



PAN AMERICAN HEALTH ORGANIZATION  
WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION



## **48th DIRECTING COUNCIL**

### **60th SESSION OF THE REGIONAL COMMITTEE**

*Washington, D.C., USA, 29 September-3 October 2008*

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*Provisional Agenda Item 4.13*

CD48/17 (Eng.)

15 August 2008

ORIGINAL: SPANISH

### **REGIONAL CONTRIBUTION TO GLOBAL MINISTERIAL FORUM ON RESEARCH FOR HEALTH**

#### **Background**

1. According to the findings of a 2002 evaluation in the Americas, essential research for the development and application of innovative solutions in health is among the least developed of the 11 Essential Public Health Functions. The indicators that assessed capacities to plan public health research received particularly low scores in most countries (1).
2. Research is crucial for development, and for the improvement of equity and public health. Functional national health research systems are needed to enable countries to develop and improve public health, to address the gap between what is known and what is done, and to deliver innovative solutions that improve health and equity (2)(3). This is particularly relevant in low resource scenarios where every expenditure is important and resources cannot be wasted on ineffective or unsafe practices.
3. The Mexico Statement on Health Research about Knowledge for Better Health: strengthening health systems, issued during the Ministerial Summit on Research for Health in Mexico City in 2004, listed strategies and actions needed to bolster national health research systems that encompass country needs through the production and use of scientific research that informs decisions for health (4).

#### **Progress since the Mexico Ministerial Summit 2004**

4. The 58th World Health Assembly acknowledged the Mexico Statement and issued Resolution WHA58.34 urging interested parties to act. WHO has coordinated the response with its Global and Regional Advisory Committees on Health Research and

Regional Offices, including technical cooperation for the subjects mentioned in the Resolution (5).

5. The Pan-American Health Organization (PAHO) has coordinated the response to Resolution WHA58.34 in the Americas and aligned its technical cooperation and its expected results with WHO, as reflected in PAHO's Strategic Plan 2008-2012 (6).

6. Ministers of Health and other interested parties have made a commitment to strengthen national health research systems and develop strategies to improve the systematic use and scientific proof that informs decisions on equity and health. This is reflected in the Health Agenda for the Americas 2008-2017 (7), participation in discussions and consultations, and in the development of technical and Ministerial networks for this purpose. (8)

7. PAHO/WHO has organized and participated in regional consultations to draft the document *WHO Roles and Responsibilities in Health Research* and to prepare the WHO Research Strategy. PAHO/WHO and its Advisory Committee on Health Research are preparing a Research Policy for consultation and consideration of its Governing Bodies in 2009, which will complement WHO's Research Strategy.

8. Specific initiatives have been developed to boost public confidence in scientific research, increase access to published and unpublished research, facilitate the production and use of research material that informs health policies, strengthen national health research systems and research ethics, and make optimum use of scientific knowledge by tackling the unfinished agendas and preparing to face new challenges. Examples of initiatives made in response to this call include the development of the International Clinical Trials Registry Platform Search Portal, the regional implementation strategies (9)(10), the Evidence-Informed Policy Network for Clinical Trials – EVIPNet (11), the Evidence Portal (12), and the 1st Latin American Conference on Research and Innovation for Health (13).

9. Leaders in health and research, policy makers, and other interested parties participated in sub regional meetings to discuss strategies for strengthening national health research systems, human resources for health research, funding and other issues along with the use of existing alliances and available consultative and working bodies (14)(15).

10. To respond to this challenge, develop capacities, expertise, collaboration and regional networks, PAHO/WHO is aligning its technical cooperation with PAHO/WHO Collaborating centers, networks and strategic partners.

### **Regional Support for the Bamako Ministerial Forum 2008**

11. The Ministerial Forum on Research for Health to be held in Bamako, Mali, in November 2008 will serve as follow up to the Mexico Ministerial Summit. Participants in the Forum are therefore encouraged to take advantage of this opportunity to continue and follow up on the initiatives developed in response to the Mexico Statement, thereby protecting the achievements and emphasizing the commitments made in response to World Health Assembly Resolution WHA58.34, which is geared towards the strengthening of national health research systems.

12. In the context of an integrated primary health care strategy, the Ministerial Forum is an opportunity to issue a call to identify and tackle unfinished agendas, such as neglected diseases, the unachieved Millennium Development Goals, health inequities, the improvement of health systems, and the implementation of simple and effective strategies that will improve the quality of life of peoples and facilitate development.

13. The Ministerial Forum also is an opportunity to identify, prioritize, and respond to new challenges, such as preparedness for environmental changes, emerging diseases, use of new technologies and their unexpected effects, the setting of new standards, the appearance of ethical dilemmas, and the development of tools to monitor research and improve its governance and stewardship, as well as for developments in innovation and intellectual property, such as the Global Strategy and Plan of Action on Public Health, Innovation and Intellectual Property (16).

14. We believe that we must protect the significant achievements and progress of the past four years, supporting the initiatives put forward in response to World Health Assembly Resolution WHA58.34 (paragraph 9) and that we should continue to monitor and evaluate the development, implementation, and results of these initiatives.

15. We invite participation from the parties involved in the development and strengthening of national health research systems, especially in the health, science and technology, and education sectors, so that these sectors can put together integrated proposals that will strengthen health research.

16. We will continue to implement the proposals in the PAHO Strategic Plan 2008-2012 and the agreements reflected in the Health Agenda for the Americas 2008-2012 (6)(7). In this vein, the First Latin American Conference on Research and Innovation for Health underscored the need for collaboration to address common problems, including the need for the prioritization and management of health research that will be responsive to national and local needs and improve health and equity in Latin America. Regional cooperation touched on the Conference's four main lines of work: the development of

national health research systems; human resources to conduct health research; health research financing; and access to and development of products and innovation (13).

17. New challenges are attracting growing attention. For example: the need to coordinate and organize resources, initiatives, and agendas for health research; coordination with other sectors, such as science and technology or education; the response to climate changes and new political scenarios; the response to the countries' own cultural needs and realities when implementing and expanding research; increasing public confidence and social involvement in research; the need for basic, dependable instruments and data to monitor and strengthen research management; the creation of virtuous cycles in which research becomes an engine of development; the need to fund and coordinate the numerous opportunities and initiatives that are emerging because of the progress in health research and development.

18. A consultation has been organized that will involve different actors and will be extended to different forums and virtual meetings to enrich and complement the conclusions of the First Latin American Conference on Research and Innovation for Health, as well as the various international debates that have already taken place (13)(17). These consultations enriched regional support for the Bamako Ministerial Forum. The consultation is open online at <http://new.paho.org/bamako2008esp>.

## References

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- (2) WHO. World report on knowledge for better health. (Accessed 16 May 2008) Geneva: WHO; 2004. Available at: <http://www.who.int/rpc/meetings/wr2004/en/index13.html>.
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- (4) Ministerial Summit on Research for Health: the Mexico Statement on Health Research. Knowledge for better health: strengthening health systems. Mexico, DF, 16 to 20 November, 2004. (Accessed 16 May 2008) Available at: [http://www.who.int/rpc/summit/agenda/Mexico\\_Statement-English.pdf](http://www.who.int/rpc/summit/agenda/Mexico_Statement-English.pdf).
- (5) World Health Organization. World Health Assembly, Resolution WHA 58.34 Geneva: WHO; 2005 (Accessed 16 May 2008) Available at: [http://www.who.int/gb/ebwha/pdf\\_files/WHA58/WHA58\\_34-en.pdf](http://www.who.int/gb/ebwha/pdf_files/WHA58/WHA58_34-en.pdf).

- (6) Pan American Health Organization. Strategic Plan 2008-2012. Washington, DC: 2007. (Official Document 328) (Accessed 16 May 2008). Available at: <http://www.paho.org/english/gov/csp/od328-full-e.pdf>.
- (7) Pan American Health Organization. Health Agenda for the Americas 2008-2012. Presented by the Ministers of Health of the Americas in Panama City, June 2007. Washington, DC: 2007 (Accessed 16 May 2008). Available at: [http://www.paho.org/English/D/HAagenda\\_English.pdf](http://www.paho.org/English/D/HAagenda_English.pdf).
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- (9) International Clinical Trials Registry Platform (ICTRP) Search Portal (Accessed 5 July 2008). Available at: <http://www.who.int/trialsearch/>.
- (10) Latin American and Caribbean Center on Health Sciences Information, Pan-American Health Organization. Clinical Trials Registry Platform for Latin America and the Caribbean, Version 7.0 (Accessed 5 July 2008). Available at: <http://regional.bvsalud.org:8070/reddes/documentacao-dos-proyectos/clinical-trials-1/draft-reports/vision-report-0.7/vision-report-0-7-pdf>.
- (11) Evidence Informed Policy Network for Better Decision Making – EVIPNet (Accessed 6 July 2008). Available at: <http://www.who.int/rpc/evipnet/en/>.
- (12) Virtual Health Library, Evidence Portal (Accessed 6 July 2008). Available at: <http://evidencias.bvsalud.org/php/index.php?lang=en>.
- (13) 1st Latin American Conference on Research and Innovation for Health (Accessed 5 July 2008). Available at: <http://www.cohred.org/main/healthresearch/latinamerica.php>.
- (14) Newsletter – Press release 1st Latin American Conference on Research and Innovation for Health. 16-18 April 2008, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. [http://www.globalforumhealth.org/Site/002\\_What%20we%20do/003\\_Arrange%20gatherings/011\\_First%20Latin%20American%20Conference%20.php](http://www.globalforumhealth.org/Site/002_What%20we%20do/003_Arrange%20gatherings/011_First%20Latin%20American%20Conference%20.php).
- (15) Newsletter – PAHO. PAHO working to improve public health, equity, and health systems at the 42nd Session of the Advisory Committee on Health Research (ACHR/CAIS)/Director of the Pan American Health Organization opens the 1st Latin American Conference in Research and Innovation for Health. [http://www.paho.org/English/D/D\\_NewsletterI1008.asp](http://www.paho.org/English/D/D_NewsletterI1008.asp).

- (16) 61st World Health Assembly – World Health Organization. Global Strategy and Plan of Action on Public Health, Innovation and Intellectual Property. Latin American and Caribbean Center on Health Sciences Information 24 May 2008. Document WHA 61.21 (Accessed 8 July 2008). Available at: [http://www.who.int/gb/s/s\\_wha61.html](http://www.who.int/gb/s/s_wha61.html)
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Annex



PAN AMERICAN HEALTH ORGANIZATION  
*Pan American Sanitary Bureau, Regional Office of the*  
WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION

CD48/17 (Eng.)  
Annex

**ANALYTICAL FORM TO LINK AGENDA ITEM WITH ORGANIZATIONAL AREAS**

**1. Agenda Item:** 4.13

**2. Agenda Title:** Regional Contribution to Global Ministerial Forum on Research for Health

**3. Responsible Unit:** THR/RP

**4. Preparing Officer:** Luis Gabriel Cuervo

**5. List of collaborating centers and national institutions linked to this Agenda item:**

THR/RP has coordinated the activity, which is part of the contributions to the Global Ministerial Forum on Research for Health, organized by the World Bank, the Council on Health Research for Development (COHRED), the Global Forum for Health Research, the World Health Organization, the Republic of Mali, and UNESCO.

Numerous networks, institutions, and individuals have been invited to join the consultative process, including:

- Cátedra UNESCO

Al proceso de consulta se han invitado numerosas redes, instituciones e individuos, incluyendo;

- Cátedra UNESCO
- Cochrane Collaboration: Red Cochrane Iberoamericana; US Cochrane Center, Canadian Cochrane Center, Centro Cochrane do Brasil
- PAHO's Advisory Committee on Health Research and the members of the GlobalACHR from that region.
- Ethics in Research: Bioethics Program, Regional FLACEIS networks, Collaborating Center in Ethics Miami, Toronto, and Santiago
- FLACSO
- Health Canada (by direct request)
- International Clinical Epidemiology Network – Inclen y LatInclen
- LILACS / BIREME
- Listserve Investigación and Listserv Equidad
- Participants from the 1st Ibero-American Conference on Health Research and Innovation
- RIMAI
- Salud
- SCIENTI

**Pending completion:**

- Collaborating Centers (in the Americas): email sent to Mathias Tuler
- Organization of American States (identification of focal point pending)
- Registered participants (receipt of list from the Secretariat in Bamako pending)
- UNESCO (identification of focal point pending; I wrote to the Secretariat requesting the name)
- World Bank (identification of focal point pending)

**6. Link between Agenda item and Health Agenda of the Americas:**

Especially with section *G) Harnessing Knowledge, Science, and Technology*, which deals with the strengthening of capacities to use and conduct research that addresses the needs of the countries and promotes equity in health and development.

### **7. Link between Agenda item and Strategic Plan 2008-2012:**

Strategic Objective 11: Strengthen leadership, governance, and the evidence base of health systems.

### **8. Best practices in this area and examples from other countries within AMRO:**

Consultative exercises similar to this regional contribution have been conducted in other WHO regions

[http://www.bamako2008.org/index.php?option=com\\_content&task=view&id=24&Itemid=38](http://www.bamako2008.org/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=24&Itemid=38)

The Forum includes follow up to:

The Ministerial Forum on Research for Health. **Mexico Statement on Health Research.** Knowledge for better health: strengthening health systems. Mexico, DF, 16 to 20 November, 2004. (Accessed 16 May 2008) Available at: [http://www.who.int/rpc/summit/agenda/Mexico\\_Statement-English.pdf](http://www.who.int/rpc/summit/agenda/Mexico_Statement-English.pdf)

World Health Organization. World Health Assembly, Resolution WHA 58.34 Geneva: WHO; 2005 (Accessed 16 May 2008) Available at: [http://www.who.int/gb/ebwha/pdf\\_files/WHA58/WHA58\\_34-en.pdf](http://www.who.int/gb/ebwha/pdf_files/WHA58/WHA58_34-en.pdf)

A website has been created for consultation: : <http://new.paho.org/bamako2008.esp>

The **1st Latin American Conference on Research and Innovation for Health** was held in April 2008, [http://www.cohred.org/main/healthresearchlatinamerica\\_spanish.php](http://www.cohred.org/main/healthresearchlatinamerica_spanish.php), and its report will be published in September 2008

61st World Health Assembly, World Health Organization. **Global Strategy and Plan of Action on Public Health, Innovation and Intellectual Property.** 24 May 2008. Document WHA 61.21 (Accessed 8 July 2008). Available at: [http://www.who.int/gb/s/s\\_wha61.html](http://www.who.int/gb/s/s_wha61.html)

### **9. Financial implications of Agenda item:**

Capacity building in research and innovation has been associated with greater development and ability to improve the health status of populations. In the opening sessions of the 1st Latin American Conference on Research and Innovation for Health it was illustrated how support for research can be a good investment and an opportunity to provide the country with low-cost strategic inputs with a positive impact on the balance of trade.

The recommendations of the Commission for Health Research for Development in 1990 have been reiterated in different forums since then; the recommendations include developing sustainable capacity to conduct essential national health research, working with strategic partners, mobilizing resources (for example, the countries should invest at least 2% of their national budget in research and the strengthening of research capabilities and should allocate at least 5% of the assistance for health sector projects and programs from international aid agencies for research and the strengthening of research capabilities), and creating forums for review and advocacy.

\*Commission on Health Research for Development. **Health Research: essential link to equity in development.** Oxford University Press. New York. 1990. Available at: <http://www.cohred.org/Assests/PDF/Papers/ComReports.pdf>.