

*executive committee of
the directing council*



PAN AMERICAN
HEALTH
ORGANIZATION

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WORLD
HEALTH
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Washington, D.C.
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Provisional Agenda Item 3.2

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REPORT OF THE SPECIAL SUBCOMMITTEE ON WOMEN, HEALTH, AND
DEVELOPMENT

The 13th Meeting of the Special Subcommittee on Women, Health, and Development of the Executive Committee, the Final Report of which is annexed, was held at the Headquarters of the Pan American Health Organization, in Washington, D.C., from 5 to 7 April 1993. The meeting was chaired by Dr. María Elena de Rivas, of Honduras, with Ms. Maritza Tamayo of Cuba acting as Vice Chair and Ms. María Rodríguez de Tello of Peru as Rapporteur.

After hearing the report on the evolution, current situation, and prospects of technical cooperation on women, health, and development, the Subcommittee indicated that an important task for the future will be to define indicators that can measure progress and evaluate technical cooperation in this area. The members also emphasized that any effort at progress and evaluation will require the cooperation and participation of the countries.

The interagency preparatory activities for the World Conference on Women to be held in 1995 were described, along with the plan of work for the coming years.

Colombia's policy "Health for Women and Women for Health" was recognized as the first health policy to be formulated and implemented using a gender-based approach. The Subcommittee recommended that information about this pioneering effort be broadly disseminated in the Region, and requested the Secretariat to promote exchange and cooperation between countries with common interests in this area.

The proposals to promote equity in health by promoting women's health were examined. The delegates agreed on the need to have activities that are geared toward changing attitudes and perceptions regarding women's health and lifestyles. They

suggested that more emphasis be placed on the strategies of communication and promotion of self-care, taking into account sociocultural factors and local realities.

Violence against women and girls was discussed, and the proposed Regional strategies of action were approved. The delegates unanimously recommended the inclusion of this topic on the agenda of the Governing Bodies of the Organization and its recognition as a Regional public health problem that calls for urgent intervention strategies and the cooperation of the health sector. They requested the Executive Committee to study this problem and bring it to the attention of the Directing Council.

The proposal to promote and develop research on women, health, and development was examined and a plan of work presented on the subject of "Women, Gender, and Communicable Diseases," with emphasis on tropical diseases. It was also felt that the strategy of promoting specific topics had the potential to mobilize different areas, thus focusing interest on this field. The proposed plan was approved, with the recommendation that a report be submitted on its results.

There was a presentation on the research initiative for Female-Friendly Services, which, through a gender-based approach and a female perspective, seeks to help change and improve services so that they are better adapted to meet women's needs. The Subcommittee applauded the initiative and requested that the study be disseminated and that technical advisory services be provided to ensure its success.

There was also discussion of the proposal for a Regional system to monitor and evaluate the health status of women and sex differentials in health. The Subcommittee agreed that minimum indicators need to be established for the Regional level and for groups of countries in order to ensure monitoring and evaluation of the health conditions of women. The Secretariat was asked to prepare a proposal for discussion at the next meeting.

Finally, under "Other Matters," the Subcommittee discussed the status of women in the Pan American Sanitary Bureau, and a report was presented on the progress that has been made in appointing women to positions of higher authority. The Subcommittee expressed its thanks for the report and requested that the Secretariat examine the barriers that prevent professional women from being hired and promoted to high-level positions.

The agenda for the 14th Meeting of the Subcommittee in 1994 was discussed and approved, taking into account the issues examined and the recommendations made by the delegates.



PAN AMERICAN HEALTH ORGANIZATION

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE DIRECTING COUNCIL

SPECIAL SUBCOMMITTEE ON WOMEN, HEALTH, AND DEVELOPMENT



13th Meeting
Washington, D.C., 5-7 April 1993

MSD13/FR (Eng.)
7 April 1993
ORIGINAL: SPANISH

FINAL REPORT

FINAL REPORT

The 13th Meeting of the Special Subcommittee on Women, Health, and Development of the Executive Committee was held at the Headquarters of the Pan American Health Organization, in Washington D.C., from 5 to 7 April 1993.

The following members of the Subcommittee, elected by the Executive Committee, were present: Cuba, the United States of America, Honduras, Peru, and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines. Colombia participated as an observer.

Also in attendance, as observers, were representatives from the following agencies: the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), the Inter-American Commission of Women (IACW), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), and the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM).

OPENING OF THE MEETING

Dr. Carlyle Guerra de Macedo, Director of PAHO, opened the meeting and welcomed the members of the Subcommittee and the other participants, wishing them success in their deliberations.

OFFICERS OF THE MEETING

The following officers were elected:

<u>Chair:</u>	Dr. María Elena de Rivas, Honduras
<u>Vice Chair:</u>	Ms. Maritza Tamayo Hodelín, Cuba
<u>Rapporteur:</u>	Ms. María Rodríguez de Tello, Peru
<u>Secretary ex officio:</u>	Dr. Carlyle Guerra de Macedo, Director, PAHO
<u>Technical Secretary:</u>	Dr. Rebecca de los Ríos, Regional Coordinator of the Program on Women, Health, and Development, PAHO

AGENDA

The Subcommittee adopted the following agenda:

1. **Opening of the Meeting**
2. **Election of the Chair, Vice Chair, and Rapporteur**
3. **Adoption of the Agenda**
4. **Technical Cooperation on Women, Health, and Development: Evolution, Current Situation, and Prospects**
5. **Summary of Interagency Preparatory Activities for the World Conference on Women to be Held in 1995**
6. **Health for Women and Women for Health: A Policy of the Republic of Colombia**
7. **Violence against Women and Girls: Analysis and Proposals from the Perspective of Public Health**
8. **Health Promotion: Improving the Health Status of Women and Promoting Equity**
9. **Proposal for the Promotion and Development of Research on Women, Health, and Development**
10. **Proposal for a Regional System to Monitor and Evaluate the Health Status of Women and Sex Differentials in Health**
11. **Female-Friendly Services: A Research/Action Initiative**
12. **Other Matters**

PRESENTATIONS, DISCUSSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Presented below is a summary of the presentations and discussions on each agenda item, along with the recommendations of the Subcommittee:

Item 5: Summary of Interagency Preparatory Activities for the World Conference on Women to be Held in 1995

Dr. Rebecca de los Ríos, Regional Coordinator of the Program on Women, Health and Development of PAHO, summarized the principal activities carried out thus far in preparation for the World Conference on Women to be held in Beijing, China in 1995, and noted that this meeting will coincide with the 50th anniversary celebration of the United Nations. She reported that the Region of the Americas will present an interagency document at the conference which will be drawn up under the coordination of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), on the topic of "gender equity, sustained development, and consolidation of democracy."

Summary of the discussion

With regard to the health strategies that PAHO will propose for inclusion in the interagency document to be presented at the World Conference, the Cuban delegate said that while reproductive health should not be the central focus in the approach to the issue of women in development, it should not be ignored either, since it is still a major concern in many countries. The Peruvian delegate stressed that it was important to include discussion of the health of working women in the interagency document.

Other participants in the Meeting commented on the importance of the interagency effort, as a reflection of the collaboration within the United Nations system, as well as the wealth of activities being pursued by the governments and nongovernmental organizations.

Recommendations

The Subcommittee approved the proposed plan of work and recommended that the Subcommittee and the Member Countries be kept informed about the preparatory activities for the World Conference.

Item 4: Technical Cooperation on Women, Health, and Development: Evolution, Current Situation, and Prospects

The document on this topic summarized the activities carried out by the Regional Program on Women, Health, and Development of the Pan American Health Organization within its various spheres of action, and analyzed PAHO technical cooperation in this area, as well as future prospects. The item was presented by Dr. de los Ríos, who began with a follow-up report on the recommendations that the Subcommittee had made at its 1992 meeting. She continued by describing the evolution and current situation of the delivery of PAHO technical cooperation in WHD, pointing out that there had been three phases: (1) mobilization and creation of opportunities within the Organization; (2) organization and planning; and (3) institutionalization and technical and scientific development. She summed up the results obtained, as well as the activities carried out in 1992 with the collaboration of other Regional programs of the Secretariat, concluding her presentation with a discussion of the prospects for 1993.

Summary of the discussion

With regard to the follow-up on the agreements and recommendations adopted by the Subcommittee at the 12th Meeting in 1992, the Chair indicated that the Secretariat needed to facilitate technical and methodological support for the incorporation of the gender approach in health, as well as to provide cooperation for training. Several of the members expressed concern over the limited Regional efforts in the area of women, work, and occupational health. Dr. de los Ríos explained that, while the WHD Program had supported country initiatives during the year, there had not in fact been any activity at the Regional level, since priority had been given to other matters that had not been programmed originally, such as interagency activities in preparation for the World Conference on Women.

The members of the Subcommittee thanked the speaker for the presentation on the evolution and assessment of technical cooperation on women, health, and development, which had provided some perspective on the development of this area at the Regional level and in the countries. They suggested, however, that it would be useful to have indicators that could provide an accurate assessment of the advances, achievements, and problems that affect the health status of women in the Region, as well as any results that the countries have obtained.

Sir George Alleyne, Assistant Director, PAHO, addressed the subject of assessment and indicators, saying that it was important to specify the kind of assessment that was being talked about, given that an assessment of the evolution and situation of women's health in the Region is quite different from an assessment of the evolution and

current situation of technical cooperation on women, health, and development. Both kinds of assessment are necessary, and must be performed through the collaboration and combined efforts of the countries and the Secretariat.

The United States delegation stressed the relationship between equity, the status of women, and women's health, noting that policies and programs need to include a special focus on such critical areas as occupational health and violence against women.

Dr. Carlyle Guerra de Macedo, Director, PAHO, thanked the Subcommittee for its comments and contributions, and made several points regarding technical cooperation. He cited the importance that has been placed on the development of methodologies to implement the gender approach, and acknowledged that the Secretariat had not fully grasped this concept so as to be able to move beyond the stage of analysis to action. He indicated that several internal training activities were planned for 1993.

Dr. Macedo expressed satisfaction over the consolidation of the project on Comprehensive Health of Women in Central America, and disappointment over the relative lack of progress in research on women. With regard to occupational health, he noted that, while 1992 had been a year of intense activity, particular attention had not been given to the status of working women. He discussed the scope and limitations of the information available on occupational health, not only in relation to women but to both sexes, as well as the obstacles that needed to be overcome in order to define plans of action in the countries.

The Director reaffirmed his continued support for efforts in the area of women's health, and said that he was confident that the Subcommittee's deliberations would be fruitful.

Recommendations

After discussing and analyzing the presentations, the Subcommittee requested the Secretariat to: 1) complete the analysis of the barriers preventing women from being hired by PAHO and promoted to high-level positions, and to provide the Subcommittee with detailed information on the status of women within the Organization prior to the close of the 13th Meeting; and 2) continue its efforts to support the countries as they work to improve their information systems on occupational health, as well as promote and support research on occupational health from the gender perspective.

Item 8: Health Promotion: Improving the Health Status of Women and Promoting Equity

This item was presented by Dr. Gloria Coe, Regional Advisor in Social Communication of PAHO, who emphasized the contribution that health promotion has made to social and economic development, with a view to improving the health status of women and their families in Latin America and the Caribbean. She said that the aim of the document was to provide more information about the leading causes of death and disease among women in the Region, and the related social and environmental conditions. It also proposed lines of action to assist the Governments in the areas of policy, health and social programs, community organization, empowerment of women, education, and research. The document concluded with a proposal for lines of action in health promotion that PAHO and its Member Countries should implement, with the goal of promoting more human-centered and equitable development for both men and women, as well as improving the health status of the women in the Region. These guidelines are expected to help the Member Governments prepare concrete plans of action for health promotion.

Summary of the discussion

There was consensus among the participants with regard to the importance of implementing activities aimed at changing attitudes and perceptions regarding women's health and lifestyles. Several members suggested that there should be stronger emphasis on education and communication as a means of reshaping attitudes toward domestic violence, the risks associated with chronic diseases, etc.

It was stressed that the strategy of promotion of women's health needs to be implemented in the primary care context, and it was noted that women play a central role in health promotion. It was recommended that sociocultural factors be taken into account, and that language diversity be acknowledged so that health promotion efforts are not carried out solely in a country's official language. It was added that the countries need to more clearly define those women's health problems that merit a stronger and more sustained promotional and educational effort.

The Chair praised the document presented and agreed that primary health care needs to be a priority. The United States delegation shared that country's experiences with the "Healthy People 2000" project.

Dr. Alleyne stressed the idea of "missed opportunities" and talked about how it would be possible to take advantage of opportunities to provide education on health promotion in schools and health services, particularly on issues that affect women.

Recommendations

The Subcommittee requested that the Secretariat, in implementing the proposed activities in the field of health promotion, place emphasis on educating women about their own health, and that PAHO facilitate an exchange of information between countries. It underscored the importance of working in accordance with the epidemiological profile of each country, as well as the priority areas targeted for education and prevention efforts. The Subcommittee emphasized that health promotion should be a central focus and recommended that the initiatives to disseminate information on this and related subjects be supported. It also recommended that concrete initiatives to implement the suggested strategies and lines of action be developed in countries or groups of countries.

Item 11: Female-Friendly Services: A Research/Action Initiative

Dr. Néstor Suárez Ojeda, Regional Advisor on Maternal and Child Health of PAHO, presented this item. He noted that the document explored women's health care in Latin America and the Caribbean and discussed the differences and disparities that are observed in the delivery of health services and the resulting discrimination against women. Attention was drawn to the need to rethink the health care model from the gender perspective in order to make it more equitable and effective. The concept of "female-friendly services" was explained, and research/action methodologies were proposed for evaluating the existing services from the gender perspective and promoting positive changes in them. To that end, elements for preparing research protocols were provided, and several instruments for examining the services from the gender perspective were suggested.

The document proposed activities that PAHO might undertake as part of its technical cooperation and highlighted experiences that the Organization had supported in the countries of the Region.

Summary of the discussion

During their discussion the members of the Subcommittee agreed to stress the following points of action: involving other sectors and programs; analyzing efficiency factors and other indicators; developing a study of missed opportunities caused by lack of human resources; preparing a profile of services according to levels of complexity; and, particularly, ensuring the accessibility of these services and high quality health care for all women. Female-friendly services must be suitable from the human, technical, logistic, and information perspective, and should incorporate relevant cultural traditions in each instance.

In response to these concerns, Dr. Suárez Ojéda assured the participants that the process is being adapted to each country, and that it is the countries themselves that are taking the lead in implementing this initiative. Information on various experiences is being collected and instruments are being changed as the need arises in each country by adapting terminology to local usage and even eliminating certain points.

Dr. Alleyne expressed the opinion that the mere fact that there had begun to be talk of a change in the attitude toward women in the services was a major step forward.

Recommendations

The Subcommittee agreed with the Secretariat that the proposed instruments need to be revised before being sent to the countries so that they could be made more suitable, and recommended that PAHO provide technical advisory services on their use to the countries involved in the initiative.

Item 6: Health for Women and Women for Health: A Policy of the Republic of Colombia

The document prepared by the Ministry of Health of Colombia was presented by Dr. Wolfgang Munar Angulo, Deputy Minister of Health, who explained that the Colombian case was being presented as a means of sharing, for instructive purposes, the Ministry of Health's experience with a health policy that specifically targets women. The document reported on the socioeconomic, demographic, and political factors that had formed the context for the formulation and initial implementation of the policy.

The Colombian policy endeavors to bring about a reorganization of women's health care that meets women's needs and acknowledges biological, psychological, and social aspects, while shifting the focus in health care away from reproductive health. One year after formulation of this policy, the Ministry, at its central level, is at the stage of disseminating it and sensitizing the various health care levels, with a view to obtaining a commitment from all men and women and securing their participation in helping bring about the proposed changes. This will involve officials, NGOs, international organizations, (PAHO, UNICEF), and various institutions. The main effort has been concentrated on holding training seminars and disseminating information, as well as on presenting projects with a view to obtaining financing to underwrite the initial changes that need to be made in the local health systems.

Support for and efforts to implement this policy are still incipient. There need to be more extensive educational activities and efforts need to be stepped up--both in terms of research and action--to respond to the problems that affect women, including abuse, mental health disorders, and occupational health issues.

Summary of the discussion

The presentation by Dr. Munar was enthusiastically received by all the participants, who recognized the great importance of this pioneer experience in the Region, being the first policy on women's health with a gender approach, and concluded that many countries might follow the example of Colombia. Several members of the Subcommittee asked for more information about how the country had initiated and implemented the process of incorporating this policy into the Constitution and putting it into practice.

In response to the different questions with regard to the implementation of the process, Dr. Munar explained that Colombia had not attempted to create something from nothing, but rather had taken advantage of the existence of a variety of nongovernmental women's organizations who collaborated to support the proposed policy from the beginning. He specifically mentioned the contribution that the First Lady of Colombia had made in supporting the execution of this new pro-women policy, and noted that in implementing it the country had used the approach of focusing on a target population--in this case poor women--so that resources and efforts would not be spread too thin. He personally felt that what was most important was to ensure the policy's continuity through changes of government.

With regard to the incorporation of the policy on women into the 1991 Constitution, Dr. Munar explained that he had not been involved in that phase of the process, and asked Dr. Argelia Londoño of Colombia, who had been involved from the beginning, to provide more information. Dr. Londoño said that the strategy had been to approach the appropriate authorities at the local level, for which purpose some 200 groups of nongovernmental women's organizations were organized to promote this action.

Recommendations

The Subcommittee considered that this very interesting Colombian experience could serve as an example to other countries, and recommended that PAHO disseminate it and facilitate cooperation between countries who are interested in this subject.

Item 7: Violence Against Women and Girls: Analysis and Proposals from the Perspective of Public Health

Dr. Argelia Londoño, Consultant to the WHD Program of PAHO, presented this item. She stressed that during recent decades, abuse and violence against women and girls have increasingly become an important concern for nongovernmental women's organizations and United Nations agencies. She noted that it was widely recognized that discrimination and abuse are closely linked, and that violence against women is a health

problem with ethical and legal dimensions, as well as human rights implications. Violence against women erodes the fabric of community life, causing a breakdown of emotional ties, quality of life, and social well-being. It has become such a pervasive social pattern that more than half of women are affected. The family, school and work, and the health services are some of the social contexts in which violence disrupts human relationships.

The document recommended the adoption of a series of proposals for redirecting health sector responses in order to provide treatment and rehabilitation programs for victims of abuse, and to promote more democratic relations between human beings by teaching them how to live together peacefully. It also proposed conflict resolution and the establishment of epidemiological surveillance systems, as well as research and participatory action, with a view to ensuring diagnoses and interventions that are timely, effective, and humane. In addition, it recommended intersectoral strategies for dealing with the problem on a more comprehensive basis.

Summary of the discussion

The participants agreed that one of the principal problems with regard to violence against women is that sometimes the violence is so subtle and hidden that even the women themselves don't recognize it. Women need to be educated about their rights, and health professionals and members of the police force need to be taught to recognize violence. The delegate from Saint Vincent and the Grenadines observed that violence against women is frequently the product of child abuse, and that the perpetrator of this type of violence is usually the mother, who is the head of household in a large percentage of low-income homes. She added that nurses are usually in the best position to counsel women to prevent abuse of their children, since they can take advantage of the opportunity provided by the consultations around the time of childbirth.

Most of the discussion centered around the strategy that should be adopted to ensure that the problem of violence against women and girls, heretofore treated as a domestic conflict, is recognized as a public health problem as well and the countries take strong measures in this regard. The participants agreed to recommend implementation of the strategies outlined in the document and to place special emphasis on education and prevention, as well as special health care services for the victims.

The Subcommittee discussed several alternatives for bringing about the desired action by the Executive Committee. That body in turn could take the matter to the Directing Council, so that the specific problem of violence against women would be analyzed, and the health sector could take measures to support prevention, treatment for victims, and rehabilitation.

Recommendations

There was consensus among the Subcommittee members that it was important for this topic to be examined by the Executive Committee and then submitted by the Executive Committee to the Directing Council in the form of a proposed resolution recognizing that violence against women and girls is a public health problem and recommending the adoption of pertinent measures for its prevention and treatment by the health sector. The Secretariat was requested to mention this concern explicitly in the Final Report of the 13th Meeting.

At the same time the Subcommittee recommended that efforts be stepped up to sensitize those in the health and legal professions, to disseminate information, and to increase awareness of this problem, which will require coordinated action between the governments and civil society. It was also pointed out that closer coordination and communication is needed between women's groups and health services so that concerted action can be taken both in the area of prevention and treatment.

Item 9: Proposal for the Promotion and Development of Research on Women, Health, and Development

In presenting this item, Dr. Elsa Gómez, Consultant to the WHD Program of PAHO, indicated that the purpose of the proposed project was to promote and support in the Region, in a systematic and coordinated manner, the production and effective utilization of knowledge concerning the interactive relationships that exist between the biological, physical-environmental, and sociocultural elements that shape both the health of women and their contribution to development. She noted that the document described the institutional background of the initiative, pointed out the sizeable gaps in information in the area of women, health, and development, outlined the analytical approaches that it is hoped to stimulate, and proposed strategies to encourage and guide the development of research on this subject in the Region.

Dr. Gómez informed the Subcommittee that, in line with the recommendations issued by the 12th Meeting, the WHD Program has been promoting interprogram discussion of priority research topics and coordinated development of strategies to stimulate research using a gender approach. The Program is making progress in working out an agreement between several PAHO programs to conduct cooperative research on "Women, Gender, and Communicable diseases," with particular emphasis on tropical diseases.

Summary of the discussion

Particular concern was expressed over the fact that, of all the research protocols presented in the area of WHD by the countries of the Region in 1992, only two have been approved. Some members thought that perhaps the requirements of the Internal Advisory Committee on Research were too stringent; others felt that the solution was not to lower those requirements but rather to train and advise national personnel on how to prepare research proposals, or, in countries which already have that capability, to provide resource support. Still others believed that it was not important whether or not a proposal could be specifically categorized as research on women; what mattered was the actual content, and whether it encompassed aspects of women's health. All agreed that the essential task was to conduct simple research that could be translated into immediate action to benefit the recipients.

In response to the various concerns that were expressed, Dr. Alberto Pellegrini, Coordinator of the PAHO Research Coordination and Technology Development Unit, said that five countries of the Region account for 90% of the research, and that most of that work is clinical or biomedical. In 1988/1989, only 5% of the research projects dealt with public health. The area of research on applied social sciences, where research projects on women would be included, is also very weak. He indicated that a survey was being conducted to find out what is being taught about research methodology in graduate courses, and what students are producing once they graduate. As far as the requirements of the Advisory Committee were concerned, he said the criteria applied were intended to ensure the necessary scientific rigor.

Recommendations

The Subcommittee requested the Secretariat to carry out the proposed plan of work for the promotion and development of research on women, gender, and communicable diseases, and to report to the following year's meeting on the results.

Item 10: Proposal for a Regional System to Monitor and Evaluate the Health Status of Women and Sex Differentials in Health

The document on this subject was presented by Drs. Pedro Luis Castellanos and Edna Roberts, of the Program on Health Situation and Trend Assessment of PAHO, and by Dr. Renate Plaut, Consultant to PAHO, who pointed out that it summarized some of the characteristics of health situation assessment in general, and of assessment of women's health and sex differentials in particular. It was stressed that selection of the data whose production is to be promoted and supported must be preceded by definition of the health problems that are to be targeted for action. Three criteria for selecting

health problems to monitor were described, and some general characteristics of the indicators were discussed.

The procedures suggested for the evaluation included: the compilation and refinement of indicators which, while specific--for example, figures on maternal mortality--have information value that relates to broader aspects of health; the use of statistics from health establishments to get an approximate idea of the amount of resources absorbed by major groups of diagnostic categories for both hospitalization and outpatient care; surveillance based on procedures that do not cover the total population (e.g., surveys of households and sentinel institutions); and the analysis of preventable or excess mortality.

Finally, the document proposed several lines of action for the different technical programs to implement in conjunction with the corresponding national groups and at PAHO Headquarters, in order to formalize the desired regional surveillance system.

Summary of the discussion

The participants agreed that this was a crucial and very complex area that bore a close relationship to what had been said initially about the assessment of trends in the health status of women. Some countries produce a large quantity of data which then goes unused because there are not enough human and/or financial resources available to process them.

Several members of the Subcommittee shared their concern over the numerous requests for information that the countries receive from international agencies. The Chair emphasized that it was important for the agency soliciting the data to specify what type of information it needed at every level of government, and to state the purpose for which it would be utilized.

Another concern shared by several members was the lack of indicators on women's health.

The Secretariat staff who had made the presentation assured the Subcommittee that PAHO was endeavoring not to make excessive requests for information and was attempting to improve statistical data, but noted that it was difficult to transform such data into usable information.

Recommendations

The Subcommittee requested that the Secretariat draw up and present to the next meeting a proposal on key indicators to be used in the monitoring and evaluation of women's health at the Regional level, and by groups of countries.

Item 12: Other Matters

THE STATUS OF WOMEN IN PAHO

In response to the request of the Subcommittee that the Secretariat present detailed information prior to the close of the 13th Meeting on the status of women in PAHO, Dr. Diana Lavertu, Chief of Personnel of PAHO, presented the latest statistics on the Organization's professional staff. She reported that the target figure of 30% had been surpassed at Headquarters and similar success was expected in the field. She said that much remained to be done, but not enough applications were being received from the countries when vacancies opened up.

Summary of the discussion

Several members of the Subcommittee mentioned that the lack of timely information made it difficult to apply for vacant posts. At times the announcements were being received after the cut-off date for the submission of applications or else they were not being channeled to the appropriate levels when they were received in the ministries.

The delegates from Cuba and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines emphasized that Cuba and the Caribbean certainly did not have a scarcity of qualified personnel. PAHO support would be needed to create a cadre of women who have already been trained, as well as to promote adequate education for young girls in school, with a view to qualifying them for international service.

The United States delegation added that some of the requirements for certain posts were unnecessary and might be creating another barrier. It applauded the recent promotions of qualified women in PAHO.

Dr. Alleyne said that the Organization was not just trying to reach the established targets, but was sincerely interested in having a more even distribution of men and women in decision-making posts.

Recommendations

The Subcommittee decided that the agenda for the 1994 meeting should include a study of the barriers that keep professional women from being hired by the Pan American Sanitary Bureau and promoted to high-level posts. In addition it asked the Secretariat to present another progress report on the status of women in the Bureau at that meeting.

PROPOSED AGENDA FOR THE XIV MEETING

The Rapporteur presented the proposed agenda for the 1994 meeting to be considered by the Subcommittee.

Summary of the discussion

Dr. Carlyle Guerra de Macedo, Director, PAHO, joined the group during the discussion of the proposed agenda and expressed satisfaction that several of the items under consideration were a continuation of what had been discussed at the 13th Meeting. He suggested that the agenda include a follow-up report on the preparations for the World Conference to be held in 1995, but added that, in order to keep the agenda from becoming too long, two of the proposed topics should be eliminated: occupational health from a gender perspective, and the study on the role of the female work force in the health sector.

Recommendations

The Subcommittee accepted the Director's suggestions and approved the following proposed agenda for the 14th Meeting:

1. Quadrennial Report on Technical Cooperation in Women, Health, and Development during 1991-1994. Analysis of the Implementation of the Strategic Orientation by the Secretariat and the Member Governments.
2. Follow-up Report on the Interagency Preparatory Activities for the World Conference on Women to be Held in 1995.
3. Case Study (of a country or subregion).
4. Results of the Plan of Work for the Promotion and Development of Research on Women, Gender, and Communicable Diseases.

5. Proposal for Basic Indicators to Monitor and Evaluate the Health Status of Women at the Regional Level and by Groups of Countries.
6. Study on the Barriers that Limit the Appointment of Women to Professional Posts in the Pan American Sanitary Bureau.

CLOSING SESSION

The Rapporteur read out a preliminary Final Report, which included the recommendations made under each item.

Dr. Macedo commended the members of the Subcommittee for the work they had done and assured them of his support in connection with the problem of violence, for which they thanked him.

The Chair declared the 13th Meeting closed, thanking all the participants for having attended and contributed to the meeting.

Annex: List of participants



PAN AMERICAN HEALTH ORGANIZATION
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE DIRECTING COUNCIL
SPECIAL SUBCOMMITTEE ON WOMEN, HEALTH, AND DEVELOPMENT



13th Meeting
Washington, D.C., 5-7 April 1993

SMD13/2, Rev. 2
16 April 1993
16 abril 1993

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS
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**SAINT VINCENT AND THE GRENADINES
SAN VICENTE Y LAS GRANADINAS**

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