53% DECLINE IN CHILD DEATHS FROM VACCINE-PREVENTABLE DISEASES

19 COUNTRIES LEGALLY RECOGNIZE THE RIGHT TO HEALTH

49% DECLINE IN MALARIA CASES

61% DROP IN TB MORTALITY

47.5% OF THE POPULATION PROTECTED FROM SECOND-HAND SMOKE

92.5% OF BIRTHS ATTENDED BY SKILLED PERSONNEL

33 COUNTRIES USE THE PAHO HOSPITAL SAFETY INDEX

SELECTED RESULTS OF THE PAHO STRATEGIC PLAN 2008-2013
The countries of the Americas have made important health progress in recent years in collaboration with the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO), Regional Office of the World Health Organization (WHO). Here we present highlights of that progress as reflected in key indicators drawn from the PAHO Strategic Plan 2008-2013, the first results-based strategic plan in PAHO’s history.

These results provide concrete evidence of the effectiveness of public health actions carried out by member countries with PAHO technical cooperation. But it is important to remember that behind the numbers are people: boys and girls, women and men throughout the Americas who enjoy longer, healthier and more productive lives thanks to public health efforts.

We at PAHO take pride in these accomplishments and satisfaction in knowing that our work benefits individuals, families and communities throughout our hemisphere. We invite our partners and stakeholders to continue working with us to protect these achievements, bridge persisting gaps and reach new health goals in the coming years.

Dr. Carissa F. Etienne
Director
Pan American Health Organization
PAHO member countries have made important gains in improving the health and well-being of people throughout the Americas—fighting disease, responding to emergencies and disasters, improving access to and quality of health services, and addressing important social determinants of health. In many countries or regionwide:

- Child mortality has declined
- Diseases have been eliminated
- Water and sanitation have improved
- Health coverage has expanded
- The health workforce has grown
- Public spending for health has increased

PAHO member countries have reduced the health, social and economic burden of communicable diseases, including HIV and tuberculosis, vaccine-preventable diseases that contribute to child deaths, vector-borne diseases such as malaria and dengue, and neglected tropical diseases such as leprosy, Chagas disease and onchocerciasis.
Childhood deaths from vaccine-preventable diseases declined 53% from 2002 to 2012. All the region’s countries maintained their status of having eradicated polio.

Malaria cases declined 49% between 2006 and 2012, with average yearly reductions of 16% in 2012 and 2013.

Tuberculosis incidence declined more than 25% between 2005 and 2012, from 39 to 29 cases per 100,000. Compared with 1990, prevalence of TB was down 62% and TB deaths were down 61% in 2012.

The incidence of HIV infections declined from 16.9 to 15 per 100,000 between 2006 and 2012. By 2012, 75% of HIV/AIDS patients had access to antiretroviral treatment, up from 72% in 2006.

Nineteen countries reported mother-to-child transmission of HIV of less than 5%, and by 2012, 13 countries had met the elimination target for congenital syphilis of fewer than .05 cases per 1,000 live births.

Eighteen of the region's countries eliminated leprosy, 17 eliminated human rabies transmitted by dogs, and 17 interrupted vector-borne transmission of Chagas disease. In 2013, Colombia became the world's first country to eliminate onchocerciasis, also known as “river blindness.”

Colombia became the world's first country to eliminate onchocerciasis.

19 countries have mother-to-child HIV transmission of less than 5%
Countries stepped up efforts to tackle the rising burden of noncommunicable diseases (NCDs) such as cancer, cardiovascular disease and diabetes and to address their major risk factors: tobacco and alcohol use, physical inactivity and unhealthy diet.
Achievements

Premature mortality (among people ages 30 to 69) from the four major groups of noncommunicable diseases (NCDs) declined 16.1% from 2000 to 2010.

Seventeen countries now have 100% smoke-free policies in enclosed public places, workplaces and public transportation, protecting 47.5% of the population of the Americas from second-hand smoke. Thirteen countries have comprehensive bans on tobacco advertising, promotion and sponsorship.

Six countries use taxes to reduce tobacco use, and two approved the use of tobacco tax revenues to finance public health action.

Important progress was also made in nutrition, food safety, and food security policies and programs.

Thirty-five countries now have surveillance data on NCD deaths, 28 countries report on disabilities, and 11 have national disease registries on cancer, stroke or diabetes. In addition, 21 countries have mental health information systems.

Twenty-five countries have adopted Pan Am STEPS studies on NCD risk factors or have aligned with its surveillance system, and 27 countries participate in the Global School Health Survey.

Seventeen countries have 100% smoke-free policies of the population protected from second-hand smoke.

Four countries use taxes to reduce tobacco use.

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Important progress was also made in nutrition, food safety, and food security policies and programs.
Countries continued to advance in reducing illness and deaths and improving health throughout the life course, including sexual and reproductive health, and child, adolescent and elderly health.
By 2013, 92.5% of births in Latin America and the Caribbean were attended by skilled personnel.

Nearly all countries in the Americas reported child (under age 5) mortality of less than 32.1 per 1,000 live births. Based on progress so far, the region is expected to achieve Millennium Development Goal 4.

By 2013, 19 countries and territories had contraceptive prevalence rates above 60%, compared with only 13 countries in 2006. Eight countries have programs for adolescent and youth health and development, and 22 have comprehensive norms and standards for care of this age group.

The proportion of underweight children fell 81%, from 7.5% in 2002 to 1.4% in 2010. The proportion of stunted children fell 37%, from 11.8% to 7.4%. Thirty countries have adopted the new WHO Child Growth Standards.

More than 20 countries are implementing strategies and programs to promote breastfeeding, prevent micronutrient deficiencies and promote healthy eating and lifestyles.

Eighteen countries have programs that work across sectors and in the community to address healthy aging.

Sixteen countries now have policies on universal access to sexual and reproductive health, and 20 have comprehensive strategies for reproductive health.

19 countries and territories had contraceptive prevalence rates above 60%

81% decline in proportion of underweight children

20 countries have strategies to promote breastfeeding

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EMERGENCY AND DISASTER PREPAREDNESS

The countries of the Americas have strengthened their preparedness and today are able to respond to most disasters and emergencies without international assistance. Countries continue to make progress in disaster preparedness and response in the health sector, with PAHO support.
Achievements

Daily mortality during major disasters was below 1 per 10,000 in the initial response phase in all emergencies assessed by PAHO during 2008-2013.

PAHO responded to all emergencies within 24 hours of requests received from its member countries, including major disasters such as the 2010 earthquakes in Haiti and Chile.

All health networks were operational within one month following disasters in PAHO member countries between 2008 and 2013.

By 2013, more than 2,900 health facilities were using PAHO's Hospital Safety Index in 33 countries and territories, most of which were implementing corrective measures in priority facilities to make them safer in disasters.

The Hospital Safety Index is also being used by more than 20 countries in other WHO regions to assess health facilities' safety.

In 2012, PAHO established a new Emergency Operations Center (EOC) to strengthen its coordinating role in emergencies and disasters.

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2,900 health facilities have applied the Hospital Safety Index

33 countries in the Americas are using the Hospital Safety Index

>20 countries in other WHO regions are using the Hospital Safety Index
Countries have made important strides in tackling the underlying social and economic determinants of health through policies and plans focused on health equity, gender and human rights and through intersectoral action to promote healthier environments.
Thirty-three countries are implementing plans to advance gender equity in the health sector. Eighteen countries—double the number in 2007—are using human rights based approaches to reduce barriers to health.

Sixteen countries are implementing policies and programs to improve the health of specific ethnic or racial groups.

The number of countries implementing national plans on workers’ health doubled between 2007 and 2013, from 10 to 20.

Regionwide, 97% of the population has access to improved drinking water. This follows increases from 95% to 97% in urban areas and from 69% to 82% in rural areas between 2002 and 2011. Twenty-five countries are implementing water safety plans, and 15 have laws that include the right to water.

Access to improved sanitation in urban areas increased from 84% in 2002 to 94% in 2011, and in rural areas from 44% to 62%, leading to overall sanitation coverage regionwide of 88%.

Twenty countries have a legal framework for pesticide use, and 10 have national programs on air quality.
Countries strengthened their health systems and expanded access to care through policies, legislation and regulation and by developing and implementing strategies and plans for accessible, comprehensive and people-centered health care.
Public spending on health as a percentage of GDP in the Americas grew from 3.1% in 2006 to 4.1% in 2010 but declined slightly to 3.8% in 2011.

Regionwide, the proportion of the population covered by a social protection scheme grew from 46% in 2003 to 60% in 2013. Eight countries have policies or mechanisms to reduce the risk of financial hardship from disease and injury.

Nineteen countries have incorporated the right to health in their constitutions or in national health legislation. Fifteen countries and territories have laws aimed at increasing access to health care.

Thirty-one countries and territories have strengthened their primary health care systems. Health reform initiatives have included commitments to expand health coverage.

In 2013, 25 countries had the recommended health workforce density of at least 25 per 10,000 inhabitants, compared with 12 countries with the recommended density in 2006.

Fifteen countries implemented processes to improve the quality and coverage of their health information systems. Thirteen countries strengthened mechanisms for ensuring quality, safety and efficacy of health technologies.
PAHO engages in partnerships with the public and private sectors and other organizations to extend the reach of its technical cooperation.

In addition to its core budget, financed by quota contributions from Member States, PAHO also mobilizes resources from partners to implement programs that respond to the collective needs and priorities of the countries of the region.

The countries of the Americas have achieved meaningful progress in public health in recent years, yet significant challenges remain. These include reducing maternal mortality, expanding access to health care, and bridging gaps in health equity, among others.

PAHO is committed to collaborating with its member countries and partner organizations to overcome these and many other challenges while protecting important achievements already made.
