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PLAN OF ACTION FOR STRENGTHENING OF VITAL AND HEALTH STATISTICS

Introduction

1. This document presents a proposal for a Plan of Action for Strengthening Vital and Health Statistics (PVEVS, for its Spanish acronym) as essential components of health information systems. The plan highlights the need for PAHO to provide technical cooperation to the countries to improve the quality and coverage of vital and health statistics; promote horizontal cooperation; establish a mechanism for collaboration between areas of the Organization; and coordinate activities with other international agencies and actors working to strengthen the health information systems of the countries of the Region.

Background

2. The PFEVS is the operative expression of the Strategy for Strengthening Vital and Health Statistics in the Countries of the Americas (EFEVS, for its Spanish acronym) approved by the 27th Pan American Sanitary Conference in October 2007 (Resolution CSP27.R12), based on the document of the same name (CSP27/13), which reports on the situation in the countries and proposes the steps to follow in the design the Plan of Action presented at this Session.¹ This document presents evidence, based on the responses of the countries to Guidelines for Analysis,² the results of which are presented in Country

¹ For further details see <http://www.paho.org/english/gov/csp/csp27.r12-e.pdf> and <http://www.paho.org/english/gov/csp/csp27-13-e.pdf> respectively and their immediate antecedent, the 140th Session of the Executive Committee, held in June 2007 <http://www.paho.org/english/gov/ce/ce140-15-e.pdf>.

² *Guía para el análisis de las estadísticas vitales, de morbilidad y recursos de salud. Documento General* [Guidelines for the Analysis of Vital, Morbidity, and Health Resources Statistics. General Document]. The guidelines address data production from a qualitative and quantitative standpoint (through six questionnaires and two applications), and complementary approaches for situation analysis.

Reports³ and summarized in a Regional Report⁴ that lists the countries according to their vital and health statistics situation. The findings reveal wide disparities among the countries and even within them, making it possible to pinpoint the areas of data production and health information systems that require strengthening (at the geographic and sectoral level, areas of health care, specific sources of data, etc.).

3. Many of the countries (among them, some that have greater problems in terms of information and priorities for PAHO) have broadened their assessments by incorporating health information system evaluation and monitoring tools into the processes whereby health statistics and information systems are strengthened.⁵ In order to facilitate harmonization and coordination in the development of health information systems, the Secretariat adopted the goal, objectives, and principles of the Health Metrics Network (HMN), a world partnership focused on health systems that promotes global standards for developing and improving the performance of information systems.⁶

4. The conceptual and operational framework of the Plan of Action for Strengthening Health and Vital Statistics in the Countries of the Americas⁷ was discussed and consolidated at meetings with other technical areas of PAHO and WHO, as well as with international organizations,⁸ considers three dimensions: (a) evaluation of the information production process, which recognizes the existence of different stages in data production and the potential presence of different factors (context, technology, procedures, human resources, etc.) that can impact quality; (b) the identification of problems and needs to identify the priority areas that should be addressed to improve the coverage and quality of the data; and (c) the definition of intervention levels to guide the application of appropriate solutions and good practices in areas identified as problematic (geographical, thematic, and sectoral).

3 The Country Reports were sent to the statistics offices of the Ministries of Health and to the National Statistics Offices for the 27th Pan American Sanitary Conference (October 2007).

4 PAHO/WHO. Status of Vital, Morbidity, and Health Resources and Services Statistics in the Countries of the Americas. Summary of the Regional Report. Santiago, Chile, November 2007.

5 Through access to the first and second rounds of financing of the Resource Mobilization Strategy (Panama, Belize, Bolivia, El Salvador, Guatemala, and Nicaragua) and the joint PAHO-USAID project (Honduras, Mexico, and Paraguay).

6 See A Framework and Standards for Country Health Information System Development. Health Metrics Network (HMN). World Health Organization (WHO). Geneva, 2006

7 See Pan American Health Organization (PAHO)/World Health Organization (WHO). Plan for Strengthening Vital and Health Statistics in the Countries of the Americas. Conceptual Framework. Santiago, Chile, 2006.

8 Such as the United Nations Statistics Division, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), the Latin American and Caribbean Demographic Center (CELADE), the population division of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), the World Bank, and CARICOM. Since 2006, there has been work with CELADE on formulating the strategy and Plan of Action for Strengthening Vital and Health Statistics within the framework of the PAHO/WHO-ECLAC agreement.

5. The Plan of Action for Strengthening Vital and Health Statistics is aligned with the Strategic Plan of the PASB 2008–2012 through Strategic Objective 11 “to strengthen leadership, governance and the evidence base of health systems,”⁹ stating that “Paramount to the achievement of this objective is the improvement of national health systems and the production of quality data, information and knowledge for planning and decision-making.”

Proposed Regional Plan of Action for Strengthening Vital and Health Statistics

6. The Plan of Action includes four levels of intervention (hereinafter referred to as “components”): country; intercountry or group of countries; corporate; and multiagency.

- (a) The country component addresses the problems identified in each country and involves specific actions and solutions defined in a strategic plan designed through the broadest possible consensus among the principal actors from civil society and the State (users and producers of statistical information).
- (b) The intercountry or group of countries component includes activities shared by a group or groups of countries, subregions, and the Region itself, with common problems (coverage, quality) and common solutions (regional courses, use of standard computer software, dissemination of good practices, technology transfer, etc.).
- (c) The corporate component focuses on the delivery of PAHO technical cooperation through the standardization of methodologies and complementary joint activities that can help strengthen the statistics used in the Organization’s work.
- (d) The multilateral component considers, on the one hand, the common needs of the agencies in terms of the validity and reliability of the statistics, and on the other, the harmonization of technical cooperation projects and programs and financing in matters directly or indirectly related to the strengthening of vital and health statistics.

7. The plan has the following objectives:

- (a) Help the countries develop and implement a process for monitoring and evaluating the quality and coverage of vital and health statistics.
- (b) Identify and disseminate good practices and lessons learned to improve vital and health statistics in the countries.
- (c) Develop standards, methodologies, and tools to strengthen vital and health statistics.

⁹ For further details, see http://intranet.paho.org/DPM.PPS/Strategic_Plan0812_INTRANET-eng.doc.

- (d) Harmonize technical cooperation projects, programs, and financing with other agencies to strengthen vital and health statistics.
- (e) Mobilize resources to support and sustain activities that strengthen vital and health statistics.

Action by the Executive Committee

8. The Executive Committee is requested to consider this proposal for the Regional Plan of Action for Strengthening Vital Statistics and Health in the Countries of the Americas.

Annex

**Regional Plan of Action for Strengthening Vital and Health Statistics
in the Countries of the Americas**

		INDICATORS and the GOAL of the Indicators
GOAL	Improve the coverage and quality of vital statistics	<p>Coverage – births</p> <p>Number of countries with less than 60% coverage of births that have improved that coverage by at least 20%: Baseline 2007: 0 2013: 5</p> <p>Number of countries with 61% to 79% coverage of births that have improved that coverage by at least 10%: Baseline 2007: 0 2013: 7</p> <p>Number of countries with 79% to 90% coverage of births that have reached at least 90% coverage: Baseline 2007: 0 2013: 13</p> <p>Coverage – deaths</p> <p>Number of countries with less than 60% coverage of deaths that have improved that coverage by at least 20%: Baseline 2007: 0 2013: 6</p> <p>Number of countries with 61% to 79% coverage of deaths that have improved that coverage by at least 10%: Baseline 2007: 0 2013: 4</p> <p>Number of countries with > 79% and < 90% coverage of deaths that have reached at least 90% coverage: Baseline 2007: 0 2013: 15</p> <p>Quality</p> <p>Number of countries where the proportion of deaths attributed to ill-defined causes is greater than 10% and less than 20% and that have reduced that proportion to 10%: Baseline 2007: 0 2013: 6</p> <p>Number of countries where the proportion of deaths attributed to ill-defined causes is greater than 20% that have reduced that proportion by 50%: Baseline 2007: 0 2013: 2</p> <p>Number of countries where birthweights are recorded for 100% of children: Baseline 2007: 0 2013: 13</p>

LINES OF ACTION		
1. COUNTRY COMPONENT		
Objective: Help the countries develop and implement a process for monitoring and evaluating (M&E) the coverage and quality of vital and health statistics.		
Specific objectives	Indicators	Activities in support of the Plan of Action for Strengthening Vital and Health Statistics
<p>1. Establish an interinstitutional committee on health information.</p> <p>2. Engage in promotion and advocacy to strengthen vital and health statistics.</p>	<p>Number of countries with an active interinstitutional committee: Baseline 2007: 10 Goal 2013: 20</p>	<p>✓ Promote and support the establishment and operation of an interinstitutional committee on health information.</p> <p>✓ Support promotion and advocacy activities to strengthen vital and health statistics.</p>
<p>3. Assess the status of vital and health statistics.</p> <p>4. Prepare a status report on vital and health statistics.</p>	<p>Number of countries with an assessment of the status of vital and health statistics: Baseline 2007: 25 Goal 2013: 35</p>	<p>✓ Support carrying out an assessment and preparing a report on the status of vital and health statistics.</p>
<p>5. Prepare and implement a national Plan of Action for Strengthening Vital and Health Statistics.</p>	<p>Number of countries with a national plan of action: Baseline 2007: 0 Goal 2013: 20</p> <p>Number of countries that have received direct technical cooperation from PAHO to implement their plan of action: Baseline 2007: 0 Goal 2013: 20</p> <p>Number of countries that have implemented the activities in their plan: Baseline 2007: 0 Goal 2013: 15</p>	<p>✓ Support the development and implementation of the national plan of action.</p>
<p>6. Devise the mechanisms for monitoring and evaluating the national plan of action.</p>	<p>Number of countries that have received PAHO technical cooperation to conduct the evaluation: Baseline 2007: 0 Goal 2013: 10</p> <p>Number of countries that have conducted the evaluation of the activities: Baseline 2007: 0 Goal 2013: 10</p>	<p>✓ Help devise the mechanisms for monitoring and evaluating the national plan of action and its implementation.</p>

LINES OF ACTION		
<p>7. Disseminate, promote, and support implementation of standards, methodologies, and tools for the analysis of vital and health statistics.</p> <p>8. Promote the development of evidence, analysis, and summary reports on vital and health statistics.</p> <p>9. Hold workshops to develop capacity in the analysis of vital and health statistics.</p>	<p>Number of countries that publish analyses of vital and health statistics: Baseline 2007: 0 Goal 2013: 10</p>	<p>✓ Support the development and implementation of standards, methodologies, and tools.</p> <p>✓ Support national activities for the analysis of vital and health statistics.</p>
<p>10. Mobilize human, technical, and financial resources to strengthen vital and health statistics through the preparation and submission of project proposals and initiatives.</p>	<p>Proportion of projects submitted to strengthen vital and health statistics that have obtained funds: Baseline 2007: 0% Goal 2013: 75%</p>	<p>✓ Support the development of, and dialogue on, national proposals to strengthen vital and health statistics.</p>
2. INTERCOUNTRY, GROUPS OF COUNTRIES, SUBREGIONAL, REGIONAL COMPONENT		
Objective: Identify and disseminate good practices to improve vital and health statistics in the countries.		
Specific objectives	Indicators	Support activities to:
<p>1. Propose coordinated action based on common needs among countries, groups of countries, and subregions.</p> <p>2. Assemble groups of experts to assist in the development of coordinated lines of action.</p>	<p>Number of groups of trained and active experts: Baseline 2007: 0 Goal 2013: 3</p> <p><i>Six major committees, with subcommittees on mortality, demographics, coverage (health services), socioeconomic issues, morbidity, and risk factors (resources).</i></p>	<p>✓ Support the definition of coordinated actions by groups of countries, subregions, and the Region to optimize resources.</p> <p>✓ Contribute to establishing subregional and regional groups for the development of coordinated lines of action.</p>
<p>3. Identify, design, and disseminate good practices and lessons learned to strengthen the production of health information.</p>	<p>Proportion of countries that have implemented the good practices they promote: Baseline 2007: 0% Goal 2013: 75%</p>	<p>✓ Adapt, disseminate, and support the implementation of good practices and lessons learned for strengthening vital and health statistics.</p>

<p>4. Establish mechanisms for horizontal cooperation among countries, groups of countries, subregions, and the Region.</p> <p>5. Carry out technical visits between countries.</p> <p>6. Hold meetings and workshops to share experiences, good practices, and lessons learned.</p>	<p>Number of workshops held among countries, groups of countries, or in the subregion: Baseline 2007: 0 Goal 2013: 5</p>	<p>✓ Promote and support horizontal cooperation among countries, groups of countries, or subregions.</p>
<p>7. Mobilize resources to support and sustain coordinated actions.</p>	<p>Proportion of projects submitted to strengthen vital and health statistics that have obtained funds : Baseline 2007: 0% Goal 2013: 75%</p>	<p>✓ Collaborate with groups of countries and subregions in the preparation and submission of proposals for the mobilization of resources.</p>
<p>3. CORPORATE COMPONENT</p>		
<p>Objective: Develop standards, methodologies, and tools to strengthen vital and health statistics.</p>		
<p>Specific objectives</p>	<p>Indicators</p>	<p>Activities</p>
<p>1. Coordinate with the entities of the Secretariat to reach the established indicators related to health information within the framework of the 2008-2013 Strategic Plan.</p> <p>2. Develop joint projects to achieve the objectives of the Strategic Plan.</p>	<p>Number of published documents on standards, methodologies, and tools to strengthen vital and health statistics Baseline 2007: 0 Goal 2013: 5</p>	<p>✓ Establish the group on basic indicators and health information systems to monitor indicators that promote the strengthening of vital and health statistics.</p> <p>✓ Collaboration and technical assistance with other projects/entities.</p>
<p>3. Develop standards, methodologies, and tools to strengthen vital and health statistics.</p> <p>4. Publish standards, methodologies, and tools to strengthen vital and health statistics.</p>	<p>Number of meetings held by the group on basic indicators and health information systems: Baseline 2007: 0 Goal 2013: 12</p>	<p>✓ Disseminate standards, methodologies, and tools to strengthen vital and health statistics.</p>
<p>5. Mobilize resources to strengthen vital and health statistics.</p>	<p>Proportion of projects submitted to strengthen vital and health statistics that have obtained funds: Baseline 2007: 0% Goal 2013: 75%</p>	<p>✓ Develop partnerships with areas of the Organization for the submission of proposals to mobilize resources.</p>

4. MULTIAGENCY COMPONENT		
Objective: Harmonize technical cooperation projects, programs, and financing with other agencies to strengthen vital and health statistics.		
Specific objectives	Indicators	Activities
<p>1. Strengthen the working group established with the the Latin American and Caribbean Demographic Center (CELADE) and the population division of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) within the framework agreement between PAHO and ECLAC.</p> <p>2. Establish partnerships with other agencies of the United Nations system, at the regional and country level, with a view to coordinating technical cooperation projects, programs, and financing.</p>	<p>Number of projects that have been carried out together with other agencies: Baseline 2007: 0 Goal 2013: 5</p>	<p>✓ Help establish partnerships with other agencies of the United Nations system and with other bilateral and multilateral cooperation, technical, and financing initiatives.</p>
<p>3. Mobilize resources to support and sustain activities that strengthen vital and health statistics.</p>	<p>Proportion of projects submitted to strengthen vital and health statistics that have obtained funds: Baseline 2007: 0% Goal 2013: 75%</p>	<p>✓ Contribute to the development of partnerships with other agencies of the United Nations system and other bilateral and multiagency cooperation initiatives in the submission of proposals to mobilize resources.</p>