



Pan American
Health
Organization



World Health
Organization
REGIONAL OFFICE FOR THE
Americas

54th DIRECTING COUNCIL

67th SESSION OF THE REGIONAL COMMITTEE OF WHO FOR THE AMERICAS

Washington, D.C., USA, 28 September-2 October 2015

CD54.R12
Original: English

RESOLUTION

CD54.R12

STRATEGY AND PLAN OF ACTION ON STRENGTHENING THE HEALTH SYSTEM TO ADDRESS VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

THE 54th DIRECTING COUNCIL,

Having reviewed the *Strategy and Plan of Action on Strengthening the Health System to Address Violence against Women* (Document CD54/9, Rev. 2);

Bearing in mind that the Constitution of the World Health Organization establishes that “the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of health is one of the fundamental rights of every human being without distinction of race, religion, political belief, economic or social condition;”

Observing that violence against women constitutes a public health problem of grave proportions and a violation or an abuse of women’s human rights and fundamental freedoms, and impairs or nullifies the observance, enjoyment, and exercise of such rights and freedoms;

Deeply concerned that violence against women affects one in every three women in the Americas;

Aware that violence against women can take many forms, but that sexual, physical, and emotional violence perpetrated by a male partner against a woman is the most prevalent form of violence against women;

Cognizant that violence against women is rooted in gender inequality and in power imbalances between men and women;

Aware that such violence has long-lasting and profound consequences for women's health, the health of their children, the well-being of their families and communities, and the economy and development of nations;

Recognizing that health systems have an important role to play in preventing and responding to violence against women as part of a comprehensive and multisectoral effort;

Recalling Resolution WHA67.15 (2014), *Strengthening the role of the health system in addressing violence, in particular against women and girls, and against children*;

Recalling additional relevant PAHO Governing Bodies resolutions, including: Strategy for Universal Access to Health and Universal Health Coverage (CD53.R14 [2014]); Health and Human Rights (CD50.R8 [2010]); and Plan of Action for Implementing the Gender Equality Policy (CD49.R12 [2009]),

RESOLVES:

1. To approve and implement the *Strategy and Plan of Action on Strengthening the Health System to Address Violence against Women* within the context of the particular conditions of each country.
2. To urge the Member States, taking into account the shared responsibilities in federated States, to:
 - a) improve the collection and dissemination of comparable data on the magnitude, types, risk and protective factors, and health consequences of violence against women;
 - b) strengthen the role of their health systems to address violence against women to ensure that all women at risk or affected by violence—including women in situations of vulnerability due to their socio-economic status, age, ethnic or racial identity, sexual orientation, gender identity and/or disabilities—have timely, effective and affordable access to health services;
 - c) encourage addressing violence against women in relevant health initiatives, including maternal and child health, sexual and reproductive health, HIV/AIDS, and mental health;
 - d) promote the engagement of the health system with other government and civil society partners as part of a multisectoral effort to address violence against women;
 - e) consider the related budgetary implications and safeguard adequate resources to support the implementation of efforts to address violence against women.

3. To request the Director to:
 - a) support the implementation of the Strategy and Plan of Action in order to maintain and strengthen collaboration between the Pan American Sanitary Bureau and the countries and territories to address violence against women;
 - b) continue to strengthen PAHO and WHO efforts to develop the scientific evidence on the magnitude, trends, health consequences and risk and protective factors for violence against women, and on effective strategies to prevent and respond to this type of violence;
 - c) continue to support countries and territories, upon their request, by providing technical assistance to strengthen the capacity of health systems to address violence against women;
 - d) facilitate PAHO cooperation with the human rights committees, bodies, and rapporteurships of the United Nations and Inter-American systems;
 - e) continue to prioritize the prevention of violence against women and consider the possibility of allocating additional resources for implementing the Strategy and Plan of Action.

(Seventh meeting, 1 October 2015)