

*executive committee of
the directing council*



PAN AMERICAN
HEALTH
ORGANIZATION

*working party of
the regional committee*

WORLD
HEALTH
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80th Meeting
Washington, D.C.
June-July 1978

Provisional Agenda Item 21

CE80/18 (Eng.)
11 May 1978
ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

PAN AMERICAN CENTERS

Background Information Report on the Study of PAHO Centers

Resolution XXXI of the XXV Meeting of the Directing Council directed the Organization to conduct two studies concerning the Pan American Centers for submission to the 80th Meeting of the Executive Committee and the XX Pan American Sanitary Conference. These studies involve a detailed analysis of the Pan American Centers and the development of draft standards and prerequisites to be met by national research and teaching centers for acceptance as Associated Centers collaborating with the Organization.

In order to implement this mandate within the short time frame available, the Director appointed a study team of outside consultants. This group was assembled by the Director on 6 January 1978, at which time the frame of reference for these studies was reviewed and agreed upon. The timetable for the initial findings of the Study Team call for an interim report to be distributed during the 80th Meeting of the Executive Committee in June/July 1978.

While considerable material had been compiled for review by the Study Team, the plan of action adopted required on-site visits of the physical plant and a close observation of the modus operandi of individual centers. Another key factor that was explored in depth was the perceptions of the many receptors of center activities, including technical personnel and policy makers at the national level.

Since the centers managed by PAHO are considered as technical extensions of Headquarters Divisions, considerable time and effort was dedicated to reviewing the policy framework and overall philosophy as viewed by the individual Divisions. In addition, extensive discussions were held with PAHO professionals, exploring the numerous mechanisms for

establishing and maintaining individual centers as well as the wide range of variation regarding management, functions, extent of coverage, relationship within the PAHO Technical Cooperation Program, mix of research, training and service activities, impact of outside sources of funds, etc.

As a prelude to examining the multinational centers in AMRO/PAHO, the study team met with WHO officials concerning the background and criteria of the WHO Collaborating Centers.

However these Centers vary considerably and comprise a wide range of institutions, departments and laboratories which undertake specific functions on behalf of the World Health Organization. After executing an agreement with the appropriate Government, WHO designates the institution, department, or laboratory as a Collaborating Center for such functions as: specific investigations, assembling specific information, storage and distribution of standard preparations, drug screening and monitoring and research training. Usually, in all of these arrangements WHO financing is generally absent or very minimal.

The criteria used by WHO for designation as a Collaborating Center includes such factors as: a recognized image in its field (international or national); professional staff and facilities; demonstrated stability in funding and personnel; capacity and ability in WHO program areas; and prolonged capability for delivering service.

These useful discussions emphasized the tremendous challenge faced by the Study Team. Visits were scheduled to the individual Centers to provide a thorough understanding of these apparently unique and complex mechanisms for delivering the PAHO Program of Technical Cooperation.

At varying times during the period from February through May 1978 the Study Team visited with various health, and agricultural authorities and PAHO field staff in Colombia, Argentina, Chile, Trinidad and Tobago, Guatemala, Uruguay, Brazil, Venezuela, Mexico and the United States of America. In addition to the multinational centers, the Team visited several national centers in Venezuela and Mexico.

The method of conducting the study of centers involved an inspection of the physical facilities at each Center, discussions with staff and Center Directors to grasp the operating pulse of the Center, and an in-depth look at the activities of the Center from the various perspectives of peer groups, extent of services beyond the host country, etc.

The Study Team also discussed with a wide range of U.S. officials their experiences and views regarding individual centers, as well as broad philosophical concepts of the Center mechanism.

The U.S. officials who met the Study Team at PAHO represented the Agency for International Development; Health Education and Welfare, Public Health Service; National Institutes of Health; Communicable Disease Center and the Environmental Protection Agency.

In order to capitalize on the knowledge and experience in the field, the Study Team felt that all Area and Country Representatives should be allowed an opportunity to convey their views and expectations/recommendations regarding the various Centers.

Since visits to every country were impractical, a questionnaire was devised (see Annex) for this purpose and sent to all AR's and CR's in April. These data are not expected to be received until mid-June, and it is unlikely that all results from this survey will be fully tabulated prior to mid-July.

Annex

COUNTRY: _____

DATE: _____

Please Note: In the first part of questions I-IV, please indicate ✓ for yes; 0 for no. In the second part of questions I-IV, and in questions V and VI, please use a scale of 1=least to 5=greatest for your answer.	REGIONAL						SUB-REGIONAL			
	BIREME	CEPANZO	CEPIS	CLAP	CLATES-Rio	ECO	PANAFTOSA	CAREC	CFNI	INCAP
During the past three years:										
I. a) Has the country had any visit(s) from personnel of each center?										
b) Rate the usefulness on a scale of 1-5.										
II.a) Has the country received publications and information from the center?										
b) Rate the utility to the country on a scale of 1-5										
III.a) Were health personnel of the country trained at the center?										
b) Rate the utility to the country of people trained on a scale of 1-5.										
IV. a) Has the product of research work done at the center been used or applied in the country?										
b) Rate the utility to the country on a scale of 1-5.										
V. Rate, on a scale of 1-5, your familiarity, and that of your staff members in the particular area of interest, with the help the center can give to your work or to improvement in delivery of health services in the country.										
VI. Rate, in your opinion, the familiarity of relevant health officials in the country with the help the center can give to your work or to improvement in delivery of health care in the country.										

Please use the other side of this page to comment further, particularly on your ideas of the future role of these or other centers.

The information you may provide will be used confidentially. This form does not need to be signed.