



PAN AMERICAN HEALTH ORGANIZATION
WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION



50th DIRECTING COUNCIL

62nd SESSION OF THE REGIONAL COMMITTEE

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RESOLUTION

CD50.R12

STRATEGY AND PLAN OF ACTION FOR THE ELIMINATION OF MOTHER-TO-CHILD TRANSMISSION OF HIV AND CONGENITAL SYPHILIS

THE 50th DIRECTING COUNCIL,

Having reviewed the report of the Director, *Strategy and Plan of Action for the Elimination of Mother-to-Child Transmission of HIV and Congenital Syphilis* (Document CD50/15), based on the PAHO Strategic Plan 2008–2012;

Considering that a review of the current situation indicates that the two basic conditions for eliminating the two diseases are within the reach of the countries of the Americas: the availability of effective means for interrupting mother-to-child transmission of HIV and congenital syphilis (biological viability) and the availability of practical treatment measures and simple, accessible, and sustainable diagnostic tools (programmatic and financial viability);

Emphasizing that although many countries have successfully expanded the response to HIV through the wide distribution of guidelines for preventing mother-to-child transmission of HIV, access to diagnosis and treatment of congenital syphilis has not simultaneously improved, and organizational and managerial problems, such as fragmented services, inequity in service delivery, human resources scarcity and capacity, and insufficient supplies, persist in the Region's health systems;

Recognizing the goal of moving beyond the outdated notion of tackling the two diseases (HIV and congenital syphilis) and their risk of mother-to-child transmission

through separate efforts (i.e., a disease-focused, instead of a patient-focused, approach), that the two infections occur, or can occur, in a single woman, and that the services provided have an impact on the entire family;

Bearing in mind the commitments of resolutions: *Plan of Action for the Elimination of Congenital Syphilis* (Resolution CE116.R3 [1995]); *Scaling-up of Treatment within a Comprehensive Response to HIV/AIDS* (Resolution CD45.R10 [2004]); *Regional Strategic Plan for HIV/AIDS/STI, 2006-2015, of the Pan American Health Organization* (Resolution CD46.R15 [2005]); and *Elimination of Neglected Diseases and Other Poverty-Related Infections* (Resolution CD49.R19 [2009]);

Recognizing that the Pan American Health Organization has collaborated with the countries of the Region to establish the conceptual underpinnings, techniques, and infrastructure for the preparation of national programs and policies on sexual and reproductive health, with a focus on eliminating mother-to-child transmission of HIV and congenital syphilis;

Considering the importance of a plan of action for implementing the Strategy for the Elimination of Mother-to-Child Transmission of HIV and Congenital Syphilis, which will offer guidance, as appropriate, for the preparation of future national plans and the strategic plans of all organizations interested in cooperating for health with this goal in the countries of the Americas,

RESOLVES:

1. To endorse the Strategy and approve the Plan of Action for the Elimination of Mother-to-Child Transmission of HIV and Congenital Syphilis by 2015, in order to respond effectively and efficiently to current and emerging needs, with specific consideration of the prevailing inequalities in health status, to strengthen the health system's response in order to develop and implement policies, laws, plans, programs, and services to address this public health problem.
2. To urge Member States to:
 - (a) give priority to the elimination of mother-to-child transmission of HIV and congenital syphilis and the reduction of risk factors by integrating Human immunodeficiency virus/sexually transmitted infections (HIV/STI) prevention and control interventions in the health services for prenatal care, sexual and reproductive health, and other related areas;

- (b) design and execute national plans and promote the establishment of public policies guided by the Strategy and Plan of Action, focusing on the needs of the most at risk and vulnerable populations;
- (c) coordinate with other countries in the Region to share experiences and tools and engage in joint advocacy, monitoring, and evaluation of the progress of the elimination initiative;
- (d) implement the Strategy and Plan of Action, as appropriate, as part of an integrated approach based on primary health care, emphasizing intersectoral action and monitoring and evaluating the program's effectiveness and allocation of resources;
- (e) promote the collection and use of data on mother-to-child transmission of HIV and congenital syphilis, disaggregated by age, sex, and ethnicity, as well as the use of gender analysis, new technologies (for example, geographic information systems), and forecasting models to strengthen the planning, execution, and surveillance of national plans, policies, programs, laws, and interventions related to sexual and reproductive health;
- (f) increase the coverage of quality health services and access to such services—including health promotion, prevention, early diagnosis, effective treatment, and continuing care—to foster greater demand and use by women of childbearing age, pregnant women, and their partners;
- (g) promote greater capacity among policymakers, program directors, and health care providers to draft and implement policies and programs that promote community development and provide quality, effective health services which address sexual and reproductive health needs and their related health determinants;
- (h) improve coordination in the health sector and with partners from other sectors to help put health measures and initiatives for the development of sexual and reproductive health into practice, and at the same time minimize the duplication of functions and heighten the impact of the limited resources to the fullest;
- (i) promote vigorous community participation in the health sector.

3. Request the Director to:
 - (a) promote coordination and implementation of the Strategy and Plan of Action by integrating the activities of PAHO's program areas into the national, subregional, regional, and interagency levels;
 - (b) collaborate with the Member States in implementing the Strategy and Plan of Action in accordance with their own national situation and priorities, and promote the dissemination and interagency utilization of the resulting products at the national, subregional, and regional levels;
 - (c) promote the development of collaborative research initiatives that can furnish the evidence needed to establish and disseminate effective, appropriate programs and interventions for the elimination of mother-to-child transmission of HIV and congenital syphilis and the improvement of sexual and reproductive health;
 - (d) forge new partnerships and strengthen existing ones in the international community to mobilize the human, financial, and technological resources needed to implement the Strategy and Plan of Action;
 - (e) promote technical cooperation among countries, subregions, international and regional organizations, public entities, private organizations, universities, the media, civil society, and communities, in activities to promote sexual and reproductive health;
 - (f) promote coordination between the Strategy and Plan of Action and similar initiatives of other international technical cooperation and financing agencies;
 - (g) report periodically to the Governing Bodies on the progress and obstacles identified during the execution of the Strategy and Plan of Action, and consider adapting the Plan to respond to the varied contexts and new challenges in the Region.

(Eighth plenary, 30 September 2010)