Instructions:

Template to be completed by the **Staff member**.
Complete one set (up to 4 tables) per activity. The complete set for each activity should not exceed two pages. Use the tables in the template provided below. If you need to provide additional information, such as graphs, tables, reports, please do so as an attachment. The essential information, however, should be included in the summary.

Table 1: Activities Undertaken in 2010-2011. **Briefly** please describe main events and outputs (e.g. workshop, publication with indicators [metrics and/or qualitative] showing the trend in activity). Describe the main outcome/impact of the activity.

Table 2: Activities Planned for 2012-2013. Provide a **brief** description of main activities planned and the intended outcome/impact of undertaking those activities.

Table 3: Future Developments. Indicate the longer term objectives of your program and if appropriate include other key players. Indicate the challenges (dependencies and/or constraints) and opportunities to achieving the goals of your program.

Table 4: Key issues. List up to three issues, and for each indicate whether they are intended for ACHR/CAIS information, discussion, or decision..

The table below is provided to assist you in completing the information requested in the template that follows.

	PAHO Policy on Research for Health
	(a) Promote the generation of relevant, ethical, and high quality research
	(b) Strengthen research governance and promote the definition of research agendas
	(c)Improve competencies and support for human resources involved in research
	(d) Seek efficiencies, enhanced impact, and ownership of research
	(e) Foster best practices and enhanced standards
	(f) Promote dissemination of and utilization of findings

Quality

Activity: Quality
Policy Goal: Promote the generation of relevant, ethical, high-quality research
Staff member: Luis Gabriel Cuervo

Table 1. Headline Activities Undertaken in 2011-2012		
1.1 PASB will develop tools to register and systematically follow the research projects it sponsors, produces, funds or conducts, and to measure how well these projects align with country priorities;		
Events/Outputs	Outcomes/Impacts	Comments/Additional Information
PAHO's Research Registry is functional and there is a requirement to register all research	Compliance for research registration needs consistent adherence. In addition to advocacy there is a need to address the integration of the use of the research into administrative processes in HQ and country offices, and to provide visible added value (e.g. reports to entities about their research outputs, investment and capacity).	Funding to monitor and evaluate research at PAHO is needed to get the baseline evaluation completed and to set up automatic reporting system from the registry so that entities are regularly receiving key indicators of their research; Fragmentation of the registry's management; engagement of key partners and entities to promote adherence requires resources.
On-going collaboration with COHRED seeking to integrate research registries in ICTRP and HRWeb	Preparing to provide a single entry point for health systems governance that allows gathering information about clinical trials and others sources of information (http://www.healthresearchweb.org/en/americas/projects)	Integration requires collaboration between COHRED, ICTRP and other potential partners (BIREME/Cochrane, PROSPERO). Funding would need to be mobilized for this project
Health Systems Evidence integrated into BIREME's virtual health libraries (http://bireme.br)	Paperwork nearly completed, will allow consulting health systems evidence from the Evidence Portal increasing the visibility and access of this database specialized in health systems research and evidence for policies for health.	The agreement is included as an annex to the MoU that PAHO and McMaster have that will be extended
PROSPERO database of systematic reviews.	Access to an organized collection of registered protocols and completed systematic reviews. Many relevant SRs for evidence to policy are indexed in Health Systems Evidence and the Cochrane Library, both accessible to most of the region.	We have been following this closely and staying in contact as it grows, to promote it and determine how it will integrate with Cochrane's Database –to which PAHO already offers access through BIREME to most countries in the Americas.
1.2 use available tools to systematically assess the public health research needs and those of its own technical areas and prioritize specific lines of research integrating cross-cutting issues, priority issues such as health systems research, research that tackles the neglected diseases in the Americas, and primary and secondary research for health technology evaluation and public health;		
Events/Outputs	Outcomes/Impacts	Comments/Additional Information
Technical areas have worked on prioritization.	A novel exercise was done to move from priorities to specific research questions of importance to achieve MDG 5. This included identifying open questions from systematic reviews and working with experts to prioritise those most likely to impact on achieving MDG 5: the findings and methods are in publication stage.	Chapman E, Reveiz L, Chambliss A, Sangalang S, Bonfill X. **Cochrane systematic reviews are useful to map research gaps for decreasing maternal mortality**. Journal of Clinical Epidemiology - (2012) – Accepted, embargoed. Chapman E, Reveiz L, Sangalang S, Manu C, Bonfill X, Muñoz S. **Global research priorities for decreasing maternal mortality: an international Delphi-like study**. In editorial review.

Priorities set up by Member States mapped and organized	http://www.healthresearchweb.org/en/national_priorities_for_health_research The Latin American Conferences on Research and Innovation for Health have been an occasion to update and expand this information and to revamp the commitment and engagement to keep the information up to date. Key elements highlighted in Health in the Americas 2012	Reveiz L, Elias V. Comparing national health research priorities setting methods and characteristics in Latin America and the Caribbean countries. Editorial review. Alger J, Becerra-Posada F, Kennedy A, Martinelli E, Cuervo LG, Grupo Colaborativo de la Primera Conferencia Latinoamericana de Investigación e Innovación para la Salud. Sistemas nacionales de investigación para la salud en América Latina: una revisión de 14 países. [National health research systems in Latin America: a 14-country review]. Rev Panam Salud Publica. 2009;26(5):447–57.
Mandates and policies scanned to identify priority topics and areas for research	In preparation for the development of the strategy on research for health, PAHO staff scanned mandates to identify research related topics.	
Response to technical cooperation on priority areas requested by sub-regional and country offices	Contributions to the expert working group on Chronic Renal Disease of Unknown origin as per request from ELS and other countries in Central America. COMISCA, PAHO, COHRED and other agencies discuss proposals to implement PAHO's Policy with a regional approach for Central America and Dominican Republic http://www.sicasalud.net/node/612 and address priority areas	

1.3. develop incentives to support research activities that address the research priorities of the Region and Member States, while building skills and generating capacities that strengthen national health research systems;

Events/Outputs	Outcomes/Impacts	Comments/Additional Information
Identification of research needs in EVIPNet Americas country teams	Funding remains an issue. Research needs have been identified in the development of evidence summaries for policy.	See report of EVIPNet by Evelina Chapman in the Annexes section.
Re-establishing the grants programme.	Grants programme stays closed. Funding agencies approached and work needs to be done with PAHO's External Relations and Partnerships office. Applications (2) to the 7th Framework Programme of the European Union were turned down. Information about grants applications regularly disseminated on different media.	Bringing partners to the table to fund research proposals requires building the support from internal and external partners, and dedicated coordination. A grants program generates incentives for research in priority areas.
Cochrane – PAHO award for systematic reviews relevant to public health, equity, and health systems research	The prize was last awarded in 2011; a new call will be issued for 2013.	
Work with strategic partners to promote grants in key topics, and partnerships to advance research	Participation in the advisory board of EU-LAC Health, a project sponsored by the 7th Framework Programme of the European Union to promote the development of partnerships and research between Europe and LatinAmerica. Scoping meeting held in Rio de Janeiro (2012) with support from FioCruz. PAHO supported a successful application by the Universidad de Barcelona to Erasmus Mundus to establish a research network on reducing perinatal mortality. The project is beginning now and links are being proposed with EU-LAC Health. The NIH-NCI/Ministry of Health of Colombia workshop for Latin America and the Caribbean aimed to promote successful application to NIH grants for researchers from Latin America, including some working on priority topics such as renal disease	

Quality

TDR supports research in LAC through a focal point coordinating research activities	Supports research proposals on neglected tropical diseases, capacity building including EPPES training	Integration into research management coordination.

1.4 support Member States in the development of strategies to identify and periodically review and assess their own research priorities, and provide technical cooperation aimed at identifying and resolving knowledge gaps in key areas

Events/Outputs	Outcomes/Impacts	Comments/Additional Information
Collaboration with COHRED; 2nd Latin American Conference on Research and Innovation for Health	Updated information about national health research systems in Latin America and the Caribbean. Report of the Conference published and available at www.paho.org/researchportal/nhrs	Same references as 1.2 on research priorities and EVIPNet report.
An analysis of the policies and priorities on research for health conducted at PAHO regional office	In preparing the working document of the Strategy, policies at PAHO were scanned to identify research components. The analysis about PAHO's own research needs to be completed	
Advocacy about tools to do this done by partners (COHRED) and PAHO	Hi level advocacy has taken place at international and high level events to promote the use of tools to identify and review research priorities. Examples: Latin American Conferences on Research & Innovation for Health, Global Forum 2012, COMISCA meetings, EULAC Health, Grants writing workshop for Central America and the Andean Region organized by NIH-NCI/Ministry of Health of Colombia, with support from PAHO.	

1.5 assist Member States, international organizations, and other partners in the development and deployment of appropriate tools and indicators to monitor research capacities and production, adherence to standards and good practices, and, where possible, public health impact of the research conducted with the participation of Member States.

Events/Outputs	Outcomes/Impacts	Comments/Additional Information
International Clinical Trial Registry Platform functional and growing	An updated report of clinical trial registration is being prepared for publication. Clinical trial registration has grown significantly in the region as documented in the previous report.	15 data providers (3 from the Americas)
Work with key partners such as EQUATOR and Cochrane to enhance standards for research reporting and to facilitate assessments of equity issues in systematic reviews	On-going work; activities planned for the 9th CRICS include training and further engagement of regional experts in publications standard development. EQUATOR Symposium October 2012 with PAHO presenting challenges for low and middle income countries. PRISMA Equity extension done with contributions from PAHO Staff provides guidance on how to report systematic reviews including elements that enable analysis of equity issues. Webinars and capacity building activities scheduled with WHO-CC at McMaster University seeking to enhance the standards of guidelines and technical recommendations at PASB and in countries.	PRISMA Equity extension due for publication in PLoS in October 2012; the process and methodology were presented at the 2012 Cochrane Colloquium and have been widely disseminated. PAHO has translated guidelines on how to publish PAHO/WHO guidelines, and conducted a baseline assessment. Re-assessment likely to be presented in 2013
PAHOERC's Secretariat continues supporting the development of ethical research	Software for research ethics review is being developed in collaboration with the Pontificia Universidad Católica de Paraná (Brazil), to be offered to all ethics review committees in the region to help increase the quality and accountability of ethics review. A network of over 1200 ethics review committees in LAC has been established through list "investigacionETICA." Translation to Spanish in process and dissemination of English versions of WHO-developed research ethics material (*Casebook on Ethical Issues in International Health Research, Standards and Operational Guidance for Ethics Review of Health-Related Research*	Concept paper "Bioethics: Towards the Integration of Ethics in Health" with accompanying resolution approved in 2012 Pan American Sanitary Conference: http://new.paho.org/hq/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=7022&Itemid=39541&lang=en

Quality

	with Human Participants)	
	An assessment of 12 years of research ethics training in LAC conducted with Fogarty funds (i.e. most significant research ethics training projects in the region), including an evaluation of regional achievements and assessment of needs and challenges is being completed in cooperation with the training programs.	
PAHOERC screens and reviews research proposals in which PAHO is involved.	Significant improvements in the Committee's performance: Review process averaged 17 days in 2011. Due to continuous support from PAHOERC Secretariat to research teams, approval rates went up from 18% to 41%, and non-approvals went down from 54% to 18% of proposals. With the goal of increasing adherence to the ethics review requirement, two workshops for PAHO staff clarified the distinction between public health research and non-research. PAHOERC SOPs are being revised.	PAHOERC 2011 report submitted to the Director in January 2012.

Table 2. Headline Activities Planned for 2012-2013		
Event/Output	**Intended Outcome/Impact**	**Comments/Additional Information**
An evaluation of adherence to clinical trial registration by publishers, and of the trends for clinical trial registration are being prepared.	An analysis of compliance with the requirement for clinical trial registration for publication. An analysis of the trend of clinical trial registration and a map of registered clinical trials by country.	During live demonstrations participants consistently express that ICTRP appeals as a valuable tool for research governance and regulation in countries.
Work with regulatory authorities to promote trial registration		Develop a joint HTA/Research approach and link the relevant databases for consistency and minimization of duplication
Work with national funding bodies including science & technology institutions, to promote registration of research and adherence to clinical trial registration.	Promoting that all research is registered in openly accessible databases starting with all publicly funded research, and that clinical trial registries are captured by ICTRP.	
Integration of ICTRP with HRWeb and the Regional Platform on Access and Innovation for Health Technologies (www.paho.org/prais)	Building on existing resources and simplifying access to end users. Enabling access to research registries from any access point and streamlining managerial processes.	Conversations with the team producing health analysis information to establish cross links between platforms that enable accessing health indicators from the research sections and HRWeb, and vice versa.
Partnership with WHO Collaborating Center at University of British Columbia to explore the use of complex systems analysis in issues such as evaluations of health systems.	An exploratory meeting held with a group of experts in September 2012.	Complex systems analysis may provide tools to better understand health and health research systems, and the effects of interventions.
A regional clinical trial registry for the region.	Viability, maintenance and resourcing need to be sorted out to develop such a regional platform probably hosted in BIREME	Might contribute to equitable access and standardization to registration focusing country resources in compliance/legislation.
3rd Latin American Conference on Research & Innovation for Health	TBC with partners and used to update and expand the descriptors and indicators for national health research systems.	Resource mobilization needed.
Establish systematic periodic reports of research activities at PAHO	Requires adjustments to the system and resourcing the periodic reporting to PAHO entities	Managers and the exec will be able to report on their investment and achievements in terms of research contributions and capacities
Parties interested in info about	Integration of the relevant platforms and	

Quality

Table 2. Headline Activities Planned for 2012-2013		
national health research systems and evidence for policies for health can access relevant information at a single entry point	databases in collaboration with strategic partners	

Table 3. Future Developments		
Objectives	Challenges/Opportunities	Comments/Additional Information
Update and enhance indicators of scientific production and capacities: agreements and work plans with BIREME, RICyT	RICyT and BIREME have capacities and experience; need to harmonize standards for assessment	May require MoU's and LoA's including resource mobilization to set up adequate sustainable monitoring and evaluation systems.
Develop a network of research institutions and partnerships to promote health systems research		Securing resources to participate and network at the events where these debates and networking takes place.
Developing a cadre of MPHs from the region with skills to advance key elements of PAHO's Policy on Resarch for Health	Develop a network of MPH programs in the region where knowledge translation strategies promoted by PAHO, and standards become integral to the training programs.	Preliminary conversations have resulted in several universities expressing interest; one has already submitted a draft of terms of reference for a MoU. These universities participate in EVIPNet, offering a lab to practice.
Monitoring of standards of research publications	Bireme, Pan American Journal of Public Health, PAHO promote and monitor adherence to standards as agreed with VHLs/LILACS/SCIELO.	Key to Engagement of leaders from the region in influential committees monitoring and implementing research publication standards
Raise the standards of ethical review in the region	Use existing maps and agreements to work with ethics review networks and committees in raising the standards of review, and establishing accreditation processes where needed.	Limited evidence (assessment from proposals submitted to PAHO with approval of local (and sponsors) ethic review committees) suggests that the standards for ethical review vary significantly and needs to be raised.
3rd Global Symposium o health systems research	Seek a substantial participation from the region	

Table 4. Key Issues	Indicate if information is provided for Information, Discussion or Decision
1. Integration of platforms and databases	How to better integrate existing and developing databases providing access to key information about national health research systems, and evidence for policies for health.
2. How to better use influence and existing resources to engage funding agencies and research sponsors in addressing regional and country priorities? Is it possible (and how) to achieve harmonization and collaboration given the different agendas and needs of development agencies and donors?	
3. What options should be considered in promoting research governance and coordination at PAHO? Does the location of the coordinating entities matter? What outputs add value to managers and leaders in organizations promoting adherence and supporting research management and coordination?	
4. What contributions are more likely to enhance influence and promote engagement in defining research agendas and standards for quality research?	In the face of cuts, how can we better position the organization to lead and influence the research and research strengthening agendas.
5. What approaches may work better to engage key partners in raising the standards of research ethics (including methodology) reviews in LAC?	3 WHO-CCs in the region offering training but accreditation needs to be complemented with monitoring and evaluation to assess change, and with the database of ethics review committees to ensure adequate coverage.

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