



PAN AMERICAN HEALTH ORGANIZATION
WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION



44th DIRECTING COUNCIL

55th SESSION OF THE REGIONAL COMMITTEE

Washington, D.C., USA, 22-26 September 2003

RESOLUTION

CD44.R1

SUSTAINING IMMUNIZATION PROGRAMS - ELIMINATION OF RUBELLA AND CONGENITAL RUBELLA SYNDROME (CRS)

THE 44th DIRECTING COUNCIL,

Having seen the progress report of the Director on sustaining immunization programs (Document CD44/11);

Recognizing the important breakthroughs in the fight against vaccine-preventable diseases to protect the children of the Region made possible through the close partnership of the Member States and the international development community;

Noting with great pride the sustained collective efforts by the Member States in fulfilling the goal of interruption of indigenous measles transmission in the Western Hemisphere;

Considering the remarkable progress and experience gained by the Member States in the accelerated control of rubella and the prevention of congenital rubella syndrome (CRS) initiatives, which seek to achieve a more rapid decrease of rubella cases and infants born with CRS;

Taking note of the spirit of solidarity and Pan Americanism in the implementation of the first *Vaccination Week* in the Americas that targeted immunization services to high-risk and underserved areas;

Concerned with the fluctuations in the allocation of resources in public budgets to these activities at the national level, mainly due to economic downturns; and

Cognizant of the potential negative impacts of certain health sector reform and decentralization processes on the implementation of national immunization programs, including disease surveillance activities,

RESOLVES:

1. To urge Member States to:
 - (a) encourage the establishment of a specific line item for immunization in their national budgets and the timely allocation of financial resources towards vaccines, supplies, and operational costs;
 - (b) inform the finance ministers and senior budgetary decision-makers about the benefits of sustaining immunization programs and the risk resulting from pockets of low immunization coverage;
 - (c) implement health sector reform and decentralization policies and programs in a manner that safeguards the achievements made in immunization;
 - (d) support the implementation of an annual hemispheric Vaccination Week, to be held in April, targeting high-risk population groups and underserved areas;
 - (e) maintain the Region free of indigenous measles through high, routine (>95%) measles vaccination coverage by municipality or district, and follow-up measles vaccination campaigns at least every four years, timely surveillance, and outbreak investigation and control;
 - (f) maintain high ($\geq 95\%$) and homogenous vaccination coverage by municipality or district for all antigens;
 - (g) eliminate rubella and congenital rubella syndrome (CRS) from their countries by the year 2010; to accomplish this, they are requested to draft the respective national plans of action within one year.
2. To request the Director to:
 - (a) elaborate a regional plan of action and mobilize resources in support of a rubella/CRS elimination goal for 2010;

- (b) continue advocating for an active mobilization of national and international resources to sustain and expand the investments made in immunization programs by the Member States;
- (c) foster joint action by the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank, and the Inter-American Development Bank and Member States, ministries of health and finance, to establish provision within the public budgets that ensure the uninterrupted allocation of funds to national immunizations programs;
- (d) promote the annual hemispheric Vaccination Week to improve equity in immunization.

(Second Meeting, 22 September 2003)