

29th PAN AMERICAN SANITARY CONFERENCE

69th SESSION OF THE REGIONAL COMMITTEE OF WHO FOR THE AMERICAS

Washington, D.C., USA, 25-29 September 2017

Provisional Agenda Item 8.7-J

CSP29/INF/7
28 July 2017
Original: Spanish

J. PLAN OF ACTION FOR THE COORDINATION OF HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE: MIDTERM REVIEW

Background

1. The purpose of this document is to report to the Governing Bodies of the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) on the achievements made with implementation of the *Plan of Action for the Coordination of Humanitarian Assistance* (Document CD53/12) (1), adopted in October 2014 by means of Resolution CD53.R9 (2014).
2. The goal of the Plan is to facilitate strengthening of the health sector in the Member States, in addition to improving coordination for receiving and providing humanitarian health assistance in emergencies and disasters.

Progress update

3. This report is based on updates received from Member States through their participation in regional meetings of ministry of health disaster coordinators, from PAHO/WHO country offices, from direct coordination with subregional entities and agencies, as well as from the databases of the PAHO Health Emergencies Department (2-4).
 4. The Plan of Action is comprised of three strategic lines: *a)* strategic alliances, cooperation among countries, and international agreements; *b)* foreign medical teams; and *c)* leadership, coordination, and accountability.
 5. The report indicates that all midterm targets have been met. Agreements establishing the health logistics network are in process of confirmation for signature with countries or entities. Implementation of the UNASUR resolution and of new strategic alliances will require a longer time. Countries are implementing strategies and working groups to update their mechanisms and procedures to facilitate the request, provision, and
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registry of emergency medical teams (EMTs). It should be noted that the Americas is the most advanced Region in implementation of the global EMT initiative.

<i>Strategic line of action 1: Strategic alliances, cooperation among countries, and international agreements</i>		
Objective	Indicator, baseline, and target	Status
1.1. Increase partnerships and cooperation for rapid and effective international health assistance.	1.1.1 Number of multilateral agreements that facilitate humanitarian health assistance. Baseline: 3 Target 2017: 4	A multilateral agreement, the Union of South American Nations (UNASUR), through a Declaration from its 10th Summit of Ministers of Health, ¹ recognized the initiative for standardization of both national and foreign emergency medical teams.
	1.1.2 Number of countries that participate in the inter-American health sector network for emergencies. Baseline: 0 Target 2017: 10	Twelve UNASUR countries, signatories of the Declaration, form part of the inter-American health sector network for emergencies.
	1.1.3 Number of countries that participate in the inter-American health logistics network. Baseline: 0 Target 2017: 10	Five countries—Argentina, Dominican Republic, Colombia, Ecuador, and Peru—are reviewing the agreements to form the logistics network and have demonstrated their interest in establishing bilateral agreements with PAHO.

<i>Strategic line of action 2: Foreign Medical Teams</i>		
Objective	Indicator, baseline, and target	Status
2.1. Establish a regional mechanism for registry of foreign medical teams.	2.1.1 Number of countries that implement the system for registry of foreign medical teams. Baseline: 0 Target 2017: 15	Four countries have implemented CICOM — Medical Information and Coordination Cell for national and foreign medical teams — for the request, registry, and coordination of emergency medical teams during emergencies occurring to date in Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, and Haiti.

¹ *Declaración sobre estándares mínimos de equipos médicos de emergencia (EMT)*

<i>Strategic line of action 2: Foreign Medical Teams</i>		
Objective	Indicator, baseline, and target	Status
	<p>2.1.2 Number of countries that have up-to-date procedures for receipt and provision of international health assistance.</p> <p>Baseline: 5 Target 2017: 15</p>	<p>Fifteen countries in the Region have implemented training workshops on coordination procedures for the receipt and provision of medical emergency teams. In the Caribbean, 22 experts in 19 countries and territories have received training for the coordination of emergency medical teams. Five countries in the Region are integrating the procedures into their national mechanisms (Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, and Peru).</p>

<i>Strategic line of action 3: Leadership, coordination, and accountability</i>		
Objective	Indicator, baseline, and target	Status
<p>3.1. Strengthen the capacity of the ministries of health to lead and coordinate international humanitarian assistance.</p>	<p>3.1.1 Number of ministries of health that have mechanisms for coordination of humanitarian health assistance.</p> <p>Baseline: 3 Target 2017: 10</p>	<p>Twenty countries have an Emergency Operations Center in the ministry of health to coordinate the health sector response to emergencies and disasters at the national level.²</p>
	<p>3.1.2 Number of countries with personnel trained to coordinate humanitarian health assistance.</p> <p>Baseline: 3 Target 2017: 10</p>	<p>Ten countries in the Region have personnel trained in humanitarian health assistance coordination. In 2016, 42 experts received training to strengthen ministry of health capacity for leadership and coordination of international humanitarian assistance.³</p> <p>Twenty-one countries in the Region have trained 64 national experts as emergency medical team coordinators, to be deployed to support national authorities in information management and coordination of emergency medical teams.</p> <p>In Colombia, the Health Cluster was activated, headed by the Ministry of Health with PAHO support.</p>

² Report of the Regional Meeting of Health Disaster Coordinators, October 2015.

³ *Informe sobre la reunión del grupo de consulta para el liderazgo y la coordinación de la asistencia humanitaria en salud de las Américas*, 15 June 2016.

Necessary action to improve the situation

- a) Endorse and disseminate guidelines on coordination of humanitarian health assistance; continue implementation of the Plan of Action and the road map established by the advisory committee.
- b) Share progress with the Ministries of Foreign Affairs of the Member States, considering that in most countries of the Region these entities are responsible for negotiating and implementing the procedures for sending and receiving humanitarian assistance, jointly with the various responsible agencies in each country, based on comprehensive disaster risk management processes.
- c) Promote strengthening of the emergency medical team initiative in countries, by providing training of national medical teams, preparation of national mechanisms to request and register these teams, and the establishment of the Medical Information and Coordination Cell (CICOM) for national and foreign medical teams.
- d) Continue incorporation of countries into the inter-American health logistics network and support definition of minimum contents, the establishment and updating of procedures for the loan, shipment, donation, and replenishment of medical supplies and provisions, in addition to the harmonization and dissemination of procedures.
- e) Incorporation by Member States of the necessary measures to strengthen national capacities so as to ensure that they have updated procedures to send, request, and receive international health assistance, and to verify its implementation, taking into account the existing national regulatory framework.

Action by the Pan American Sanitary Conference

6. The Conference is invited to take note of this midterm report and formulate the recommendations it deems relevant.

References

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