



*executive committee of
the directing council*

PAN AMERICAN
HEALTH
ORGANIZATION

*working party of
the regional committee*

WORLD
HEALTH
ORGANIZATION



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FORTIETH ANNIVERSARY OF THE WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION

The Fortieth World Health Assembly (1987) adopted Resolution WHA40.36 inviting the Regional Committees of WHO to provide strong support to Member Countries in their activities relating to commemoration of the 40th Anniversary of WHO, also the 10th anniversary of the Alma-Ata Declaration. In accordance with this Resolution, PAHO has undertaken a series of activities. Of major significance are the following:

1. The Director sent a letter to the Minister of Health of each Member Country to provide information about the anniversary and to invite them to coordinate and develop a series of commemorative activities which would be launched on World Health Day and held throughout the remainder of the year. It was suggested that these events should be part of a national mobilization for health development.

Suggested activities were as follows:

- a) Establishment of a National Commemoration Commission to develop and support national and local celebration activities for the 40th Anniversary and other events, such as World Health Day and the World's First No Tobacco Day.
- b) Adoption of an executive proclamation and congressional or parliamentary resolution extolling the accomplishments of WHO/PAHO and stressing the significance of the Alma-Ata Declaration. These official declarations would recount national progress toward Health for All, affirm the Government's continued support of the Organization, and call for widespread community participation throughout the year in celebration of the anniversary.
- c) Incorporation of 40th Anniversary issues and themes in all significant meetings, conferences and symposia during 1988.
- d) Development of a media campaign to stimulate interest in the celebration activities by holding regular meetings and disseminating press kits.

- e) Organization of health fairs, exhibits, and other activities throughout the country to promote public interest in health related issues.

2. A series of six articles were commissioned on themes related to the 40th Anniversary of WHO, the accomplishments of WHO and PAHO in the Region, and the health challenges that lie ahead. These articles will be released throughout the year and are being written in a non-technical format in order to facilitate their use by newspapers and magazines read by the general public.

3. All PAHO outgoing correspondence in 1988 contains an embossed sticker of the 40th Anniversary logo. In addition, all PAHO publications released this year display the 40th anniversary logo and carry a short anniversary message by the Director praising the dramatic achievements of WHO-led efforts to improve health conditions around the world.

4. A PAHO designed special exhibit on primary health care in the Americas was prominently displayed at the Headquarters of both WHO and PAHO during the World Health Day celebrations. The exhibit consisted of large color photographs portraying the effect of the different components of primary health care on improving the quality of life of the people in the Americas, along with explanatory captions.

5. World Health Day materials were distributed throughout the Americas and received with great interest. WHO-supplied materials consisted of posters and stickers--which symbolically depicted the significance of WHO and its accomplishments, a special issue of World Health magazine, and a general information kit for media and instructional use. PAHO translated the WHO kit into Spanish and Portuguese (in addition to the English and French versions provided by WHO) and produced its own supplement to the kit containing the World Health Day message of the Director and an original article on the meaning of the 40th anniversary in the Americas. In addition, kits distributed to the English-speaking Caribbean contained an article commemorating the Caribbean Food and Nutrition Institute which is celebrating its 21st anniversary this year. World Health Day materials were reprinted by many newspapers in all parts of the Region and were additionally supplemented by stories produced by health ministries.

6. PAHO is sponsoring a "Health for All - All for Health" essay contest for high school students of the Americas to commemorate the 40th Anniversary of the World Health Organization. The contest is designed to create general public interest in the celebration of WHO's 40th Anniversary, to call attention to the outstanding public health achievements gained over the past 40 years, and to promote vigorous discussion on Health for All by the Year 2000 and the role of youth in furthering this goal.

7. PAHO contributed US\$2,500 to the WHO sponsored "Health for All - All for Health" international photo competition. The judging of the competition took place in November 1987 and all winning entries were exhibited at WHO Headquarters in April 1988 and at the Palais des Nations during the 41st World Health Assembly and at PAHO headquarters in April 1988.

8. A high-quality, full-color commemorative poster consisting of photographs representing each of the eight major components of primary health care, and arranged around a photo of the PAHO Headquarters building, was produced and distributed to Member Countries in time for the launching of 40th Anniversary activities on World Health Day. The subjects of the photos are from the different subregions of the Americas, while the border of the poster is printed in the official blue hue of the United Nations.

9. The World's First No Tobacco Day on 7 April was promoted throughout the Region. PAHO provided the WHO Smoking and Health program with names and background information on persons throughout the Region who have contributed substantially to promotion of a tobacco-free society and thus were eligible for a special medal from the WHO Director-General. PAHO also sought endorsements of the No Tobacco Day from the Secretary-General of the OAS, the Secretary-General of the United Nations, presidents and other leaders in the Americas. Selections from the WHO information kit on the World's First No Tobacco Day were translated into Spanish and Portuguese for dissemination to the media and decision makers. NGOs and other organizations also held activities to encourage people to stop smoking.

Members of the Executive Committee might wish to comment on the steps taken thus far by the PAHO Secretariat, and to contribute with further ideas and suggestions on how to make the best possible use of this anniversary year to raise the public's awareness regarding the challenges and opportunities for Health for All in the Americas.