



PAHO Immunization GIN Articles



(GLOBAL IMMUNIZATION NEWSLETTER)

December 2017

Eighth Meeting of the Regional Certification Commission for the Polio Endgame in the Region of the Americas

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Pan American Health Organization – Washington, DC

Location	Lima, Peru
Dates	3 December 2017
Participants	<p>- RCC Members: Dr. Arlene King, Chair of the Regional Certification Commission (RCC) and medical specialist in public health and preventive medicine; Dr. Jose Luis Díaz-Ortega, epidemiologist; Dr. Angela Gentile, infectologist; Dr. Mark Pallansch, virologist; and Dr. Eliseu Waldman, epidemiologist. Two RCC members were not present, Dr. Rosa Alba Salas, virologist, and Dr. José Félix Sánchez Largaespada, pediatrician.</p> <p>- Dr. David Salisbury, Chair of the Global Certification Commission (GCC), and Dr. Deblina Datta, CDC epidemiologist and member of the Risk Assessment Task Team (RATT).</p> <p>- In attendance, representing the PAHO/WHO secretariat, were Dr. Cuauhtémoc Ruiz, Chief of the Comprehensive Family Immunization Unit (FGL/IM), Dr. Ana Elena Chévez, Dr. Gloria Rey, Andrea Villalobos, Elizabeth Thrush, Daniela Dietz Chavez and Eduardo Rivero.</p> <p>The objectives of the eighth meeting of the RCC were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• to discuss the recommendations from the GCC and the next steps for the RCC;• to discuss advances on the harmonization of the global, regional and national risk assessments;• to review country-specific challenges for very high-risk countries; and• to review the initial proposal for an annual report from countries on polio eradication status and activities conducted for risk mitigation.
Purpose	

The RCC reviewed and provided feedback on a proposed format for annual country reports on polio eradication activities. The secretariat provided an update on the regional surveillance and coverage situation, advances with containment activities and a proposed strategy for increasing the visibility of polio eradication activities and highlighting the work of the countries in fulfilling the objectives of the Polio Eradication and Endgame Strategic Plan. Each presentation was followed by a discussion and development of recommendations from the RCC.



Country delegations from high-risk countries were invited to private sessions with the RCC to present a report on the challenges they are facing with polio eradication activities, including meeting coverage goals and surveillance indicators. Each country presented a risk analysis that they conducted and actions they are taking in order to mitigate the identified risks. The RCC provided country-specific recommendations and will send a letter to the National Certification Committees (NCCs) of these countries with their recommendations.

Fifth Regional Polio Meeting: One step away from making history: a world without polio

Ana Elena Chévez; Gloria Rey; Andrea Villalobos; Elizabeth Thrush, Pan American Health Organization – Washington, DC

Location	Lima, Peru
Dates	4-6 December 2017
Participants	Representatives from 28 countries, including participation from the Expanded Program on Immunization (EPI), AFP surveillance, NCC presidents and the polio reference laboratory network. RCC members, GCC chair and representatives from CDC, UNICEF, Rotary International, Path, Task Force for Global Health, WHO-HQ, WHO-EURO and PAHO/WHO. Build capacity for national teams to detect and respond adequately and opportunely to an importation of wild poliovirus or emergence of a circulating vaccine-derived poliovirus (cVDPV) and prepare for global certification and the post-certification era.
Purpose	Specific objectives: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review the global and regional containment situation • Review the standards for certification and documentation of global polio eradication • Discuss the methodology of the risk assessment • Perform a simulation exercise to evaluate the capacity to respond to the detection of poliovirus or an outbreak of poliomyelitis • Raise visibility for the final stage of polio eradication and the work of the RCC and NCCs • Present the proposed post-certification strategy

On day 1 of this meeting, presentations were given on the global and regional advances towards global polio eradication, the regional polio surveillance and containment situation, and preparation towards the global certification process, including risk assessments. WHO-EURO shared experiences on lessons learned to sustain polio eradication in the European Region. The afternoon session focused on the regional progress towards implementing the recent TAG and SAGE recommendation to introduce fractional doses of the inactivated poliovirus vaccine (fIPV).

Day 2 of the meeting was dedicated to testing the practicality and completeness of the national polio outbreak response plans. Countries were placed in small working groups and conducted a realistic and dramatized outbreak response simulation exercise. After this exercise, countries evaluated the completeness of their plan and identified areas that need to be strengthened.

On day 3 feedback on the national outbreak response plans was given. The post-certification strategy was discussed, and there was a presentation on how to improve national communication strategies to support the certification process.

The final report with conclusions and recommendations from this meeting is being developed and will be disseminated to countries in January 2018.



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Participants at fifth regional polio meeting in Lima, Peru, December 2017



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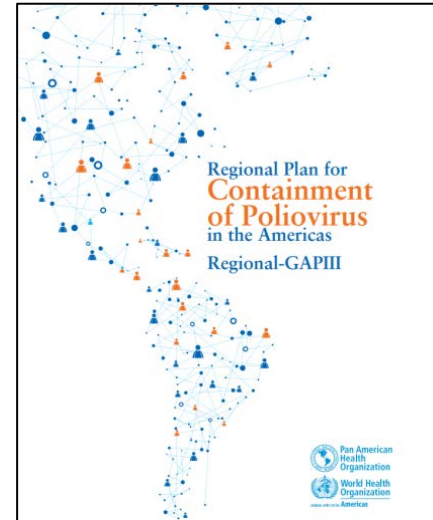
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Regional Plan for Containment of Poliovirus in the Americas, Regional-GAPIII

Gloria Rey Benito; Andrea Villalobos; Pan American Health Organization – Washington, DC

The original document was developed by the WHO at global level. In the WHO version, only Sabin 2 and WPV2 are included. The PAHO adaptation includes the containment of Sabin 2 and wild poliovirus (WPV) type 2; and advances with a process of destruction of all unneeded WPV1/WPV3 poliovirus materials.

A decision based on the widespread use of OPV in the countries of the Region and the last confirmed case of paralytic polio caused by wild poliovirus occurred in 1991. The WHO document gives the indications to GAP III that must be taken, but does not include the “how to.” The [Regional GAPIII](#) version operationalizes WHO recommendations and includes four annexes: regional survey (Annex A), attestation of final disposal of poliovirus materials (Annex B), National Report (Annex C) and validation form of National Containment Report (Annex D).



<http://iris.paho.org/xmlui/handle/123456789/34371>

Parts of the original text of the WHO GAPIII were eliminated or adapted to align the regional plan with the recommendations of the small working group that met in April 2015 in Washington, DC. At its 23rd meeting, the PAHO Technical Advisory Group (TAG) on Vaccine-preventable Diseases endorsed the proposed Regional Plan for Containment of Poliovirus in the Region of the Americas.

The document is available in English and Spanish, which are the languages used in the majority of territories in the Region of the Americas.



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Celebrating Leaders of Polio Eradication in the Americas

Eduardo Rivero, Ana Elena Chevez, Elizabeth Thrush, Pan American Health Organization-Washington, DC

The theme for the fifth Regional Polio Meeting was “One step away from making history: a world without polio.” During this meeting, PAHO/WHO developed banners to honor four important leaders in polio eradication:



- **Albert Bruce Sabin (1906-1993):** Polish virologist, nationalized American, developed the oral poliovirus vaccine. Dr. Sabin not only dedicated his entire professional career to innovative medical advances to reduce human suffering, but also undertook a tireless campaign against poverty and in favor of knowledge throughout his life.
- **Jonas Edward Salk (1914-1995):** Medical researcher and American virologist discovered and developed the inactivated poliovirus vaccine. In addition to his research work, he continuously promoted the creation of collaborative environments to explore the basic principles of life and contemplate the wider implications of scientific discoveries for the future of humanity and thus contribute to the well-being and understanding of man.
- **Ciro de Quadros (1940-2014):** Brazilian epidemiologist who was one of the central figures in polio eradication in Latin America and the Caribbean, distinguished as Public Health Hero of the Americas by the Pan American Health Organization. In the late 1970s, he founded the PAHO/WHO Expanded Program on Immunization (EPI) and successfully mobilized technical support to Member States. He was also a key figure behind the creation of the PAHO Revolving Fund for the Purchase of Vaccines, established in 1977.



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- Donald A. Henderson (1928-2016): American physician, educator and epidemiologist, led the global smallpox eradication program of the World Health Organization (WHO) and in 1974, promoted the global polio eradication program. In the Region of the Americas, he was president of PAHO's Technical Advisory Group (TAG) on Vaccine-preventable Diseases. He is an example for thousands of health professionals and was recognized for his meritorious work by many institutions and governments, having received honorary titles and prizes, among them, the PAHO Public Health Hero award.

PAHO/WHO also developed a video that shows both historic and current immunization leaders across the Region talking about their experiences being a part of the polio eradication process, available here (Spanish only):

<https://youtu.be/SKRm1BpLtO8>



Still of video showing historic and current immunization leaders across the Region talking about their experiences being a part of the polio eradication process