

C. PLAN OF ACTION FOR STRENGTHENING VITAL AND HEALTH STATISTICS

Introduction

39. The purpose of this document is to report to the Governing Bodies of the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) on the progress made in implementing resolution CD48.R6 (2008) *Regional Plan of Action for Strengthening Vital and Health Statistics* (PEVS for its acronym in Spanish), adopted in October 2008.¹

Background

40. The aforementioned resolution urges Member States to promote the participation and coordination of different agencies and actors (national and sectoral statistics offices, epidemiology departments of the ministries of health, civil registries, and other public and private actors) in the situation analysis and preparation of national plans of action. It also urges them to approve the PEVS, which would provide indicators with sufficient coverage and quality for the design, monitoring, and evaluation of health policies.

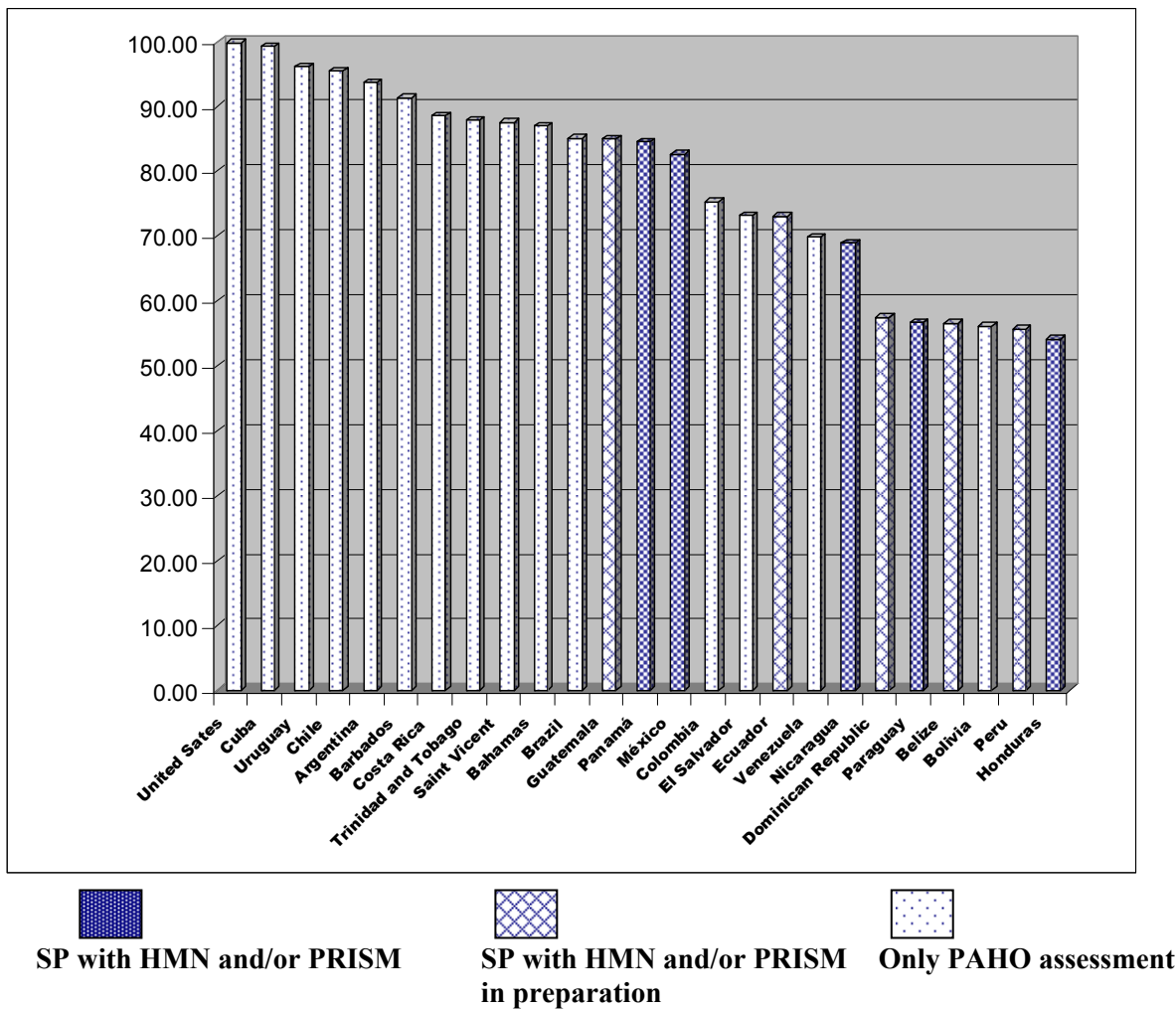
41. The resolution also requests the Director to work with Member States to develop their national plans of action and improve coordination between the PEVS and initiatives of the same nature undertaken by other international technical cooperation and financing agencies, as well as global initiatives to strengthen health statistics in the countries.

Situation Analysis

42. Analyses of the statistics situation, performed using PAHO tools, are available for 25 countries. In partnership with the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) and initiatives such as the Health Metrics Network (HMN) and the Performance of Routine Information System Management (PRISM) framework, strategic plans have been drafted in 10 of the priority countries. The figure and tables below describe the situation as it stands.

¹ Pan American Health Organization. Regional Plan of Action for Strengthening Vital and Health Statistics (Resolution CD48.R6) [online] 48th Directing Council, 60th Session of the Regional Committee of WHO for the Americas; 29 September-3 October 2008; Washington (DC), USA. [Accessed 15 April 2010].
<http://www.paho.org/english/gov/cd/cd48.r6-e.pdf>

Figure 1: Countries by index of coverage of vital events (PAHO assessment) for which there is an assessment and/or strategic plan (SP) using tools of PAHO, HMN, and PRISM² (circa 2005)



² PAHO: Pan American Health Organization, HMN: Health Metrics Network, and PRISM: Performance of Routine Information System Management Framework.

Table 1. Countries with a strategic plan (SP)

Country	Study	SP	Remarks
Belize	Yes	Yes	
Bolivia	Yes	No	Not yet initiated
Costa Rica	Yes	Yes	
Dominican Republic	Yes	No	Is developing a plan within the framework of PAHO/WHO
Ecuador	Yes	No	Is developing a plan within the framework of PAHO/WHO
El Salvador	Yes	Yes	
Guatemala	Yes	No	Is developing a plan within the framework of PAHO/WHO
Honduras	Yes	Yes	
Mexico	Yes	Yes	
Nicaragua	Yes	Yes	
Panama	Yes	Yes	
Paraguay	Yes	Yes	
Peru	Yes	No	Is developing a plan within the framework of PAHO/WHO

* The priority countries for statistics are in boldface.

Table 2. Countries with a situation analysis and strategic plan (SP) with a framework different from that of PAHO/WHO. 2010.

Country	Assessment	SP
Argentina	Yes	No
Brazil	Yes	No
Chile	Yes	No
Colombia	Yes	No
Cuba	Yes	No
Uruguay	Yes	No
Venezuela	Yes	No

43. Every country in the Region has aligned itself with Strategic Objective 11³ of the Strategic Plan 2008-2012 for PAHO, Amended (2009). The PEVS is included in the subregional biennial work plans of the Andean countries and MERCOSUR, and a comprehensive plan for the countries of the English-speaking Caribbean is being discussed.

³ Pan American Health Organization. Strategic Plan 2008-2012 for PAHO, Amended (Official Document 328), pg. 93. Strategic Objective 11: To strengthen leadership, governance, and the evidence base of health systems.

44. PEVS activities are complementary and in sync with other Organization activities such as the Regional Core Health Data Initiative (RCHDI). The strategies on the gender and ethnic approach, which provide the conceptual framework for the core health indicators, make it possible to monitor the Organization's mandates, such as the Millennium Development Goals (MDG). Better health information is expected to result in the dissemination of better quality indicators and, thus, better monitoring of the policies implemented to meet the Millennium Development Goals.

45. A list of strengthening activities, based on the common needs of groups of countries or subregions, is available.

46. Agreements have been entered into, and there has been success in coordinating the countries' work with international technical organizations and agencies. This includes: the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC); ECLAC's Population Division (ECLAC/CELADE); ECLAC's Statistical Conference of the Americas (SCA-ECLAC); the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF); the United Nations Population fund (UNFPA); the World Health Organization (WHO); and the United Nations Statistics Division (UNSD), and financing agencies such as the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) and the World Bank.

Proposal

47. A workplan has been developed for the biennium 2010-2011, coordinated with the Regional Core Health Data Initiative (RCHDI), that will make it possible to evaluate the coverage and quality of the data toward the end of 2011. The focus will be on monitoring the countries' progress toward the achievement of MDGs 4 and 5.

48. The plan, however, requires the mobilization of extrabudgetary resources (estimated cost: US\$ 8 million for three years) to finance implementation and technical cooperation in at least 15 countries whose situation is critical, and the design and implementation of subregional activities based on horizontal cooperation among countries.

49. The PEVS seeks to strengthen the recently created Latin American and Caribbean Network for Strengthening Health Information Systems (RELACISIS), with a view to implementing strengthening practices at the regional and subregional level, based on horizontal cooperation and the support of regional and national collaborating centers working in the field of health information.