

*directing council*



PAN AMERICAN  
HEALTH  
ORGANIZATION

XXIX Meeting

*regional committee*

WORLD  
HEALTH  
ORGANIZATION

XXXV Meeting



Washington, D.C.  
September-October 1983

INDEXED

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Provisional Agenda Item 19

CD29/8 (Eng.)  
18 July 1983  
ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

STUDY ON THE HOLDING OF TECHNICAL DISCUSSIONS DURING MEETINGS OF THE DIRECTING COUNCIL AND THE PAN AMERICAN SANITARY CONFERENCE

The XXI Pan American Sanitary Conference adopted Resolution XXVI, which is contained in Annex I of Document CE90/20 (annexed). Among other matters, this resolution requested the Executive Committee to conduct a thorough analysis of all aspects of the Technical Discussions, giving special attention to their impact in terms of time, human, and financial resources. After a full deliberation on the matter, the 90th Meeting of the Executive Committee adopted Resolution XIV, which contains a proposed resolution for the consideration of the Directing Council:

THE 90th MEETING OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE,

Having examined the study on the holding of Technical Discussions during meetings of the Directing Council and the Pan American Sanitary Conference (Document CE90/20) prepared in compliance with Resolution XXVI of the XXI Pan American Sanitary Conference; and

Aware of the need to enable the Governing Bodies to give all necessary time to the study and approval of the proposed biennial program budgets of the Pan American Health Organization, without detriment to the interest and importance that must attach to the holding of Technical Discussions of the highest quality,

RESOLVES:

To request the XXIX Meeting of the Directing Council to approve the following resolution:

THE XXIX MEETING OF THE DIRECTING COUNCIL,

Having examined the study on the holding of Technical Discussions during meetings of the Directing Council and the Pan American Sanitary Conference (Document CD29/8), prepared in compliance with Resolution XXVI of the XXI Pan American Sanitary Conference;

Aware of the need to enable the Governing Bodies to give all necessary time to the study and approval of the proposed biennial program budgets of the Pan American Health Organization, without detriment to the interest and importance that must attach to the holding of Technical Discussions of the highest quality; and

Bearing in mind Resolution XIV of the 90th Meeting of the Executive Committee,

RESOLVES:

1. That no Technical Discussions are to be held during meetings of the Directing Council and Pan American Sanitary Conference in which the proposed program budget of the Pan American Health Organization is to be studied and approved.

2. That Technical Discussions are to open with a statement on the chosen topic, prepared by a group of experts of established standing in the subject.

3. That the duration of Technical Discussions is to be limited to the working hours of the Saturday of the first week of the meeting.

Future Actions

In addition to the deliberations and decisions taken regarding the above, a decision will be needed with respect to the effective date for introducing any changes in format, frequency, etc., and the necessary lead time required for review and approval of appropriate amendments to the Rules for Technical Discussions, which could be presented for review and approval during the XXX Meeting of the Directing Council in 1984.

Annex

*executive committee of  
the directing council*

PAN AMERICAN  
HEALTH  
ORGANIZATION



*working party of  
the regional committee*

WORLD  
HEALTH  
ORGANIZATION



90th Meeting  
Washington, D.C.  
June-July 1983

CD29/8 (Eng.)  
ANNEX

Provisional Agenda Item 18

CE90/20 (Eng.)  
25 April 1983  
ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

STUDY ON THE HOLDING OF TECHNICAL DISCUSSIONS DURING MEETINGS OF THE  
DIRECTING COUNCIL AND THE PAN AMERICAN SANITARY CONFERENCE

Resolution XXVI of the XXI Pan American Sanitary Conference (1982) (Annex I) asks the Executive Committee to review carefully all aspects of the Technical Discussions and to submit a report to the XXIX Meeting of the Directing Council with recommendations directed towards maximizing the impact and significance of the Technical Discussions and minimizing the expenditure by the Secretariat and Member Governments in terms of time, human, and financial resources. To assist the Executive Committee, the Secretariat has prepared this background document.

BACKGROUND

Essentially, the idea of in-depth discussion on technical problems emerged quite spontaneously during the Second World Health Assembly in Rome in 1949. At that time the problem of malaria was quite significant on a worldwide basis. A number of malariologists, included as members of various national delegations, met informally each evening to discuss problems they were facing and new control methods being used. News of these informal sessions generated an interest on the part of Assembly participants, and an informal meeting was arranged at which the malariologists served as an expert panel. This informal interchange of information, ideas and practical experiences on malaria represented a significant milestone for the World Health Organization and generated a groundswell of interest and enthusiasm for incorporating substantive technical proceedings to an agenda considered to be mostly administrative issues. The process began when the 6th Session of the Executive Board of WHO in 1950 recommended, in Resolution EB6.R37, that "the technical proceedings of future Health Assemblies should progressively be concentrated

on more thorough discussion of a small number of subjects, with a view to the application of existing knowledge in those fields to public health administration," and that it was "desirable that there should be more technical discussion on a number of specified subjects of international interest." The opinions of Member States with regard to the proposal were sought, as a result of which the first formally scheduled technical discussions were held during the Fourth World Health Assembly in 1951. Similar to the experience in Rome generated by the malariologists, they proved to be so successful that the Health Assembly decided that technical discussions should take place annually at subsequent Health Assemblies.

Thus, in 1951 the Executive Board, in Resolution EB8.R24, invited "...the Regional Committees to consider the advisability of holding technical discussions on matters of regional interest." In addition, the Board encouraged the Regional Committees to utilize the experience gained from such technical discussions held in concert with the World Health Assemblies as a basis for initiating this activity in their Regions.

The practice of conducting technical discussions during the World Health Assembly has continued each year since 1951, with the exception of 1958 when no discussions were held. However, an analysis of the available information reveals that diverse opinions have been regularly expressed regarding the advisability of holding them during a significant part of this 31-year period. Such recurring issues as: the process of selection; the number of topics to be discussed; the duration of the technical discussions; their timing in relation to the duration of the World Health Assembly; utilization of regional committees for preparatory discussion forums; and the question of whether they should be held during Assemblies and the costs accompanying the process, have all been raised frequently over the years.

An indication of an evolution in the role and relationship of the technical discussions within the framework of the Assembly can be noted from two events that occurred at the Thirty-fifth World Health Assembly in 1982. First, eight technical topics were included as a sub-item of the agenda (Resolution WHA31.9) within the framework of the discussions of the Program and Budget. The second involved an action that was not taken, and which was a change from past practice. The Thirty-fifth World Health Assembly deferred from selecting a topic for the technical discussions for the Thirty-seventh World Health Assembly in 1984. This selection was subsequently made by the 71st Executive Board in January 1983. Factors which have contributed to this process of change stem from the "Study of WHO's Structures in the Light of Its Functions" and the more recent "Study on the Method of Work of the Health Assembly."

The changes in the method of work of the Assembly, which limits the period of the Assembly to two weeks placed a premium on the available time for carrying out its work and therefore introduced changes in format. For example, various technical topics are now introduced during the Programme Review item on the Assembly agenda. Thus, the pressures of time and the inclusion of various technical topics through the mechanisms of the Programme Committee reports (viz. Health Manpower Development, Evaluation of the Special Programme for Research and Training in Tropical Diseases, Tuberculosis Control in the World, etc.) place a different perspective on the current practice of technical discussions.

This was reflected at the 69th Executive Board in January 1982, where various views were expressed on the topic of Technical Discussions. One suggestion involved the consideration of having more than one technical discussion at the Health Assembly. Another view expressed was that the frequency of the technical discussions at the Health Assembly could be reduced. Another perspective was that "The Board and the regional committees should consider carefully the relevance and impact of the Technical Discussions. Those discussions had served a useful purpose in the past, when communication between Member States had been more difficult; perhaps there was now less need for them because up-to-date technical information was provided regularly through such publications as the Technical Report Series and the WHO Chronicle. Summary reports of any Technical Discussions held at the regional level might be circulated in the early stages of the Health Assembly, and discussed during a single meeting."

The final result of these discussions was reflected in Resolution EB69.R13, "Method of Work of the Health Assembly" (25 January 1982), which decided that during the technical discussions held at the end of the first week, plenary sessions of the World Health Assembly would be held all day on Friday and one main committee would meet on Saturday.

More recently, on 24 January 1983 the 71st Executive Board selected "The Role of Universities in the Strategies for Health for All" as the subject for the technical discussions to be held at the Thirty-Seventh World Health Assembly in 1984, and it appears that in the future technical discussions may be held only in even-numbered years, allowing more time in odd-numbered years for the review of the Program and Budget.

#### EXPERIENCE IN OTHER REGIONS

As indicated by the 74th Executive Committee, the vigor and value of the technical discussions lie in the number and qualifications of participants, which is determined by the background from which they are drawn.

The dynamics and broader perspective of the technical discussions at the World Health Assembly result from the participants being drawn from a much larger group representing many cultures. Thus, a brief look at two other WHO Regions might provide some useful insights.

The Western Pacific Regional Committee held its first technical discussions in 1952 on "The Education and Training of Medical and Public Health Personnel." These continued as in PAHO until 1974, when the process of technical discussions was terminated and replaced by a technical presentation on a selected topic by one or two experts. Some of the more recent technical presentation topics presented over the last few years include: Acute Respiratory Infections (1979), Community Involvement in the Development of Health Services (1980), Health Education and Rural Water Supply and Sanitation (1981), and New Policies for Health Education and Information in Support of Health for All by the Year 2000 (1982).

In 1981 the Regional Office for the Western Pacific conducted a review of the usefulness of technical presentations. Based on this review, another significant change was made in scheduling the technical presentation after the closing of the final session of the Regional Committee so that representatives who wished to depart could do so.

The Regional Committee for Europe, on the other hand, has maintained the practice of technical discussions on an uninterrupted annual basis from 1953 to the present. However, a thorough review of the methodology for technical discussions was conducted and presented in May 1981, offering an alternative procedure of holding technical discussions every two years. The possibility of discontinuing technical discussions had also been examined five years earlier, and again the decision was made to continue them on an annual basis, essentially reaffirming their importance.

#### EXPERIENCE IN PAHO

Similarly, in the Region of the Americas, as early as 1948 the importance of the potential value of recurring exchanges of views on technical matters of public health concern between representatives of governments was recognized and incorporated into the Constitution of the Organization. In accordance with Article 4.D (now Article 4.C) of the Constitution of the Pan American Health Organization, the V Meeting of the Directing Council of PAHO/Regional Committee of WHO for the Americas in 1951 readily accepted the Executive Board's recommendation, and in Resolution XXXI provided for the initiation of the first technical discussions in the Region of the Americas during the VII Meeting of the Directing Council in 1953.

The first topic chosen in the Region of the Americas by the 16th Executive Committee of PAHO in 1952 was "Nutrition Programs in Public Health Services." This was consistent with Article 4.C which states "The Conference shall serve as a forum for the interchange of information and ideas relating to the prevention of disease, the preservation, promotion and restoration of mental and physical health, and the advancement of sociomedical measures and facilities for the prevention and treatment of physical and mental diseases in the Western Hemisphere." The VII Directing Council in 1953 established the basis for future technical discussions in Resolution CD7.R23 and authorized the Executive Committee to establish the appropriate procedures.

As a result, the Executive Committee in Resolution CE22.R10 established the initial procedures in 1954, and annual technical discussions became an integral part of the meetings of the Pan American Sanitary Conference and the PAHO Directing Council. The rules for the technical discussions held at meetings of the PAHO Governing Bodies were established by the 25th Executive Committee (Resolution CE25.R11) in April-May 1955 and approved by Resolution XIX of the VIII Meeting of the Directing Council in September-October 1955. In 1955 the Executive Committee also recommended scheduling the technical discussions at approximately the midway point of future meetings of the Directing Council/Pan American Sanitary Conference. These rules for the technical discussions, originally contained in Document CD8/25, were approved by the Conference in 1958 (Resolution CSP15.R7) and are currently incorporated into the Basic Documents of the Pan American Health Organization, Official Document 188 (Annex II).

These Rules make technical discussions mandatory at each session of the Conference and Directing Council and establish the procedures with regard to them. That decision has evolved to the present whereby the first Friday and Saturday of the scheduled meetings at the Governing Bodies have traditionally been set aside for technical discussions.

The Executive Committee, through studies of the technical discussions, has actively monitored their progress and has made periodic modifications and amendments to the rules of procedure in order to improve them. The rules were first modified in 1968 (CE59/7, CD18/4), and a more extensive review took place in 1975.

The XIX Pan American Sanitary Conference (1974), in Resolution XLIV, requested the Executive Committee "To study the ways of ensuring that technical discussions produce the best results for the Member States."

During 1975 and 1976, the question of reducing the length of the meetings of the Directing Council was also reviewed, including the scheduling of the technical discussions. Such issues as the timing of

the technical discussions, holding them on Saturday, or holding technical discussions at the same time as the sessions of the Council, were explored. It was noted that a simultaneous scheduling of the technical discussions would necessitate countries' designating technical experts specifically to take part in them. However, the study of the technical discussions that was conducted during 1975 and 1976 (Documents CD23/16, CE74/9, CD24/7 and CE76/19) essentially resulted in a reaffirmation of the importance of the technical discussions and that "they have an intrinsic and significant value in the development of the programs of the Organization." Resolution X of the XXIV Directing Council changed the time period for selection of the topic from one year in advance to two years in advance. All other procedures and components of the technical discussions were kept unchanged.

This study paved the way for future changes and improvements. For example, the process of selection of the topic during plenary sessions of the Conference or Council was an important issue, as well as the timing and duration mentioned above.

The most recent amendment in the Region of the Americas came in 1981 and involved a delegation of authority to the Executive Committee (Resolution V, CD28/9; and CE82/22, Annex II) for selecting the topic for recommendation to the Conference or Council in lieu of submitting several topics for selection. This action was taken so as to reduce the time previously required during the Conference or Council to reach a decision regarding the selection of a subject for the technical discussions from among the several topics presented.

#### RECENT EXPERIENCE IN PAHO

In addition to a review of the PAHO official documents regarding technical discussions, a series of interviews was conducted with technical coordinators and various participants to obtain a more comprehensive perspective of the PAHO experience. The following summary covering 1979 to 1982 provides some insight into the extent of participation, products or impacts, and the range of procedures followed in the technical discussion process. A summary table indicating attendance at and outcome stemming from the last five Technical Discussions is attached as Annex III.

##### I. Summary Review of Technical Discussions held in 1982

In 1982 at the XXI Pan American Sanitary Conference, the technical discussions were held on the topic "Managerial Analysis of Health Systems," which had been selected by the XXVII Meeting of the Directing Council in September 1980. Dr. Horacio Rodríguez Castello, Argentina, served as Moderator of the plenary sessions, and the keynote speaker was Dr. Paulo Roberto de Mendonca Motta, Brazil, who spoke to an estimated 120 people in the initial plenary session. Of the 292 people attending



the Conference, 64 registered for the technical discussions, and approximately 50 people participated in two simultaneous working groups of 20 to 25 participants each on Friday, 24 September. The final report was reviewed on Saturday in plenary session by approximately 80 participants and submitted to the eleventh plenary session of the Conference, which approved Resolution XXXII. Briefly, the resolution recommends that Member Governments strengthen their planning and management systems, give priority to the development of human resources and approaches to increasing community involvement and participation; and that the Director strengthen and support research at producing better managerial alternatives to meet the health issues and challenges of HFA/2000, to support education and training programs, and to foster the establishment of a mechanism for sharing of information among Member Governments on national experiences and approaches in strategic management.

#### Comments

While the report was well received and considered a valuable experience, there were some concerns expressed to indicate that more time than the one day allotted would have been useful to achieve greater depth of discussion on such a broad and important topic.

#### Products/Impacts

The proceedings are scheduled for publication in May 1983. In addition, a technical consultation is scheduled for the middle of the year to develop concrete proposals for the follow-up and implementation of the resolution approved by the Directing Council in relation to these discussions. These proposals will form the basis for developing a program of work for the next four years.

#### Procedures Followed

With the selection of the topic in October 1980, the Secretariat was able to utilize the two-year time period to prepare the subject adequately and to obtain national participation in the process.

In March 1981, an Interdivisional Working Group was established to collaborate in preparation for the technical discussions, and it attempted to focus on key points involved and to provide inputs into developing a preliminary document and questionnaire. These were sent to the countries in early 1982 requesting information on critical areas relating to the managerial analysis of health systems. Utilizing the responses received from 12 countries (in April 1982), the Secretariat prepared a new document reflecting the country contributions and emphasizing the elements of strategy formulation and implementation.

A technical discussion group including three technical experts in the area of management was convened in early June 1982 to review a draft of the final document for use at the technical discussions. Based on this review, the final document on Managerial Analysis of Health Systems was prepared in consultation with the Interdisciplinary Group by July 1982 and circulated to the countries in August.

## II. Summary Review of Technical Discussions Held in 1981

In 1981 at the XXVIII Directing Council, held in Washington, D.C., the topic for the Technical Discussions was "Sanitary Control of Food." This topic had also been selected two years previously at the XXVI Directing Council. The moderator appointed for the technical discussions was Dr. Edith de Betancourt of Panama. The first plenary session, held on 25 September 1981, featured Dr. Alec Morrison of Canada as the keynote speaker, who presented the subject before approximately 70 people. Two Working Groups, chaired by Dr. Edward Ellis, Canada, and Dr. Leonardo Marranghello Bonifati, Costa Rica, involving 20 to 25 participants in each, discussed the topic. Included in these groups were representatives from FAO, WHO (AFRO, SEARO), USDA, FDA and the Grocery Manufacturers Association (GMA). Attendance at the plenary on Saturday was approximately 35 participants, many of whom were ministerial administrators and technical personnel from a total attendance of 194 people at the Council itself.

The final report of the technical discussions was presented at the fourteenth plenary session of the Directing Council meeting, and Resolution CD28.R30 was approved, with recommendations to Member Governments to develop and maintain food protection with legislative and financial support and to initiate massive training, institutional development, and education programs in all aspects of food safety, particularly at the community level, by focusing on women and children. The Director was requested to continue to give priority to this area and distribute the Technical Report as widely as possible. This was published in Scientific Publication No. 491 produced in 1982.

### Comments

Comments expressed during this session were very positive regarding the presentation of a subject that was quite comprehensive. In this respect, concerns were expressed that, given the amount of time, essentially one day of discussion did not allow for such a broad topic to be covered sufficiently in depth.

### Products/Benefits

Some benefits derived from the technical discussions on Sanitary Control of Food included an unexpected issue raised by participants regarding the role and problem of street vendors in the spread of

food-borne illnesses and disease and the link with incidences of diarrheal disease. The report of this topic was widely circulated, and the Secretariat has received a significant response from Ministries of Health and Agriculture requesting technical cooperation in the area of food sanitation.

#### Procedures Followed

In May 1980, the Secretariat organized a Strategy and Planning Group including short-term consultants, to initiate preparation for the technical discussion. During the period July through October 1980, information was gathered in the field and questionnaires were sent to those countries not being visited. A meeting was held in November 1980 to review the material gathered and begin the process of developing a draft document. The document was completed in March 1980 and circulated to the countries in April. Based on further inputs and contributions, the final draft document for discussion at the XXVIII Directing Council was prepared and circulated in August 1981.

#### III. Summary Review of Technical Discussions held in 1980

In 1980 at the XXVII Directing Council, the technical discussions dealt with the topic "Community Health Education: Evaluation of Present Programs, New Approaches and Strategies." Keynote speaker Dr. George Foster, USA, opened discussion on the topic at a plenary session of 75 people.

The Moderator for the technical discussions was Dr. Carmelo Calvosa Chacón from Costa Rica and the Working Group Moderators were Dr. Merlin Fernández of Honduras and Dr. Germán Jimenez Bozo of Colombia. The two working groups operating simultaneously included approximately 50 participants with 20 to 25 involved in each group at various sessions on Friday, 26 September. At the plenary session on Saturday, 27 September, some 40 participants reviewed the draft final report, yet 172 people participated in the Directing Council Meeting itself.

The Report (CD27/DT/3) was presented during the eleventh plenary session of the Directing Council, which approved Resolution CD27.R34, requesting Member Governments to intensify their efforts in formulating policies and defining strategies for promoting community health education as a means of extending coverage of health services and in the development, selection and application of appropriate primary health care techniques, including training and instruction of health personnel and operations research activities. In addition, the resolution requested the Director to include in the HFA/2000 Strategies emphasis on community health education as a means of obtaining community participation, inter-country exchanges, utilization of information, experiences, training facilities and providing information on the progress of the above. An excerpt of the discussions was published in the Boletín in April 1981.

### Products/Impacts

The importance attributed to this topic was best exemplified by the presence of the Vice President of Costa Rica, who came to Washington solely to participate in the technical discussions on community health education.

### Comments

Diverse comments during these sessions centered on very general discussion of broad areas which did not allow deep exploration or focus on single issues. In fact, many participants who raised such issues were urged to consider the broader perspective due to the limited time available for the discussions.

### Procedures Followed

In 1978, a series of meetings/training seminars were held at national levels to prepare nationals for the collection of the appropriate data for the technical discussions. This period was also marked by changes in organizational structure and technical direction within PAHO. This resulted in a lack of consistent support to the field in gathering the necessary background data. As a result, with time becoming a crucial factor, a number of short-term consultants (STC's) were utilized during January and February of 1980 to collect the information and background material necessary. This was done through a combination of country visits and a series of questionnaires circulated to countries that were not visited. Analysis of this information was compiled into a draft document which was circulated as background material. Notwithstanding all of the above, the technical discussions produced a significant momentum for the future incorporation of community health education components within the Regional Plan of Action.

#### IV. Summary Review of Technical Discussions Held in 1979

In 1979 the technical discussions held during the XXVI Directing Council dealt with the topic of "Strategies for Extending and Improving Potable Water Supply and Excreta Disposal Services During the Decade of the 80's."

The keynote speaker, Dr. Abel Wolman, addressed approximately 120 people in the plenary session, presenting a paper on "Potable Water Supply and Excreta Disposal." Other background documents available for the sessions included "Possible Strategies for the International Drinking Water and Sanitation Decade."

Moderator for the discussion was Mr. Humberto Romero Alvarez of Mexico. For the two Working Groups, Dr. Christine Moody of Jamaica and Dr. Luis A. Cousin of Honduras served as moderators. Each group involved 35 to 40 participants at various sessions during the day, yet 149 people attended the Meeting of the XXVI Directing Council itself.

The results of these efforts were presented in a report to the thirteenth plenary session and approved in Resolution CD26.R22. The complete proceedings were published in 1979 in Scientific Publication No. 390.

### Comments

Currently the Scientific Publication serves as an important reference document and guide for national action, as well as for the technical cooperation program of PAHO. The topic was thoroughly discussed, and in general there was recognition of the important goals and objectives of the decade and a realization of the constraints limiting development of the sector as well as financial implications and future institutional needs.

### Procedures Followed

At the United Nations Water Conference held in Mar del Plata, Argentina, in May 1977, the participating governments agreed to conduct efforts towards an integral and complete coverage of drinking water supply and sanitation services. Special efforts would be made for underserved and low-income populations. In September/October 1977, the XXV Directing Council selected the topic to be scheduled in 1979. Working documents were developed in early 1978, and the process of national participation and use of various experts resulted in a number of comprehensive background papers prepared significantly in advance. The final document "Strategies for Extending and Improving Potable Water Supply and Excreta Disposal Services During the Decade of the 1980's" was widely circulated in the fall of 1979.

### ISSUES AND OPTIONS TO BE ADDRESSED BY THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

In considering approaches toward maximizing the significance and impact of the technical discussions, it will be recalled from the background information that the WHO and PAHO Governing Body meetings have increasingly involved discussion of a technical nature outside of the technical discussions. In reviewing the current practice of annual technical discussions, such issues to be considered include timing, frequency, simultaneous and/or separate sessions, and the impact of changes in the method of work in the Assembly and in Regional Committees.

#### 1.A Concurrent Sessions of Technical Discussion Working Groups during Plenary Sessions

A factor that has come under close scrutiny for many years involves the timing of the technical discussions. PAHO has been holding essentially one day of technical discussion (on the first Friday of the

Conference or Council) and with the review and presentation of the final report occurring usually late Saturday morning. From a cost standpoint to the Secretariat, there does not appear to be any significant potential for savings. The technical discussions currently extend the total time of the Conference or Council by one day. Thus, cost savings might include one day's per diem; an estimated \$1,200-\$1,600 for simultaneous interpretation, and the related STC and temporary adviser costs. Since Secretariat staff would most likely be working on Saturday anyway, cost savings would be very minimal. Thus, an option to consider would be to stage the initial plenary session of the technical discussions on Friday morning (from 8:00 a.m. to 10:00 a.m., or whatever is agreed) and to conduct the Working Groups (which tend to involve 20-25 participants on an average for each group) concurrently on Friday and on Monday, thus allowing more time for the Conference or Council to resume plenary sessions for the remainder of Friday, resulting in a net savings of 1/2 day. This would allow scheduling the final report for a plenary on Tuesday or Wednesday.

1.B Concurrent Session of Technical Discussion Plenary and Working Groups

This would result in the saving of one full day. The World Health Assembly has adopted this approach and utilizes Saturday mornings for a Committee session, resulting in a net savings of 1-1/2 days.

2. Modify Frequency of Technical Discussions

With time needed for a thorough review of the Program and Budget during odd-numbered years, the technical discussions could be scheduled for even-numbered years on a biennial basis.

3. Co-host/Co-sponsor Technical Discussions as a Separate Event from PAHO Governing Body Meetings

Utilization of one or more nongovernmental organizations (NGO's) to co-sponsor an international symposium on specific technical areas. Experience in the United States and Canada on such annual or biennial symposia provides the following information:

- a) A large annual or biennial conference or symposium with from 400 to 500 participants for approximately 3-4 days would cost an estimated \$80,000. A small registration fee of \$100 per person would generate approximately \$40,000 to \$50,000. If such an event were co-hosted, PAHO and an NGO, for example, would provide a subsidy of approximately \$20,000 each.
- b) A smaller symposium depending on the topic and objective and ranging in size from 25 to 85 participants for a 2-1/2 day meeting in a college or university setting would range in total cost from \$12,000 (25) to \$26,000 (85), excluding costs for publication of proceedings. Income realized from a recent symposium of 85 participants was \$12,000, leaving a subsidy amount for the host or co-hosts of \$14,000.

A possible mechanism to be explored further would be to utilize the American Association of World Health (AAWH) and/or other such organizations to manage a symposium. PAHO could arrange a small grant, meeting facilities throughout the Region, and/or various forms of technical assistance.

The potential networking impact of such international symposia would perhaps be significantly greater, drawing from a wider population than presently being experienced with the more stable population of current technical discussions. Also, issues of relevance to the Member Governments generated from such symposia could be analyzed, presented, and discussed as a specific agenda item at future Governing Body meetings.

The Study of WHO's Structure in the Light of Its Functions and Resolution X of the XXVII Directing Council (1980) encouraged an increased role of the Scientific Advisory Committee and the Advisory Committee on Medical Research and broadening of its membership. Perhaps for those technical discussion topics relating to management of research and operational research activities, the Scientific Advisory Committee could be utilized in the development and preparation of specific components for preliminary papers and studies on related topics. This could assist in the strengthening of the preparatory process and possibly increase the information dissemination and utilization of the technical discussions' findings, publications, etc.

While it can be seen from the above that significant effort has been placed in preparation for each technical discussion, it appears that an important benefit that is derived from the two-year effort is the approval of a specific resolution. These resolutions serve to incorporate the momentum and emphasis generated by the technical discussion process into the appropriate PAHO program of technical cooperation.

Finally, an important aspect of strengthening the impact of the technical discussions involves the dissemination and exchange of information. It also appears that more information could be obtained from technical discussion participants than is presently incorporated into the official documents of the Organization. This could include names, titles, organization represented, areas of interest, address and phone number, etc. Identification tags could be provided for each participant, stimulating discussion in working group sessions and to provide later analysis of the number in attendance and mix of participants. Also, this process would assure that every participant would receive appropriate follow-up information.

The Director invites the Executive Committee to consider the alternatives suggested, or any other options it may wish to put forward.



PAN AMERICAN HEALTH ORGANIZATION

WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION



# XXI PAN AMERICAN SANITARY CONFERENCE

## XXXIV REGIONAL COMMITTEE MEETING

WASHINGTON, D.C.

SEPTEMBER 1982

### RESOLUTION XXVI

CE90/20 (Eng.)  
ANNEX I

SELECTION OF THE TOPIC FOR THE TECHNICAL DISCUSSIONS TO BE HELD IN  
1984 DURING THE XXX MEETING OF THE DIRECTING COUNCIL OF PAHO,  
XXXVI MEETING OF THE REGIONAL COMMITTEE OF WHO  
FOR THE AMERICAS

THE XXI PAN AMERICAN SANITARY CONFERENCE,

Having examined the document presented by the Director on this  
subject (Document CSP21/10);

Bearing in mind the provisions of Rule 7 of the Rules for Technical  
Discussions;

Aware that the 88th Meeting of the Executive Committee has  
recommended that "Increasing the operational capacity of the health  
services for the attainment of the goal of health for all by the year  
2000" be selected as the topic for the Technical Discussions to be held in  
1984 during the XXX Meeting of the Directing Council of PAHO, XXXVI  
Meeting of the Regional Committee of WHO for the Americas; and

In view of the considerable expenditure for Technical Discussions by  
PAHO and the Member Governments, in terms of time and financial and human  
resources,

#### RESOLVES:

1. To select "Increasing the operational capacity of the health  
services for the attainment of the goal of health for all by the year 2000"  
as the topic for the Technical Discussions to be held in 1984 during the  
XXX Meeting of the Directing Council of PAHO, XXXVI Meeting of the Regional  
Committee of WHO for the Americas.

2. To ask the Executive Committee to review carefully all aspects  
of the Technical Discussions and to submit a report to the XXIX Meeting of  
the Directing Council with recommendations directed towards maximizing the  
impact and significance of the Technical Discussions and minimizing the  
expenditure by the Secretariat and Member Governments in terms of time,  
human, and financial resources.

(Approved at the eleventh plenary session,  
28 September 1982)



**12. RULES FOR TECHNICAL DISCUSSIONS AT MEETINGS  
OF THE PAN AMERICAN SANITARY CONFERENCE AND  
OF THE DIRECTING COUNCIL<sup>1</sup>**

**PART I**

**PURPOSE OF THE TECHNICAL DISCUSSIONS**

**Rule 1.** The Pan American Sanitary Conference (hereinafter referred to as the Conference) and the Directing Council of the Pan American Health Organization (hereinafter referred to as the Council) shall meet in special session to hold Technical Discussions to deal with matters of regional interest related to the activities of the Pan American Health Organization and of the national public health administrations, the study of which may produce immediate and practical results.

**PART II**

**NATURE OF THE TECHNICAL DISCUSSIONS--PARTICIPATION**

**Rule 2.** The Technical Discussions shall form part of the business of the Conference and of the Council.

**Rule 3.** Participation in the Technical Discussions shall be open to delegates, alternates, or advisers of the delegations accredited to the Conference or the Council meeting at which the Discussions are held.

**Rule 4.** Representatives of international organizations, intergovernmental or nongovernmental, that maintain official relations with the World Health Organization or with the Pan American Health Organization, may participate in the Technical Discussions.

**Rule 5.** In the Technical Discussions, opinions are expressed in a personal capacity.

**Rule 6.** The documents pertaining to the Technical Discussions shall be issued by the Pan American Sanitary Bureau separately from the documents of the Conference or the Council.

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<sup>1</sup> Approved by Resolution VII of the XV Pan American Sanitary Conference (September-October 1958), and modified pursuant to Resolution IV of the XVIII Meeting of the Directing Council (1968), Resolution XXXV of its XXIV Meeting (1976), and Resolution V of its XXVIII Meeting (1981).

### PART III

#### SELECTION OF TOPICS FOR TECHNICAL DISCUSSIONS

**Rule 7.** The Technical Discussions shall deal with only one subject, which shall be selected at a meeting of the Conference or the Directing Council preceding by two years that of the Conference or the Directing Council at which the Technical Discussions are to be held. The selection shall be based on the recommendation of the Executive Committee. The Governments and the Director of the Pan American Sanitary Bureau shall be entitled to suggest subjects prior to or in the course of the meeting of the Executive Committee in which the recommendation to the Conference or the Directing Council will be made. The Bureau shall inform the Governments of the Organization of the subject recommended by the Executive Committee. Both the Conference and the Council shall be entitled to delegate the selection of subjects to the Executive Committee.

### PART IV

#### DESIGNATION AND DUTIES OF THE EXPERTS

**Rule 8.** The Conference or the Council, as the case may be, shall select the subject for the Technical Discussions by the affirmative vote of a simple majority of the Governments present and voting in plenary session.

**Rule 9.** The Director of the Pan American Sanitary Bureau shall, at the earliest possible date, inform the Governments, territories, and organizations entitled to be represented of the subject selected for the Technical Discussions.

**Rule 10.** The Director of the Pan American Sanitary Bureau shall designate the necessary expert or experts to prepare the introductory statement(s) on the subject selected for the Technical Discussions.

**Rule 11.** The Pan American Sanitary Bureau shall place at the disposal of the designated expert or experts such background material as may be considered useful for the preparation of the introductory statement(s).

## PART V

### ORGANIZATION OF THE TECHNICAL DISCUSSIONS

Rule 12. The Director of the Pan American Sanitary Bureau shall, at the earliest possible date, send the Governments, territories, and organizations entitled to be represented a copy of the introductory statement(s).

Rule 13. The Pan American Sanitary Bureau shall not be held responsible for the opinions and ideas expressed in the introductory statement(s).

Rule 14. The Conference or the Council, on examining the program of sessions, shall schedule the date on which the Technical Discussions are to be held. Preferably, the date should fall approximately midway in the course of the Conference or the Council meeting.

Rule 15. The Technical Discussions will be held in special session, and while they are being held no other activity of the Conference or the Council shall take place.

## PART VI

### DELIBERATIONS AND REPORTS

Rule 16. The Conference or the Council shall elect the moderator and the rapporteur for the Technical Discussions which are to be held during the meeting. The moderator shall preside over and organize the Technical Discussions in such a way as to facilitate the detailed study and analysis of the subject of the Technical Discussions. If working groups are organized, each one shall appoint a moderator and a rapporteur.

Rule 17. The Director of the Pan American Sanitary Bureau shall appoint a technical secretary to assist the moderator and the rapporteur. He shall also be entitled to appoint technical secretaries to assist the rapporteurs of the working groups.

Rule 18. The Technical Discussions shall open with a statement by the designated expert or experts, who will give a brief summary of the introductory paper prepared for the Discussions.

Rule 19. The Conference or the Council may establish working parties to examine the Technical Discussion topics. Each working party shall elect a moderator and a rapporteur, who will be assisted by the technical secretary appointed by the Director of the Pan American Sanitary Bureau.

Rule 20. No minutes of the sessions shall be kept. The rapporteur shall prepare a report summarizing the opinions expressed in the course of the Technical Discussions and stating the conclusions reached, if any.

**Rule 21.** The moderator shall transmit the Report of the Technical Discussions to the Conference or the Council, for presentation in plenary session.

**Rule 22.** The Conference or the Council may adopt decisions on the topic of the Technical Discussions, following the same procedures as those applied for the other decisions of the meeting.

**Rule 23.** The Director of the Bureau shall give the widest possible distribution to the reports and other documents, through the *Boletín* and other special publications of PASB.

TOPIC/YEAR	CONFERENCE/COUNCIL ATTENDANCE	TECHNICAL DISCUSSION PARTICIPATION			RESOLUTION APPROVED	PUBLICATION
		FRIDAY PLENARY	WORKING GROUPS	SATURDAY PLENARY		
MANAGERIAL ANALYSIS OF HEALTH SYSTEMS 1982	292	120	50	80	GSP/21.32	pending
SANITARY CONTROL OF FOOD 1981	194	50	45	35	CD/28.39	Scientific Publication No.421 1982
COMMUNITY HEALTH EDUCATION 1980	172	70	50	40	CD/27.34	Boletin April 1981 Spanish only
STRATEGIES FOR EXTENDING POTABLE WATER SUPPLY AND EXCRETIA DISPOSAL 1979	149	120	75	60	CD/26.22	Scientific Publication No.390 1979
THE IMPACT OF DRUGS ON HEALTH COSTS NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL PROBLEMS 1978	132	100	50	65	CSP/20.27	Boletin Dec.1979