



PAN AMERICAN HEALTH ORGANIZATION

WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION



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EVALUATION OF THE TEN-YEAR HEALTH PLAN
FOR THE AMERICAS: PROGRESS REPORT

EVALUATION OF THE TEN-YEAR HEALTH PLAN FOR THE AMERICAS: PROGRESS REPORT

At its XXII Meeting, held in October 1973, the Directing Council adopted the following Resolution VI:

OBJECTIVES AND PRIORITIES IN THE PROGRAM OF THE ORGANIZATION
IN THE LIGHT OF THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE III SPECIAL
MEETING OF MINISTERS OF HEALTH OF THE AMERICAS

THE DIRECTING COUNCIL,

Having heard the report of the Director on the steps being taken by the countries and the Organization in compliance with the provisions of Resolution XIII of the XXI Meeting of the Directing Council of PAHO (Document CD22/17);

Bearing in mind the position taken by the Ministers of Health to the effect that, if the goals of the Ten-Year Health Plan are to be met, it is essential for each country to define a policy consistent with its economic and social development, clearly specifying the objectives, strategies, and programs for attaining them; and

Considering that, pursuant to Resolution XIII, the Director convened a Working Group on Evaluation of the Ten-Year Health Plan, whose report stated that the process of evaluating the Plan will depend on the way in which the national health policies are defined and that it should reflect the effort made by the countries and the progress achieved in solving their priority health problems,

RESOLVES:

1. To urge Governments to continue, and if possible intensify, the review and formulation of their health policies during the current year, and to draw up and develop their priority programs.
2. To recommend to the Director that he continue to render to the countries the collaboration of PAHO in these activities.

3. To request the Director to put into effect the recommendations concerning studies of costs and financing of the health sector contained in Resolution XIII mentioned above, and that he keep the Governments informed on the results of the programmed activities and on the experience of the countries.

4. To request the Director to take the necessary steps so that the documents relating to evaluation, including those resulting from the experience of the countries until 1 May 1974, be the subject of special consideration during the 72nd Meeting of the Executive Committee, and that countries desiring to do so participate in the discussion by sending observers.

As a follow-up to this, the Director reported to the Executive Committee at its 72nd Meeting in July 1974 on the activities carried out by the Bureau pursuant to the recommendations of the Directing Council. The Committee discussed the information submitted and adopted Resolution XX, as follows:

METHOD OF EVALUATING THE TEN-YEAR HEALTH PLAN FOR THE AMERICAS

THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE,

Having examined the report of the Director on the steps being taken by the Organization to comply with the provisions of Resolution VI of the XXII Meeting of the Directing Council of PAHO;

Considering that it is urgent for the countries to speed up the review of their policies, priorities, and strategies and to implement the programs required for their achievement, with a view to contributing to the fulfillment of the Ten-Year Health Plan for the Americas;

Recognizing the need for the system of evaluation of the Ten-Year Health Plan to be put into operation during the present year; and

Endorsing the recommendations of the Working Group on Evaluation of the Ten-Year Health Plan convened by the Director to deal with the matter, and the method prepared by the Secretariat following the Group's proposals,

RESOLVES:

1. To urge the Governments which have not yet reviewed their health policy in the light of the Ten-Year Health Plan for the Americas to intensify their efforts to do so, and at the same time to formulate and implement the programs required to achieve that end.
2. To recommend to the Director that he transmit the scheme and the forms for the proposed evaluation to the Governments as soon as possible, and that he give any assistance required to enable them to supply the necessary information.
3. To request the Governments to provide PAHO with the necessary information.
4. To ask the Director to arrange for the evaluation of the Ten-Year Health Plan to be a systematic and ongoing activity of PAHO and to keep the Governments informed of the outcome.
5. To request the Director to inform the XIX Pan American Sanitary Conference of the progress made.

The time has now come, in accordance with paragraph 5 of Resolution XX, to inform the Pan American Sanitary Conference of the present status of the process of systematic evaluation of the Ten-Year Health Plan for the Americas.

In view of the exceptional importance and complexity of this, it may be well to refer to some of its main technical and organizational aspects.

Pursuant to recommendations made by the Directing Council at its XXI Meeting, the Director convened in Washington a Working Group of specialists in planning, information and economic matters to furnish advice on the philosophical, methodological and organizational characteristics desirable in the process of evaluating the Ten-Year Health Plan for the Americas. The experts expressed their views in a report incorporated in Document CE72/6 submitted to the Executive Committee at its last Meeting.

The report specifies that the main objective of the evaluation should be to assist the efforts being made by the countries to achieve the national goals they have fixed, in the light of the goals laid down in the Ten-Year Health Plan for the Americas. According to the Working Group, the analysis of the way in which the countries have adopted and adapted the goals of the ten-year regional plan, and the study of any discrepancies between the goals as decided by the countries and those fixed at the continental level by the

III Special Meeting of Ministers, and between the target set by the countries and what has been achieved during the period of evaluation, should constitute the basic nucleus of the evaluation of the Ten-Year Health Plan for the Americas. This examination, combined with the study of the strategies defined by each of the countries for attaining their objectives, and the study of the main restrictions observed, should also provide adequate information on which to draw up the Ten-Year Health Plan for the Americas during the decade 1981-1990.

The Working Group also recommended that this evaluation process be divided clearly into two levels, correlated one with the other but requiring different technical and organizational treatment:

- The process of self-evaluation by each country; and
- Evaluation at the continental level of the efforts of the countries in relation to the proposals laid down in the Ten-Year Health Plan for the Americas.

With regard to evaluation at the continental level, the Working Group recommended taking three points in time: initial evaluation, intermediate evaluation (which in its view should be done in 1977), and final evaluation (1981). During the initial evaluation, the situation of each country would be evaluated in each of the different areas included in the Ten-Year Health Plan (1971-1980) during the first year of its span, and the degree of implementation by countries of the recommendations of the III Special Meeting of Ministers of Health on the definition of goals and determination of strategies. This initial evaluation is regarded as the take off point for the other stages. From the methodological viewpoint, the experts emphasized that the method and the outlook for analysis of each period of evaluation would depend essentially on the way in which the countries presented the information, referring both to the national goals and strategies adopted (take off point for the continental evaluation), and to the information making it possible to estimate the extent of their achievement at the intermediate and final points of the continental evaluation.

The proposed final evaluation is a typical terminal evaluation--a comparison between the goals fixed by the countries and those achieved. This comparison will also make it possible to analyze the discrepancies between the achievements of the countries in regard to the goals of the Ten-Year Health Plan for the Americas. This final evaluation is of the utmost importance, since it will furnish the information needed to give realistic basis to the proposals embodied in the third health plan for the Region of the Americas, in regard both to goals and to strategies for their achievement.

With regard to the process of self-evaluation of each country, the Working Group pointed out that a systematic process of evaluation must be organized and carried out if the desire to improve health in each country,

as reflected in its programs, is to be achieved with the utmost efficiency. The characteristics--philosophical, methodological and organizational--of these national evaluation processes will of course depend on the peculiarities of each country. Nevertheless, the Group considered it important to point out that a clear operational definition of national health policies and strategies is the indispensable framework of reference for programming and for the evaluation of activities and results. It also recommended that, as far as possible, the countries adopt a uniform methodological approach to facilitate the comparison between countries which their undertaking in regard to the evaluation of the Ten-Year Health Plan for the Americas requires.

To help to achieve these ends, the Group recommended that the Director organize the implementation of the continental evaluation of the Ten-Year Health Plan and set up a program of support for the Governments.

Pursuant to these recommendations, which are in line with the various resolutions of the Governing Bodies of the Organization on the subject, the Bureau drew up guidelines for the purpose of assisting in the review and adjustment of national health policies and strategies, with the Ten-Year Health Plan as the frame of reference, and ensuring comparability between the different countries in regard to evaluation at the continental level. Once these guidelines had been sent to the Member Countries, the Bureau provided assistance to Governments requesting it, and is continuing to do so.

More recently, a set of forms was sent to each country, with instructions on how to complete them, based on the proposals in the Ten-Year Health Plan, in order to arrange and compile the data necessary for the initial evaluation. The forms were approved in principle by the Executive Committee at its 72nd Meeting.

These two documents form part of the program of assistance to countries at the two levels mentioned; they were organized by the Director in accordance with the recommendations of the Working Group. In connection with the development of national evaluation systems, PASB is providing assistance at the request of countries through its regular programs in support of the processes of planning and information, with the further help of other programs in specific areas where the situation so requires.

At the continental level, the Bureau has set up an operational group whose main purposes are:

- To work with countries so requesting on the production and organization of the information required for the continental evaluation;
- To centralize, analyze and put into systematic order the information received from the countries and, on the basis of this analysis:

- In the first place, to draw up the methodological and organizational scheme for the evaluation of the Ten-Year Health Plan for the Americas at the continental level; and
- Secondly, to formulate the scheme for evaluating the Ten-Year Health Plan in its intermediate and final stages.

Parallel with this, the Bureau has focused its efforts, designed to improve the programming of its assistance to countries, on making them as efficient and effective as possible in the spirit of the Ten-Year Health Plan for the Americas, which is the mandatory framework of reference for its programming.

The Working Group emphasized that the review and systematic adjustment of national health policies and strategies constituted the prior condition for an efficient process of evaluation, national or continental. It would therefore be legitimate to assess the success achieved so far by the process of evaluation of the Ten-Year Health Plan on the basis of the number of countries which have redefined their health policies in the light of the Ten-Year Health Plan for the Americas.

Of the 29 countries analyzed, 20 have redefined their health policies on the basis of an analysis of their national situation and the proposals embodied in the Ten-Year Health Plan. Of these 20 countries, 16 have already completed their review, and four are completing it at the present time. It may be important to mention that 15 of these countries have followed or are following the course laid down in the guidelines drawn up by the Bureau. Of the 16 countries which have already completed the reformulation of their policies and strategies, 10 are now at the stage of redesigning their plans for the medium term.

The prospects for the evaluation of the Ten-Year Health Plan will depend largely on what proportion of countries define precisely their politics, strategies and goals, and how and when they produce the essential information. The countries should therefore endeavor to speed up these processes and so contribute to the joint effort they have undertaken in this vastly important task of developing and evaluating the Ten-Year Health Plan for the Americas.

The Bureau is prepared to help countries so requesting to achieve this task.