



*executive committee of
the directing council*

PAN AMERICAN
HEALTH
ORGANIZATION

*working party of
the regional committee*

WORLD
HEALTH
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MECHANISMS FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF OFFICIAL RELATIONS BETWEEN PAHO AND
NONGOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS

In compliance with Resolution V of the XXV Meeting of the Directing Council on "Mechanisms for the Establishment of Official Relations between PAHO and Nongovernmental Organizations," the Director of the Pan American Sanitary Bureau presents to the Executive Committee of PAHO for its consideration a provisional draft of special regulations for the establishment of official relations with inter-American nongovernmental organizations.

The document reviews the process by which were established the criteria for the recognition of nongovernmental organizations by the Pan American Health Organization and for their admission to official relations with it, proposes a procedure for considering applications, and describes the privileges associated with official relations.

The document closes with some general remarks that may be of interest to the Executive Committee.

MECHANISMS FOR ESTABLISHING OFFICIAL RELATIONS BETWEEN PAHO AND
INTER-AMERICAN NONGOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS

A number of private inter-American nongovernmental scientific organizations and foundations having requested recognition by the Pan American Health Organization for the purpose of establishing formal relations, the Director of PASB presented to the 78th Meeting of the Executive Committee Document CE78/20 setting forth the benefits that would accrue to PAHO and the NGOs from official relations and cooperation on health programs of mutual interest, and suggesting the advisability of formalizing simple procedures for establishing these relations and the cooperation desired.

To this end, he submitted two alternative guidelines, as follows:

- "1. The Directing Council might establish a standing subcommittee of the Executive Committee and assign to it a review and decision procedure similar to WHO, including the drawing up of specifications for applying the criteria and carrying out preliminary reviews.
2. The Directing Council might instruct the Director to prepare specifications and procedures for the initial review, to determine the frequency of further reviews, and delegate in him the authority to carry out the procedures with requisite care and diligence. Before notifying the applicant of admission or rejection, the Director would inform the Executive Committee, or a standing subcommittee, of his decision, and at the same time transmit to it the background material on which he had based his decision, with the request that any member objecting notify him within 60 days. In the absence of such objection, the Director would, after the 60-day interval, notify the NGO. In the event of an objection, the Director would place the matter on the agenda of the next meeting of the Executive Committee for final decision."

After carefully considering the document, the Executive Committee approved the second alternative and recommended its adoption and approval to the Directing Council.

The XXV Meeting of the Directing Council, following an in-depth study of the matter at its meeting in October 1977, requested that a provisional draft of special regulations for the establishment of official relations with inter-American nongovernmental organizations be drawn up and submitted to the Executive Committee and the Pan American Sanitary Conference for approval.

Criteria for the Recognition of Nongovernmental Organizations by the Pan American Health Organization and for their Admission to Official Relations with It

The criteria for the recognition of nongovernmental organizations by the Pan American Health Organization and for their admission to official relations with it were set forth in Resolution CSP14.28 of 1954, and are almost identical to the criteria used by WHO in establishing relations with international nongovernmental organizations.

CSP14.28. THE XIV PAN AMERICAN SANITARY CONFERENCE,

Considering that collaboration in matters of common interest to the Pan American Sanitary Organization and other international and inter-American organizations contributes to the fulfillment of the objectives of the Organization, as stated in the Pan American Sanitary Code and in the Constitution of the Organization,

RESOLVES:

That the Pan American Sanitary Organization establish and maintain cooperative relations with other international and inter-American organizations in the manner that it deems appropriate; that the criteria given below be observed when the Pan American Sanitary Organization establishes cooperative relations with any other international and inter-American organizations; and that these relations be established or maintained in accordance with the provisions set forth in Article 23 of the Constitution.

Criteria

1. The Organization shall be concerned with matters falling within the competence of the Pan American Sanitary Organization.
2. The aims and purposes of the organization shall be in conformity with the spirit, purposes, and principles of the Pan American Sanitary Code and the Constitution of the Pan American Sanitary Conference.
3. The organization shall be of recognized standing and shall represent a substantial proportion of the persons organized for the purpose of participating in the particular field of interest in which it operates. To meet this requirement, a group of organizations may form a joint committee or other body authorized to act for the group as a whole.

4. The organization shall have a directing body and authority to speak for its members through its authorized representatives; evidence of this authority shall be presented if requested.

5. The organization shall normally be inter-American in its structure and scope, with members who exercise voting rights in relation to its policies or action.

6. Save in exceptional cases, a national organization that is affiliated to an inter-American nongovernmental organization covering the same subject on an international basis shall present its views through its government or through the inter-American nongovernmental organization to which it is affiliated. A national organization, however, may be included in the list after consultation with, and with the consent of, the Member Government concerned, if the activities of the organization are not covered by any international organization or if it offers experience upon which the Pan American Sanitary Organization wishes to draw.

Procedure for the Consideration of Applications from Inter-American Nongovernmental Organizations for the Establishment of Official Relations with the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO)

1. An inter-American nongovernmental organization may, of its own accord or by invitation, request official recognition and the establishment of working relations in areas of mutual interest.

2. To this end, the inter-American nongovernmental organization must submit with its application the following supporting documentation:

2.1 A certified copy of its charter and by-laws.

2.2 Certified copies of the charters and by-laws of its affiliates in the Hemisphere.

2.3 An authenticated copy of the proceedings in which the Directors were elected and of the authorization of the Assembly to establish relations with PAHO.

2.4 A copy of the most recent periodic report on its activities.

3. The Executive Committee of PAHO will appoint a standing subcommittee composed of three members, one of whom will be rotated each year to insure the continuity of the subcommittee's functions.

3.1 The Director of PASB will forward to the standing subcommittee the applications for recognition and supporting documents received from inter-American nongovernmental organizations.

3.2 If the documentation received is not sufficiently complete or satisfactory, the Director will also inform the subcommittee of the steps that have been taken.

3.3 The Committee will review and analyze the documentation presented in detail. If a question arises, it may request the appearance of an authorized representative of the nongovernmental organization to clarify any matter relating to the application.

4. When the applications received have been properly reviewed, the standing subcommittee will make its recommendations to the Executive Committee on recognition of and the establishment of official working relations with inter-American nongovernmental organizations.

In certain cases, the standing subcommittee may recommend that consideration of an application be postponed and that the Director be requested to contact the applying organization in order to determine the areas of common interest and the mutual benefits that would accrue from cooperation between the two organizations.

5. Once it has considered the standing subcommittee's recommendations, the Executive Committee will decide whether or not to authorize relations with a given organization.

6. Every year the Chairman of the Executive Committee will convey the decisions taken to the Directing Council or the Pan American Sanitary Conference.

7. The Director of PASB will inform each organization of the Executive Committee's decision on its application. If favorable, he will indicate the privileges conferred by the establishment of official relations.

8. Every three years the Executive Committee, acting through the standing subcommittee, will review the list of inter-American nongovernmental organizations with which PAHO has official working relations and decide whether they should be continued or suspended.

Privileges Conferred on a Nongovernmental Organization by Official Relationship with PAHO

1. The right to appoint a representative to participate, without the right to vote, in the regular meetings of the Governing Bodies of PAHO, and in conferences and seminars conducted under the auspices or sponsorship of PAHO.

When matters of particular interest to it are discussed at these meetings, its representative may, at the request of the officers of the meeting or of his own accord, make a statement presenting the views of his organization.

2. Active participation in the Technical Discussions that take place in the meetings of the Directing Council or the Conference.

3. Access to nonconfidential documents related to matters of interest to it.

4. Collaboration, when requested, in the programming of joint activities in health matters of common interest.

5. The right to submit its opinions and comments to PAHO on programs going forward in areas of common interest.

6. The right to request PAHO's cosponsorship of conferences or seminars on matters of common interest.

General Remarks

The procedures submitted to the Governing Bodies of PAHO for consideration refer basically to inter-American nongovernmental organizations that are essentially concerned with health matters and so fall within the competence of PAHO (Resolution CSP14.28, par. 1).

However, there are a number of other inter-American and national organizations not directly concerned with health but which regularly or occasionally carry out operations in the health field in which cooperation with PAHO could help attain the objectives and increase the benefits to the target population.

One example of this kind of organization is the Partners of the Americas Association, which is made up of groups in the United States of America associated with similar groups in Latin America. The activities of the Association are quite diverse but they occasionally operate in the

field of health by providing medical equipment, vaccines, etc., which, with PAHO's cooperation, could be put to better use. It should be emphasized that these nongovernmental organizations provide most valuable cooperation in disasters.

It is therefore suggested that the standing subcommittee on non-governmental organizations to be appointed by the Executive Committee make a careful study of these organizations and groups and convey to the Executive Committee their experiences and suggestions for the appropriate regulation of relations with them, which must necessarily differ from those maintained with inter-American nongovernmental organizations that are concerned only with health matters.