

## International meeting of countries that are facing leptospirosis outbreaks in the Americas

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### Experiences in Human Leptospirosis in the Dominican Republic

*Dr. Emilia Peña, General Directorate of Epidemiological Surveillance, Ministry of Health/Dominican Republic*

During her presentation Dr. Peña referred to the history of leptospirosis in the country, explaining chronologically the experiences that included: the mandatory reporting of diseases, establishment of standards for monitoring and control, surveillance of febrile syndromes, the regulation of the SINAVE and the establishment of a rapid response team. She described the experience of the first outbreak of leptospirosis that occurred in 2007. The outbreak was due to climatic events with high fatality rates and the main transmission mechanism was contact with soil, water or vegetation (through wounds or lacerations in the skin) that were contaminated with urine of infected animals. She also explained that the strategy for controlling the outbreak included antibiotic therapy in high-risk areas. She showed the rates of leptospirosis cases per week, years and provinces. The map had risk stratification by provinces and her and her team conducted an analysis according to the epidemiological variables and presented contingency plans for outbreaks, because they do not have a plan or a national program to make a more effective control of the pathogenesis and serovars identified until now.

She explained the importance of ecosystem changes, variations and climate change, as well as demographic and economic factors as drivers that favor the transmission of leptospirosis. To conclude she described the experience of the last outbreak that occurred in the region called "El Salado" in 2009. She stated that the lack of piped water is a determinant factor for the spread of the disease and the serovars found in animals and humans.