to strengthen the capacity of institutions of the Region and the Member States to (i) analyze the international and transnational factors that affect their health situation; (ii) design innovative policies and strategies of action, using the experiences of the international community and mobilizing its political, financial, and technical resources; (iii) relate actively and effectively with organizations within the international system and participate in the definition of their action agenda; and (iv) develop cooperative relations, projects, and networks among professionals and institutions in the Region.

Created in 1985, the Program receives every year between eight and ten health professionals living in the Americas, who demonstrate leadership and interest in delving more deeply into the international dimensions of health. Through their participation, the Program strives to promote leadership in international health by enabling participants to develop a broader vision of the evolution of regional and global trends in health and development; critical and strategic thinking regarding the main challenges facing countries today; and a more profound understanding of, and capacity for action in, international cooperation in health.

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## **Educational philosophy**

The Training Program in International Health follows a competency-based approach. On entering the Program, each participant brings with him or her certain specialized expertise that corresponds to his or her area of interest, education, and experience in public health. Although the Program provides an arena that lends itself to the consolidation of that expertise, its educational purpose focuses on strengthening those essential competencies that form a core of knowledge, skills, attitudes, and values that are relevant to the theory and practice of international health. The five essential macro areas of competence identified by the Program are situational analysis, political analysis, directing of processes, communication, and cooperation, through an international perspective. Guiding the development of these competencies are the underlying values of ethics, equity, solidarity, and social justice.

## **Program structure**

The training process is based on the participants becoming involved in the work of the Organization through a work-study format for a period of approximately ten months. The participants are largely responsible for their own training. They are expected to possess the autonomy, enthusiasm, and initiative necessary to become involved in projects that are underway and to take advantage of the available institutional resources inside and outside of PAHO.

Program participants are given the opportunity to experience international cooperation first-hand, both in terms of its technical as well as its diplomatic and political dimensions. They join a technical unit that constitutes their area of concentration. In close collaboration with the unit chief and with the assistance of a mentor, they develop a work plan and are integrated into the life of the unit. Some examples of activities carried out during the course of the year are technical meetings in the countries and at Headquarters, the formulation and evaluation of technical cooperation projects, policy or case analysis, the study of “good practices” and technology transfer, country missions, and training activities.

They also have the opportunity to participate in activities relevant to governance, policy formulation, and the programming of PAHO/WHO technical cooperation. Participants attend the working sessions of the Governing Bodies of the Organization and presentations of national authorities visiting Headquarters; they actively participate in technical discussions with other professionals; and they familiarize themselves with the role and duties of the PAHO/WHO Country Offices.

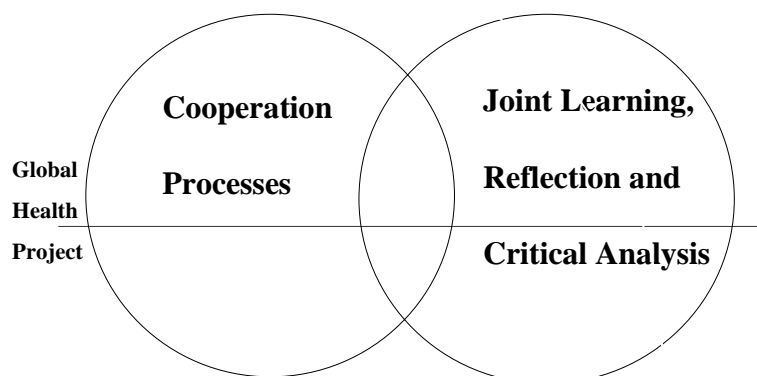
Group activities represent another important component of the Program. These encounters allow participants a period of joint reflection and exchange of experiences, perspectives, and analysis that are central to the learning process. The group activities evolve around the following major themes: (1) global health/international health; (2) international technical and financial cooperation in health and development; (3) regional and global trends affecting health and development; and (4) the role of the State.

In addition, each resident is asked to develop a project, which may take the form of a paper, relating their particular area of work to global health. This project will serve as a “common thread”

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for their participation in the Program, thereby further linking these two experiences. This process can be visualized in the following manner:

## Program structure



## Terms of participation

The Training Program in International Health for 2006 will begin on **1 March 2006** and will end on **22 December 2006**. Participants in the Program receive a stipend intended to cover basic living expenses. In addition, each participant is provided with a round-trip, economy-class ticket between their country of residence and Washington, D.C., and a lump sum settling-in allowance. Participants are also given a subsidy for the purchase of bibliographic materials during their stay. PAHO provides basic health insurance for the participant only. Participation in the Program does not presuppose any future contractual commitment on the part of PAHO. The Organization reserves the right to change the administrative terms of the Program.

## II. APPLICATION AND SELECTION PROCEDURES

### Eligibility Criteria

The requirements for participating in the Training Program in International Health are as follows:

**Education:** Master's degree in Public Health or related field

All candidates must possess a Master's degree or an equivalent advanced degree. It is important to note that not all specializations and postgraduate degrees are considered equivalent to a Master's. The

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determination of degree equivalence will be bound by the laws, rules and/or regulations governing the country where the institution awarding the degree resides. In the absence of such laws, rules or regulations, the determination will be made by the PAHO/WHO Regional Office for the Americas in collaboration with the PAHO/WHO Country Office in that country and the Ministry of Health or other government entity. Medical degrees (MD) are not considered equivalent to Master's degrees for the purposes of this Program. Studies must be in public health or a related field of study, including the social sciences applied to health. Please contact the TPIH Coordination if you have any questions regarding this or any other requirements.

**Experience:** Minimum of two years' work experience in public health

Experience must be in the area of public health. Clinical experience cannot be counted towards the years of experience for purposes of meeting the minimum duration requirement. Experience must be in one of the following areas: directing programs, projects or services; directing educational or research programs at the university level; teaching at the university level; carrying out public health research (as principal or co-principal researcher).

**Age:** Age limit of 35 years as of 31 July 2005

**Nationality:** Permanent resident of one of PAHO's member countries

**Language:** Excellent knowledge of either Spanish or English, with a demonstrated ability to understand, read, write, and express oneself in the other.

## Application procedures

The following application documents are required:

- **Completed application form**

- **Curriculum vitae**

Please submit résumé only. Do not include certification of participation in courses, workshops or seminars that did not lead to a degree.

- **Copy of birth certificate**

- **Photocopy of undergraduate diploma(s)**

- **Photocopy of graduate and/or postgraduate diploma(s)**

Applications will only be considered from those candidates who have completed their Master's degree by the application deadline. Completion of the degree means that all requirements have been met (including completion of all coursework and submission and defense of thesis, if applicable), and that the degree or title of *Masters* has been conferred on the candidate. In instances where the institution has not yet provided the diploma, PAHO/WHO will accept a letter on university letterhead with original signature in which the university certifies that all degree requirements have been met and the degree conferred. In any case, all diplomas must be submitted to the TPIH Coordination no later than 31 October 2005.

- **Certificate of proficiency in Spanish and/or English**

Certification must be provided for the language that is not the applicant's native language. In cases where the applicant's native language is other than Spanish or English, he/she must provide certification of both. The following documents are considered acceptable:

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standardized language exams (TOEFL, British Language Exam, Foreign Service Institute, etc); transcripts from university showing language courses; letter from a language school recognized by the country indicating enrollment and level of attainment, proof of having studied, lived and/or worked abroad in that language.

- **Copy of a working paper prepared by the candidate**

Examples include position paper, consultancy report, research paper, essay, publication, etc. Paper must include the name of the candidate as author.

The following documents are welcome, although not required:

- Letters of recommendation
- Letters from the institution where the candidate is currently employed or will be employed endorsing the candidate's participation in the Program

The above documents may be sent to PAHO Headquarters through the PAHO Office in the candidate's country of residence, or directly to:\*

Training Program in International Health  
Human Resources Development Unit  
Area of Strategic Health Development  
Office of the Director of Program Management  
Pan American Health Organization  
525 Twenty-third St., NW  
Washington, DC 20037-2895  
Tel: (202) 974-3592  
Fax: (202) 974-3612

\*United States citizens should send their applications directly to PAHO Headquarters. Candidates from Canada should send their applications through the *Canadian Society for International Health (CSIH)*, 1105-One Nicholas Street, Ottawa, Ontario K1N 787 Canada, Tel: (613) 241-5785, Fax: (613) 241-3845. Web: [www.csih.org](http://www.csih.org).

**Please submit application and all documents in duplicate (original plus one copy) in the order indicated. Please do not submit original documents** as they will not be returned to you.

All required documents must be included with the application at the time of submission. **Incomplete applications will not be considered** (that are missing one or more of the required documents). Letters of reference or letters from the candidate's institution may be sent separately.

## **KEY DATES:**

➤ Deadline for receipt of applications: **31 October 2005**

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- Date for information of selection results: January 2006
- Beginning date of the Program: 1 March 2006

## **Evaluation criteria of candidates**

Candidates will be contacted by the PAHO office in their country of residence for an interview, the results of which will be forwarded to PAHO Headquarters in Washington, DC and will serve as input into the selection process.

The criteria considered in the selection of participants are: (1) the quality of the candidate's training and professional experience; (2) the candidate's demonstrated leadership capabilities; (3) the candidate's own perspectives for his or her participation in the Program; and (4) the degree of match between the candidate's profile and the program priorities of the Organization.

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## III. RIGHTS AND OBLIGATIONS OF PARTICIPANTS

### **Amount and mode of compensation**

The Training Program in International Health will begin on 1 March 2006 and will end on 22 December 2006. Each Participant is contracted by the Pan American Health Organization/World Health Organization (PAHO/WHO), and receives a subsistence stipend of approximately US\$3,400.00 per month to cover their expenses for the duration of the Program. PAHO/WHO will reimburse Participants who are U.S. residents for any taxes that they are required to pay on income received from PAHO/WHO.

### **Health insurance**

Once a candidate has been selected, he or she must undergo a medical examination according to PAHO/WHO Staff Rules. PAHO/WHO will provide the Participant with health insurance for the duration of the contract. However, it should be noted that the health insurance provides only limited protection and **covers only the Participant**; family members are not included. The insurance does not cover pre-existing medical conditions.

### **Settling-in expenses**

Participants who are selected from outside the local commuting area of Washington, DC will be entitled to a lump sum allowance of US\$3,500 to cover their settling-in expenses.<sup>1</sup> The PAHO/WHO Office in the country of origin of the Participant provides a cash advance equivalent to 80% of the settling-in costs prior to the commencement of travel to Washington, DC. The cost of housing as well as all moving and housing arrangements are the sole responsibility of the Participant. However, the Program Coordination is available to provide information or assistance in this regard.

### **Transportation**

Participants will be granted one round trip, economy fare ticket from their current place of residence to Washington, DC.<sup>1</sup> PAHO/WHO does not cover travel expenses for family members (spouse, children, or other dependents). The Program will cover up to US\$100.00 for excess baggage for the return trip home at the end of the contract. The travel insurance meets the customary standards of protection for PAHO/WHO staff.

### **Visas**

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<sup>1</sup> Not applicable for Participants living in the Washington, DC area.

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The Organization will assist Participants in obtaining a visa for employees of international agencies (G-4) from the Government of the United States of America. No Participant or his or her immediate family member should travel without this type of visa.

## **Book allowance**

During the course of the Program, each Participant is entitled to an allowance of up to US\$300.00 to purchase books or other instructional materials related to the objectives of the Program. These materials should be acquired through the Program Coordination. In addition to the allowance, the Program will provide Participants with basic materials related to common subjects and activities.

## **Vacations**

Each Participant is entitled to 10 working days of vacation during the course of the Program, which should be authorized in advance by both the coordinator of the relevant technical program and the Coordinator of the Training Program in International Health. All vacation days must be utilized prior to the termination of the Program and are not reimbursable in cash.

## **Program compliance**

The Participant is expected to arrive in Washington, DC on the date indicated to him or her. He or she commits to actively participate in the activities of the Program to the end. The Participant agrees to devote him or herself full time to the Training Program in International Health. Any proposed deviation from the Program as stipulated herein initiated by the Participant, including, but not limited to, early termination of the Program due to prior professional commitments, new career opportunities, or personal reasons, shall be immediately communicated to PAHO/WHO. At this time, PAHO/WHO at its sole discretion will determine if the Participant forfeits his or her rights and benefits under the Program. Any breach of the agreement without prior communication to PAHO/WHO will result in full forfeiture of benefits. Participants will be required to sign a contract with PAHO/WHO upon commencement of the Program.

## **Language proficiency**

For admission to the Program and to carry out the plan of activities in a satisfactory manner, Participants must have an adequate knowledge of spoken Spanish and English and be able to write proficiently in at least one of these languages. Experience indicates, however, that many Participants have significant limitations in oral communication in one of the two languages. Should this be the case, Participants must commit themselves to making the necessary effort to improve their language ability outside of regular Program hours.

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## **Publications**

Any publication by the Participant resulting from participation in the Program should explicitly acknowledge this fact and include a disclaimer indicating that the opinions and statements expressed do not necessarily represent those of PAHO/WHO; the Participant may not in any way speak on behalf of the Organization or give the impression that he/she has such authority.

## **Rules of ethics**

PAHO/WHO is an international organization that provides technical cooperation to the Member States in the Region of the Americas. Participants in the Training Program in International Health are expected to maintain a high degree of professionalism in their relations with colleagues, high standards of technical quality, and respect in their encounters with national authorities, and to duly comply with the rules and regulations of the Organization. The Participant may not in any way act or speak on behalf of the Organization, or convey the impression that he or she has any authority in this regard.

## **Commitment**

The purpose of the Program is to strengthen the national institutions of the Member States of PAHO/WHO. Participants commit themselves to returning to their country immediately upon completion of the Program and to performing their services at the national level for a period of not less than two years. Participation in the Program does not create any future contractual commitment on the part of PAHO/WHO. The Organization reserves the right to change the administrative terms of the Program.