



# XVII Pan American Sanitary Conference

## XVIII Regional Committee Meeting



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### ASPECTS OF HEALTH RELATED TO POPULATION DYNAMICS

The health aspects of population dynamics have emerged in recent years as important elements of decision-making on the planned development of human and material resources.

The responsibilities of PAHO/WHO in these matters have been defined in the following resolutions of the World Health Assembly and the Directing Council of PAHO:

#### Resolution WHA18.49 - 1965

"THE EIGHTEENTH WORLD HEALTH ASSEMBLY,

Having considered the report of the Director-General on Programme Activities in the Health Aspects of World Population which might be developed by WHO;

Bearing in mind Article 2 (1) of the Constitution which reads: 'to promote maternal and child health and welfare and to foster the ability to live harmoniously in a changing total environment';

Noting Resolution 1048 (XXXVII) adopted by the Economic and Social Council at its thirty-seventh session, August 1964;

Believing that demographic problems require the consideration of economic, social, cultural, psychological and health factors in their proper perspective;

Noting that the United Nations Population Commission at its thirteenth session, April 1965, attached high priority to the research and other activities in the field of fertility;

Considering that the changes in the size and structure of the population have repercussions on health conditions;

Recognizing that problems of human reproduction involve the family unit as well as society as a whole, and that the size of the family should be the free choice of each individual family;

Bearing in mind that it is a matter for national administrations to decide whether and to what extent they should support the provision of information and services to their people on the health aspects of human reproduction;

Accepting that it is not the responsibility of WHO to endorse or promote any particular population policy; and

Noting that the scientific knowledge with regard to the biology of human reproduction and the medical aspects of fertility control is insufficient,

1. APPROVES the report of the Director-General on Programme Activities in the Health Aspects of World Population which might be developed by WHO;

2. REQUESTS the Director-General to develop further the programme proposed:

(a) in the fields of reference services, studies on medical aspects of sterility and fertility control methods and health aspects of population dynamics; and

(b) in the field of advisory services as outlined in Part III, paragraph 3, of his report, on the understanding that such services are related, within the responsibilities of WHO, to technical advice on the health aspects of human reproduction and should not involve operational activities; and

3. REQUESTS the Director-General to report to the Nineteenth World Health Assembly on the programme of WHO in the field of human reproduction."

Resolution WHA19.43 - 1966

"THE NINETEENTH WORLD HEALTH ASSEMBLY,

Having considered the report presented by the Director-General in accordance with Resolution WHA18.49;

Bearing in mind Article 2 (1) of the Constitution;

Noting the part played by economic, social and cultural conditions in solving population problems and emphasizing the importance of health aspects of this problem;

Noting the Resolution 1048 (XXXIX) of the Economic and Social Council, the discussions at the Second World Population Conference and the subsequent Discussion during the twentieth session of the United Nations General Assembly;

Noting that several governments are embarking on nation-wide schemes, on family planning;

Noting that the activities of WHO and its Scientific Groups have already played their part in collecting and making available information on many aspects of human reproduction;

Recognizing that the scientific knowledge with regard to human reproduction is still insufficient; and

Realizing the importance of including information on the health aspects of population problems in the education of medical students, nurses, midwives and other members of the health team,

1. NOTES with satisfaction the report presented by the Director-General;

2. REAFFIRMS the policy statements contained in the consideranda of Resolution WHA18.49;

3. APPROVES the programme outlined in Part III of the Director-General's report in pursuance of the operative part of Resolution WHA18.49;

4. CONFIRMS that the role of WHO is to give Members technical advice upon request, in the development of activities in family planning, as part of an organized health service, without impairing its normal preventive and curative functions; and

5. REQUESTS the Director-General to report to the Twentieth World Health Assembly on the work of WHO in the field of human reproduction."

Resolution IX, The XVI Directing Council, 1965

"THE DIRECTING COUNCIL,

Having considered Resolution WHA18.49 of the 18th World Health Assembly;

Considering Resolution XXXI of the XV Meeting of the Directing Council, XVI Meeting of the Regional Committee of WHO recommending various studies in population dynamics; and

Recognizing the inter-relationships and inter-actions of health, population growth and socio-economic development, and the importance of active programs of cooperation among organizations of the Inter-American System,

RESOLVES:

To request the Director:

1. To provide technical advice as requested on the health aspects of population dynamics in line with the resolution adopted by the 18th World Health Assembly WHA18.49.

2. To cooperate with the Inter-American Committee for the Alliance for Progress in studies assigned to it by Sec. 1, Paragraph 16, of the progress report on the Alliance (adopted at the Third Annual Meeting of IA/ECOSOC on December 19, 1964).

3. To conduct studies as may be desirable on population dynamics related to the program activities of PAHO, and to support professional training as appropriate."

The Inter-American Economic and Social Council at Ministerial Level (IA-ECOSOC) adopted policy positions on population at its Third Annual Meeting (1965) and further stated its concern at the Fourth Meeting (1966) in the following resolution:

Resolution 11-M/66

"WHEREAS,

The Third Annual Meeting of the Inter-American Economic and Social Council and the Fourth Meeting of the Inter-American Committee on the Alliance for Progress both stressed the importance of the problems presented by population growth in relation to the economic and social development of the countries;

The group of experts on population, who were invited in January of this year by the Chairman of CIAP to suggest activities in this field, recommended that a Population Program be set up as soon as possible, with a substantial amount of personnel and budgeted funds, which program should, in addition to facilitating the activities of the various Inter-American agencies within a coordinated framework, serve as an organ for the dissemination of scientific information and information on sources of technical assistance on all matters referring to population problems, without prejudice to its role of encouraging the undertaking of studies and investigations intended to throw even more light on the serious social, cultural, and economic problems stemming from the disequilibrium between population growth and the availability of resources (Doc. CIES/874); and

The Secretariat has, in accordance with the instructions of CIAP and using the facilities to which it has access, initiated some activities in compliance with the recommendations of the IA-ECOSOC and CIAP, proposing in the Proposed Program and Budget for 1967 as specific population unit to be incorporated into the Department of Social Affairs, the establishment of which the Committee on Program and Budget of the Council of the Organization of American States decided to postpone, in spite of "its evident importance";

The Fourth Annual Meeting of the Inter-American Economic and Social Council at the Ministerial Level,

RESOLVES:

1. To recommend to the governments that they devote great attention to consideration of the need to make demographic studies that will take into account both quantitative and qualitative aspects of the problem, especially the mutual relationship between population factors and economic and social development.

2. To recommend to CIAP that, in its analysis of the progress achieved by the countries in compliance with the goals set in the national plans, it examine population trends in relation to the corresponding development outlook and report thereon at the Annual Meetings of the IA-ECOSOC."

These resolutions provide specific guidelines for PAHO and WHO in population matters. They establish the Organization's role of providing advisory assistance to Governments, and state "that it is not the responsibility of WHO to endorse or promote any particular population policy", and "that it is a matter for national administrations to decide whether

and to what extent they should support the provision of information and services to their people on the health aspects of human reproduction".

In compliance with the resolutions of the PAHO Directing Council and the World Health Assembly a program of education of professionals coming from various disciplines, and of research is being developed. Fertility has emerged as a new dimension in social, economic, and health planning and program development. The priorities in research programs in this field would seem to be in the area of population dynamics and related health concerns.

Based on these considerations, the program of the Pan American Sanitary Bureau, Regional Office of WHO, in health and population dynamics has been established. It deals with three major areas, i.e., education and training with a multidisciplinary approach, research, and advisory services. The education and research training program was developed in 1965 in cooperation with the School of Public Health of the University of Chile, the Department of Applied Statistics of the Faculty of Hygiene and Public Health of the University of São Paulo, the Latin American Demographic Center (CELADE).

The first pilot course on Health and Population Dynamics will be given at the University of Chile from 1 August - 30 November 1966. It is entitled: Programa de Investigación y Docencia en Salud y Dinámica de la Población.

The visiting faculty include professors from the Universities of North Carolina, São Paulo, Harvard, and Princeton. Milbank Memorial Fund will make available for consultant services a senior member of their staff. This course is primarily for faculty of medical schools. During this course it is hoped that guidelines for the teaching of demographic statistics in medical schools will be developed. Fifteen month courses in the School of Public Health will provide for specialization in health and population, research or demography. In São Paulo the instruction will be given for university graduates wishing to specialize in population who will be qualified as teachers and research workers in demography and population in universities, institutions or governments departments.

Agreements have been signed in Chile and São Paulo for the initiation of these programs in 1966. Supplementary grant assistance has been provided by the US Agency for International Development. The purpose of these programs is to provide advanced education and research training in health aspects of population dynamics for teachers and public health officers throughout Latin America. It is expected that additional centers may be required to meet national and regional manpower training requirements.

Research. The second field in which the organization is developing its program is in research. WHO and PAHO are combining their resources and are supporting research projects to be initiated in 1966 in Peru and São Paulo, Brazil. Epidemiological studies of populations and especially of women of the childbearing age will be undertaken to obtain data through current observation as well as from histories. Records regarding pregnancies, menstrual

periods, dates and termination of pregnancy, breast feeding, abortions, and fetal deaths, live births and deaths in these families will be obtained currently.

In addition to the extension of education on health and population dynamic to the medical profession another objective of the programs described above as education and training programs is to promote research in this field by medical schools and other medical institutions in Latin America. As a result of instruction, observation and participation in research through the education and training programs, it is expected that research projects will be undertaken in many communities.

It is of interest to record that the content and scope of research policy and program on population for the Organization was first suggested at the Third Meeting (June 1964) of the PASB Advisory Committee on Medical Research as follows:

"The Committee advised that the immense importance of the problems of the growth of human populations called for studies of the highest quality -and should include studies of human reproduction, hereditary and environmental factors in sterility and fertility, preventable malformations; demographic studies of live births, abortions, fetal and maternal deaths, and studies of family size and constitution in relation to socio-economic factors in urban and rural communities. It would also necessitate training in epidemiology and demography in relation to socio-economic development in schools of medicine and public health, and a search for improved methodology in the analysis of demographic data-. The Committee concluded that the investigation of problems of immediate importance, such as the improvement in maternal and child development, urbanization, natural resources, etc."

To secure the counsel of population experts and to exchange information on research, training, and advisory activities in population of Foundations, Universities, U.S. Government Agencies and International Agencies, including the PAU and the Inter-American Committee of the Alliance for Progress (CIAP), among others, the Organization convened two Conferences on 7 January 1965 and 3 January 1966. The Report of the Second Conference recommended that PASB should establish a permanent Center for the Exchange of Information on Population and Health as a needed service to all interested agencies thus facilitating cooperative inter-institutional and inter-country programs.

In compliance with the sense of the Directing Council and World Health Assembly Resolutions, the Organization has established a Unit on Health and Population Dynamics. The Unit is responsible for liaison with other official and voluntary agencies working in this field, and for coordination of all population activities of the Organization.

Plans are now under way, with support of an AID grant to develop a Population Information Center, adapting its programs from the experience of the PASB Medical Education Information Center (MEIC) which has functioned for fourteen years, providing liaison and coordinating services to foundations, universities, government, international, and other agencies. Its annual reports on fellowship awards and visiting professorship and research grants provide inventories of international cooperation with and assistance to medical schools in the Americas. The Population Information Center will offer similar services in the population field.

In summary, the Pan American Sanitary Bureau, in accordance with policy resolutions of the Directing Council and the World Health Assembly, has organized a program of education, training, and research services on the health aspects of population dynamics.