

Technical Meeting for Latin America and the Caribbean on School Health Promotion Closing the Implementation Gap: Closing the gap between Evidence and Execution

Introduction

In 1995, the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) launched the Health-Promoting Schools Regional Initiative in response to World Health Organization (WHO) long dedication to comprehensive school health promotion and education. The Initiative, within the context of the regional approach to healthy municipalities and communities, serves as a strategic mechanism for advocacy, social facilitation and mobilization, multi-sectorial and interagency collaboration for strengthening regional, national, and local capacities in health promotion through the Health-Promoting Schools Strategy.

Never before has there been so much abundant scientific evidence on the close relation between health and education as the basis of human development. Increasing basic education has proven to improve nutritional status and overall health. With the Millennium Development Goals (MDG) and the work of the Social Determinates of Health Commission (2008) it is clear of the immediate necessity to strengthen and integrate health promotion within different sectors, institutions, and agencies. There is a pressing need to close the gap between research and actual practice to allow for more effective, evidence based health promotion in schools.

The work of governmental health and education sectors in the Americas, United Nation organizations (UNCIEF, World Bank, UNESCO, etc), international development agencies (AECID, CIDA, etc), WHO Collaborating Centers (PROINAPSA, EDC, CDC, etc), academia, and non-governmental organizations (NGO's) must be reviewed and evaluated at this time to enrich and further strengthen the actions of countries and the Health Promoting Schools network.

In consideration with the international precedents of the Meeting of Schools for Health, Education, and Development in Vancouver (2007); the Agreement at the Technical Meeting Latin American on Health and Education (Brasilia, 2007); and the recent 7th Global Conference on Health Promotion (Nairobi, 2009), and in response to the "Nairobi Call To Action For Closing the Implementation Gap in Health Promotion" PAHO proposes the *Technical Meeting for Latin America and the Caribbean on School Health Promotion - Closing the Implementation Gap: Closing the gap between Evidence and Execution*. This meeting will allow to strengthen the network of Latin American and Caribbean Health-Promoting Schools and to facilitate the sharing of information, knowledge, and experiences among the countries of the Americas.

Objectives

Goals and objectives of the meeting:

1. Review lessons learned and good practices in Health Promotion in School Environments in Latin America and Caribbean (Evidence and Implementation, Alliances and Networks, Early Education Initiatives, Formation of Personal Health and Education, Equality and MDG's);
2. Align priorities in the cooperation to improve and expand the network of Health Promoting Schools (Healthy and Sustainable Schools or equivalent) in Latin America and the Caribbean;
3. Establish a common work agenda and objectives for 2010-2011.

Participants

Trained professionals with in-country experience in the Americas, government representatives, NGO's, academics, strategic health promotion allies, partners in Health Promoting Schools, United Nation Representatives, among others.

Date and Location

The meeting will be held from 31 March to 1 April 2010 in La Habana, Cuba, concurrent to the VII Biennial Regional Health Promotion and Education Workshop organized by the Cuban Ministries of Health and Education.