PAHO/WHO Collaborating Centres: Celebrating the Achievement of Our Common Goals

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COVID-19 in the Americas: the role of collaborating centers in understanding lessons and best practices in pandemic preparedness and response

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Overview of Article
Regional bodies can and should play critical roles in supporting outbreak preparedness and response

▪ O’Neill Institute – Center for Transformational Health Law – Hosted (global and regional) convenings to discuss the weaknesses and persisting gaps in global pandemic preparedness and inform the creating of a new international pandemic instrument

▪ Based on the findings of these convenings, this paper discussed Gaps in Current Response and Preparedness Mechanisms, and Role of PAHO in Addressing these Gaps

▪ Paper examines both the solutions provided by PAHO during the pandemic, and the important role for the Organization in building sustainable and resilient global health systems in the future
Conclusions/results?

- **Gaps in Current Response and Preparedness Mechanisms**
  - Gaps in Technical Capacity at the Country Level
    - Challenges in *training experts* at the local levels
    - Testing capacity
    - Gap in *communications* capacity
  - Gaps in *Information technology* Infrastructure
  - Gaps in Coordination

- **Role of PAHO in Addressing these Gaps**
  - Standard-Setting
    - Developing and changing national-level policies
    - Promoting evidence-based best practices, and
    - Providing direct technical support to governments
  - Regional Efforts *to Increase Vaccine Access*
How does this activity support the Organization's goals and mandates?

• Collaborating Centers, like the Institute, can assist in fulfilling the essential surveillance and evaluation functions

• Uses O’Neill’s access to academic resources and expertise in law & policy surveillance

• Recent publications/projects:
  • First comprehensive analysis of vaccine development agreements entered into by CEPI
  • Legal Tools for Pandemic Preparedness [Nov. 2021]; Advancing a World Together Equitably [Feb 2023]; National Sovereignty Implications of a Pandemic Instrument [July 2022]

• During COVID-19, the Institute supported PAHO by:
  • Developing resource materials on strengthening health systems
  • Providing technical advice on Pandemic Legal Preparedness
  • Developing a framework for health governance in the Americas