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B. SUBREGIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

Introduction

1. The purpose of this progress report is to inform the Member States of the progress made in the 2014-2015 biennium with regard to public health-related agreements and resolutions, in the framework of subregional integration processes, of interest to the Governing Bodies of the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) and the various international cooperation agencies.
2. This report also covers the progress made in activities carried out as part of cooperation agreements between PAHO and subregional integration entities.

Background

3. The framework for subregional technical cooperation is supported by Resolution CD45.R6, adopted by the Directing Council in 2004. With the adoption of this resolution, subregional technical cooperation was included in budget policy in order to promote the strengthening of PAHO's collaboration in integration processes in the three subregions: Central America, the Caribbean, and South America.

Situation Analysis

4. Through the signing of specific agreements and memoranda of understanding, PAHO/WHO currently provides technical cooperation to the subregional integration processes mentioned below. This report includes a table showing the new developments and progress made in the implementation of priority resolutions arising from these integration processes, their relation to PAHO activities, and the measures that the Organization has supported.
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a) Central America

- Central American Integration System (SICA): Council of Ministers of Health of Central America and the Dominican Republic (COMISCA)
- Meeting of the Health Sector of Central America and Dominican Republic (RESSCAD)
- Mesoamerica Project

b) Caribbean

- Caribbean Community (CARICOM): Council for Human and Social Development (COHSOD)

c) South America

- Andean Community of Nations: Andean Health Agency/Hipólito Unanue Agreement (ORAS/CONHU)
- Southern Common Market (MERCOSUR): Working Subgroup on Health No. 11 (SGT 11)
- Union of South American Nations (UNASUR): South American Health Council
- Bolivarian Alliance for the Peoples of Our America (ALBA)

Integration Entities in Central America***Central American Integration System (SICA)-COMISCA¹***

COMISCA		
Technical and political forum	PAHO-related agreements and resolutions	Subregional impact and progress
40th meeting of COMISCA (June 2014)	Resolution No. 15: Technical assistance to strengthen the capacity of technical personnel to address the chikungunya virus	Training was given in the countries through resources of various sources of financing, among others, PAHO.
	Resolution No. 18: Organ transplantation and donation	There has been no progress.
	Resolution No. 26: Technical and financial assistance to implement the plan for the prevention of adolescent pregnancy	A plan was prepared for the prevention of adolescent pregnancy, promoted by COMISCA-SICA. Its implementation is the responsibility of an inter-institutional group in which PAHO/WHO participates. The Plan is an initiative

¹ Link to consult information on SICA: <http://www.sica.int/>.

COMISCA		
Technical and political forum	PAHO-related agreements and resolutions	Subregional impact and progress
		supported by the declaration of the Partnership for the Prevention of Adolescent Pregnancy, signed by the First Ladies of Central America in October 2014 in Honduras.
Special Meeting of COMISCA (28 September 2014)	Resolution No. 4: Calling on international cooperation agencies to accompany and support the implementation of the Regional Health Policy 2015-2022	The SICA Regional Health Policy, approved by COMISCA in September 2014, was presented to the Summit of the Presidents of SICA (held in Belize in December 2014) and approved at that meeting. The Policy represents progress in the formulation of a subregional cooperation strategy.

RESSCAD²

RESSCAD		
Technical and political forum	PAHO-related agreements and resolutions	Subregional impact and progress
Agreements of the XXX RESSCAD, held 17-18 October 2014 in San Salvador (El Salvador)	Agreement 3, numeral 6, on universal health coverage: request that PAHO provide technical cooperation to support the development of participatory processes aimed at establishing the national roadmap toward universal access to health and universal health coverage	PAHO has provided technical and financial support for national consultations for the preparation of the Strategy for Universal Access to Health and Universal Health Coverage. Nineteen countries and territories have finalized their national consultations. Central American countries have made progress in the preparation of the roadmap to achieve universal access to health and universal health coverage.
	Agreement 4, numeral 3, on strengthening the national regulatory authorities: prepare cooperation agreement between SE-COMISCA, the national regulatory authorities, and PAHO, in order to strengthen the national regulatory authority in all countries	On 27-28 November 2014, with the participation of staff members of the national drug regulatory authorities with experience in bioequivalence, a workshop was held to prepare the proposal for Central American technical regulation

² Link to consult information on RESSCAD: <http://www.paho.org/resscad/>.

RESSCAD		
Technical and political forum	PAHO-related agreements and resolutions	Subregional impact and progress
		of bioequivalence; this will be presented to the Council of Ministers of Economy (COMIECO) in order to take the next step toward approval and implementation, since that entity issues all technical standards for drug quality and efficacy.
	Agreement 4, numeral 4: With the support of PAHO-SE-COMISCA, the Central American proposals for technical regulations on interchangeability, drug surveillance, and good storage and distribution practices will be coordinated with the national regulatory authorities so that SE-COMISCA can present them to SIECA in 2015	The standards for good storage and distribution practices were presented in 2014 so that the corresponding technical regulations can be issued in the first half of 2015.
	Agreement 5, numeral 1, on communicable diseases (Chikungunya virus and Ebola virus disease): Revisit the recommendations of the IHR Emergency committee and the PAHO document on Ebola virus disease (September 2014) ³	PAHO/WHO mobilized a technical team to prepare the response to possible cases of Ebola virus disease in Latin America and the Caribbean, in the framework of the International Health Regulations (IHR, 2005).
	Agreement 7, on the function of RESSCAD with respect to the SICA Regional Health Policy: PAHO/WHO technical cooperation for the working group (PPT RESSCAD, PPT CISSCAD, PPT FOCARD-PHC, and SE-COMISCA) to formulate the proposal for structure, organization, governance of the health sector	The working group has been formed, consisting of PPT XXXI RESSCAD (Honduras), PPT XXIX (Guatemala), PPT XXX (El Salvador), PPT CISSCAD, PPT FOCARD-PHC, SE COMISCA, and PAHO. The proposal will be submitted for review in June 2015.

³ Advancing toward a Regional Position on the International Health Regulations (Document [CD53/14](#))

*Mesoamerica Project*⁴

Mesoamerica Project		
Technical and political forum	PAHO-related agreements and resolutions	Subregional impact and progress
Mesoamerica Project	Agreement between PAHO and the Mexican Agency for International Development Cooperation (AMEXCID)	PAHO provides support in the preparation of the master plans for dengue, chikungunya, malaria, and road safety.

*Caribbean Integration Entities**CARICOM*⁵

5. The institutional council within CARICOM in which the ministers of health meet is the Council for Human and Social Development (COHSOD). COHSOD is responsible for the promotion of health, education, and living and working conditions in the Caribbean Community.

6. The ministers of health traditionally meet at PAHO Headquarters just before the Pan American Sanitary Conference or the Directing Council; the most recent meeting took place on 27-28 September 2014, in Washington, D.C., and was designated as a Special COHSOD.

7. On 4 November 2014, the Heads of Government of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) met in Port-of-Spain (Trinidad and Tobago) in the framework of the 17th Special Meeting. The heads of government addressed public health problems, focusing on the two public health challenges currently facing the community: Ebola virus disease and the outbreak of chikungunya virus.

CARICOM		
Technical and political forum	PAHO-related agreements and resolutions	Subregional impact and progress
Special COHSOD	Prioritize areas of study and the inclusion of technical staff in cooperation activities: there was agreement on promoting greater cooperation between PAHO and the Caribbean Public Health Agency (CARPHA) to help the Member States take innovative steps to respond to the new challenges.	

⁴ Link to consult information on the Mesoamerica Project:
http://www.proyectomesoamerica.org/joomla/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=229&Itemid=57

⁵ Link to consult information on CARICOM: www.caricom.org

CARICOM		
Technical and political forum	PAHO-related agreements and resolutions	Subregional impact and progress
	The need for a policy on alcohol use in the Caribbean: maintain the reduction of harmful alcohol use as a public health priority in the Caribbean.	The Plan of Action to Reduce the Harmful Use of Alcohol (approved by PAHO in 2011) was reviewed.
	Strengthen social protection and the prevention of violence-related injuries through implementation of a regional framework. Align the regional plan for the prevention of violence-related injuries with the CCH IV and the post-2015 development agenda.	
	Update the HIV treatment guidelines on the initiative to eliminate mother-to-child transmission: with PAHO support, promote the mobilization of resources to finance technical cooperation.	
	Approval was given for the project's content and for implementation of the Memorandum of Understanding signed in 2013 by Argentina/ CARICOM-CARPHA/ PAHO	
17th Special Meeting of the Conference of Heads of Government of CARICOM (4 November 2014)	The heads of government emphasized that disease response should be a community effort and that no CARICOM Member State should fight these public health problems on their own. The Meeting approved the measures adopted to date by CARPHA, PAHO, the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS), the Secretariat, and the Government of Cuba, in order to establish and strengthen regional capacities to address Ebola virus disease ⁶	The meeting resulted in a 10-point action plan to Stop Ebola There and Here, which included the following components, among others: Establish a Regional Coordinating Mechanism on Ebola (RCME), chaired by CARPHA and including CARICOM and the secretariats of the OECS, IMPACS, and CDEMA; Cuba would also be invited to participate. The RCME will be directly responsible for preparing a comprehensive regional strategy to address preparedness for Ebola virus disease in collaboration with PAHO/WHO. PAHO/WHO,

⁶ Link to consult information on:
http://www.caricom.org/jsp/pressreleases/press_releases_2014/pres243_14.jsp?null&prnf=1.

CARICOM		
Technical and political forum	PAHO-related agreements and resolutions	Subregional impact and progress
		<p>United Nations, and other development partners and contributors would also be invited to a meeting to be held within a month to increase the effectiveness of the collective response.</p> <p>Several CARICOM Member States were among the countries in which PAHO/WHO, in collaboration with CARPHA, conducted evaluations of preparedness for Ebola virus disease in the framework of the International Health Regulations (2005).</p> <p>PAHO/WHO also carried out technical cooperation activities with the Member States concerning integrated vector control measures for outbreaks of chikungunya virus.</p>

Integration entities in South America

*Andean Community (CAN)—Andean Health Agency/Hipólito Unanue Agreement (ORAS-CONHU)*⁷

8. Within the framework of the Andean Community of Nations, the Andean Health Agency/Hipólito Unanue Agreement (ORAS/CONHU) acts as technical secretariat for the Meeting of Ministers of Health of the Andean Area (REMSAA).⁸ PAHO participates in these meetings as the technical advisory agency on health. The most recent REMSAA was held in the Galapagos Islands (Ecuador), 26-27 March 2014. The XXXV REMSAA will be held in Bolivia in 2015. The exact date has not yet been confirmed.

⁷ Link to consult information on ORAS-CONHU: <http://www.orasconhu.org/>.

⁸ Link to consult information on: <http://www.orasconhu.org/remsa/resoluciones-8/>.

ORAS-CONHU		
Technical and political forum	PAHO-related agreements and resolutions	Subregional impact and progress
REMSAA meeting of 27 March 2014	REMSAA resolution XXXIV/488: Request that the PAHO Strategic Fund, through the Executive Secretary of ORAS/CONHU, prequalify drugs identified in the countries as being hard to acquire due to their strategic and essential nature, and their high cost	In accordance with the Action Plan on Andean Drug Policy, in the second half of 2014 a proposal on drug access strategy was prepared, to be presented at the next REMSAA; the plan incorporates elements of procurement through the Strategic Fund, consolidation of needs for hard-to-acquire and orphaned drugs, prequalification of drugs, and encouragement for industry to manufacture hard-to-acquire drugs.
REMSAA meeting of 27 March 2014	REMSAA resolution XXXIV/490: Support for the preparation, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of the Andean Intercultural Health Policy	An action plan on intercultural health has been prepared. Its progress will be considered at the meeting to be held 30-31 March 2015 in Lima (Peru).

Southern Common Market (MERCOSUR):⁹ Working Subgroup No.11 “Health” (SGT 11)

9. Health issues are addressed in Working Subgroup No. 11 (Health), a technical body made up of representatives of MERCOSUR Member and Associate States. Its main objective is the formulation and harmonization of common regulations in MERCOSUR in each area of jurisdiction. The Member States rotate the pro tempore presidency every six months; Argentina in the second half of 2014; Brazil in the first half of 2015, and Paraguay in the second half of 2015. Meetings are held in the country that acts as president pro tempore. PAHO participates as the technical advisory agency on health.

MERCOSUR		
Technical and political forum	PAHO-related agreements and resolutions	Subregional impact and progress
XXXVI Regular Meeting of Ministers of Health of MERCOSUR and Associated States, held on 14 November 2014	MERCOSUR/RMS/Agreement No. 02/14: Creation of the MERCOSUR network for cooperation and tutorials to develop transplant teams and give human resources training on donations and transplantation	Human resources training began in January 2015.
	MERCOSUR/RMS/Agreement No. 09/11: Creation of a MERCOSUR	As president pro tempore, Argentina submitted a report

⁹ Link to consult information on MERCOSUR: <http://www.mercosur.int/>

MERCOSUR		
Technical and political forum	PAHO-related agreements and resolutions	Subregional impact and progress
	organ donation and transplantation registry: DONASUR.	(11-13 November 2014 in Brasilia) on the regional organ donation and transplantation registry (DONASUR), from its creation to its current situation. DONASUR is a region-wide information technology project for the collection and publication of official information on organ donation and transplantation. It allows information to be compared between countries, as well as the standardization of criteria and languages, and ensures safe, transparent processes.

*Union of South American Nations (UNASUR)*¹⁰

10. UNASUR's South American Health Council (CSS) is made up of a Coordinating Committee, a Technical Secretariat, and five technical groups. The Technical Secretariat, consisting of the president pro tempore and representatives of two countries (past and future presidents pro tempore), convenes and supports the Council's meetings. PAHO participates in the Coordinating Committee as an observer. Starting in December 2014, Uruguay is president pro tempore for a period of one year.

UNASUR		
Technical and political forum	PAHO-related agreements and resolutions	Subregional impact and progress
Declaration of the South American Health Council: Preparedness and response to Ebola virus disease and cooperation with African countries (2 December 2014)	Agreement No.1: Task the Coordinating Committee of the South American Health Council to prepare, within 60 days, a Framework for UNASUR Cooperation consistent with the PAHO/WHO Strategic Plan, in order to strengthen national and regional capabilities aimed at preventing and combatting Ebola virus disease as an event of international concern, or any extraordinary event of a similar nature, including the key	PAHO/WHO mobilized a technical team for preparedness in the Response to possible cases of Ebola virus disease in Latin America and the Caribbean, within the framework of the International Health Regulations (RSI, 2005).

¹⁰ Link to consult information on the South American Health Council: www.unasursg.org.

UNASUR		
Technical and political forum	PAHO-related agreements and resolutions	Subregional impact and progress
	elements of epidemiological surveillance, laboratory diagnosis, clinical treatment, and risk communication.	

*Bolivarian Alliance for the Peoples of Our America (ALBA-TCP)*¹¹

11. ALBA-TCP was founded in Havana (Cuba) on 14 December 2004, by agreement between Venezuela and Cuba.

ALBA-TCP		
Technical and political forum	PAHO-related agreements and resolutions	Subregional impact and progress
Resolution of the Special Summit of 20 October 2014 in Havana (Cuba) on the response to the threat of Ebola virus disease.	Numeral 18: Task the Ministers of Health of the countries of ALBA-TCP to prepare an Action Plan in light of the proposals of the technical meeting of specialists and administrators, and to immediately implement them in coordination with PAHO/WHO. The Plan should be presented for consideration by the Heads of State and of Government of ALBA-TCP no later than 5 November 2014.	PAHO/WHO mobilized a technical team for preparedness in the response to possible cases of Ebola virus disease in Latin America and the Caribbean, within the framework of the International Health Regulations (RSI, 2005).

Proposal

12. Identify, in each subregion, the common priorities among the integration processes in which PAHO could provide technical cooperation, in order to avoid duplication of effort and to maximize the use of technical and financial resources.

13. Establish an information and monitoring system on an easy-to-access platform that enables the Member States and PAHO to monitor compliance with the resolutions, agreements, and memoranda signed by the Organization and the subregional integration processes.

Action by the Executive Committee

14. The Executive Committee is invited to take note of this report and to formulate the recommendations it deems relevant.

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¹¹ Link to consult information on ALBA: www.portalalba.org.