



*executive committee of
the directing council*

PAN AMERICAN
HEALTH
ORGANIZATION

*working party of
the regional committee*

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EXTENSION OF HEALTH SERVICES

On the basis of the Director's progress report on the steps taken by the Governments to extend coverage to unserved urban and rural populations, pursuant to Resolution XIV of the XXV Meeting of the Directing Council, which had been adopted in consideration of the conclusions reached in the IV Special Meeting of Ministers of Health, and recognizing that the results of the International Conference on Primary Health Care at Alma Ata, USSR, in September 1978 confirmed and reinforced this hemispheric policy and the activities undertaken to implement it, the XX Pan American Sanitary Conference, St. George's, Grenada, September/October 1978, adopted Resolution XXX on the extension of health services.

Most of the Governments have responded to the recommendations put forward in this resolution by stepping up their efforts to evaluate, reorient and strengthen their coverage extension processes. At the request of the countries, the Bureau is cooperating in the design of methods and the definition of criteria to facilitate these evaluations. Indeed, 20 countries in the Region are now evaluating and reorienting their national health plans, with special attention to the definition of levels of care, referral systems, administrative development, supervision and control, and are promoting application of the strategies of primary care and community participation as fundamental instruments for attaining satisfactory levels of coverage.

In regard to the conduct of multisectoral relations and activities as a necessary condition for attaining the health goals adopted by the countries, the Bureau is cooperating in two countries in the design of integrated regional planning methods in order to facilitate the implementation of multisectoral programs in regions selected by the Governments themselves. To improve the use of international cooperation, two other countries are analyzing and programming, with the Bureau's cooperation, the international cooperation requirements implied in their socioeconomic development plans. As these instruments are refined, they are expected to facilitate a dialogue and the guidance of international cooperation in the near future.

To promote exchanges of experiences and the development of appropriate technologies, PASB is cooperating with five countries in setting up programs for the development of appropriate technologies, including mechanisms for the dissemination of those technologies as a form of cooperation between countries.

In compliance with the recommendations of Resolution XXVIII of the XXIV Meeting of the Directing Council and Resolution XXX of the XX Pan American Sanitary Conference, the Bureau has designed a program which it will propose to the Governments for evaluation of the Ten-Year Health Plan for the Americas, 1971-1980.

The joint commitment of the Governments of the Region to attain the world goal of health for all in the year 2000 invests this evaluation, and the formulation of national and regional strategies, with crucial importance. We must profit from the experience of the countries in the Region in their efforts to raise their health levels and extend the coverage of efficient and effective health services to unserved and underserved populations. Moreover, this systematic analysis is needed to prepare the contribution of the Region of the Americas to the Seventh General Program of Work of WHO and to the world strategies for attaining the goal of the year 2000.

The regional experience of the last decade clearly shows that a goal as important and ambitious as the one proposed for the year 2000 can only be attained through effective intersectoral articulation. This articulation, whose purpose is to orient the economic and social development of our countries, is a determined attempt to arrive at welfare and economic growth profiles consistent with the general goals and strategies proposed by the United Nations to attain a new world economic order, which is expressed in the plan for the war on poverty.

Moreover, it is becoming absolutely essential to develop appropriate technologies that utilize the available resources with utmost efficiency and can exert an impact on the level and structure of the health of people. Eventual adjustments of national health policies to allow for the strategies of primary care and community participation, the reorientation and organizational and functional adjustment of national health services consistent with this concept, and administrative development to give their systems the requisite operating capacity, are essential if the social purpose that the Governments have set themselves is to be realized.

The distinctive features of our Region's socioeconomic development, its structure and level of health, and its demographic characteristics,

which point clearly not only to a substantial growth of population, but also to its greater concentration in urban centers, constitute the frame of reference in which the national and regional strategies for our Region must be worked out.

The evaluation of the Ten-Year Health Plan 1971-1980 must seek to identify the gains made by the countries, and--primarily--to explain the characteristics of those processes.

These national evaluations, on the basis of which the lines of regional strategy will be worked out, will facilitate the joint effort of the Governments. In compliance with the mandates of the Organization's Governing Bodies and in the context of intercountry technical cooperation the Bureau is drawing up a program for cooperation with the Governments in both the methodological and operational aspects, in support of activities in this fundamental area.