
Director's Letter



CHANGE AND CONTINUITY

The representatives of the Member and Participating Governments of PAHO, meeting in the XXIII Pan American Sanitary Conference, unanimously approved the document "Strategic Orientations and Program Priorities for the Pan American Health Organization during the Quadrennium 1991-1994," which will serve as the basic frame of reference guiding the technical cooperation activities of the Organization in the next four years. That collective decision should inspire all of us to undertake our work with renewed determination. To the extent that the document calls for a continuation of the principles and lines of action pursued during the last quadrennium, its approval reaffirms the countries' commitment to the process of transforming their health systems in ways that will make them more efficient, effective, and equitable. But the document also reflects a greater awareness that health can make a decisive contribution toward sustained development; thus, this mandate underscores the will of the countries and the Organization to strive together for development with equity in this hemisphere—development that has health as one of its cornerstones.

The approval of this mandate has important implications for the work of both the Member Governments and the Secretariat of PAHO. For the former, it signifies that they will continue to make the necessary changes in the structure and function of the health sector, promoting the agreed-upon priorities and fostering the regional effectiveness of the strategic orientations. It also implies more extensive participation by the countries in the Organization, through activities that promote dialogue and through greater involvement in the subregional initiatives as well as other mechanisms of cooperation among countries.

To the Secretariat, this mandate provides a more precise orientation for its action during the quadrennium. At the same time that it reinforces the operational strategies already in practice, it implies the search for new and innovative forms of action that will enhance our support of the transformations taking place in the countries. Above all, it points to the need for an unceasing search for excellence in the pursuit of higher levels of efficacy and efficiency.



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