THE PAN AMERICAN HEALTH ORGANIZATION

PAHO

what it is...

what it does...

how it works...

PAN AMERICAN SANITARY BUREAU
REGIONAL OFFICE OF THE
WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION

501 NEW HAMPSHIRE AVENUE, N.W., WASHINGTON 6, D.C., U.S.A.
Flags of the American Nations at the Headquarters building in Washington, D. C. Representatives from the Health Ministeries of every American country attend the meetings of the PAHO Directing Council.

THE ECONOMIC CYCLE OF DISEASE

Through the Pan American Health Organization, American nations help each other to better the health of their citizens, thus furthering economic development and raising social standards.
WHAT IT IS

The PAN AMERICAN SANITARY BUREAU (PASB), known until 1923 as the International Sanitary Bureau, had its origin in a resolution of the Second International Conference of American States (Mexico, January 1902) recommending that "a general convention of representatives of the health organizations of the different American republics" be convened. This convention met in Washington, D. C., from 2 to 4 December 1902, and established the Bureau on a permanent basis. The Pan American Sanitary Code (Havana, 1924), a treaty ratified by the governments of the 21 American republics, assigned to the Bureau broader functions and duties as the central coordinating agency for international health activities in the American republics. The XII Pan American Sanitary Conference (Caracas, 1947) adopted a reorganization plan whereby the Bureau became the operating arm of the Pan American Sanitary Organization (PASO), the Constitution of which was officially approved by the Directing Council at its meeting in Buenos Aires later that year.

At the XV Pan American Sanitary Conference (San Juan, Puerto Rico, 21 September to 3 October 1958) the designation of the Pan American Sanitary Organization was changed to the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO). The name of the Bureau remains unchanged.

Pursuant to the agreement concluded between PAHO and the World Health Organization (WHO) in 1949, PASB serves as the WHO Regional Office for the Americas. PAHO is also recognized by the Council of the Organization of American States as an inter-American specialized organization with fullest autonomy in the accomplishment of its purposes.
The **PAN AMERICAN HEALTH ORGANIZATION** comprises:

1) the **PAN AMERICAN SANITARY CONFERENCE**—the supreme governing authority—in which all Member Governments are represented, and which meets every four years, determines the general policies of the Organization, serves as a forum on public health matters, and elects the Director of the Bureau;

2) the **DIRECTING COUNCIL**, composed of one representative from each Member State, which meets once a year between Conferences and reviews and approves the annual budget of the Organization;

3) the **EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**, composed of representatives of seven Member Governments elected by the Council for overlapping terms of three years, which meets at least every six months, advises the Council on the activities of the Organization, and carries out such other duties as the Council may authorize; and

4) the **PAN AMERICAN SANITARY BUREAU**, the executive organ of the Organization.
The FUNDAMENTAL PURPOSES OF PAHO are:

to promote and coordinate the efforts of the countries of the Western Hemisphere to combat disease, lengthen life, and promote the physical and mental health of the people.

In fulfillment thereof, the Bureau cooperates with Member Governments in the development and improvement of national and local public health services, provides services of consultants, grants fellowships, organizes seminars and training courses, coordinates activities of neighboring countries having common public health problems, collects and distributes epidemiological information and health statistics, and performs other related functions.

The Director of the Pan American Sanitary Bureau is Dr. Abraham Horwitz of Chile. He began a four-year term of office 1 February 1959.

At the end of October 1959 the regular personnel of the Bureau numbered 803, representing more than 40 nationalities. Of these staff members, 232 were at headquarters in Washington and 571 in the zone offices and field projects.
HOW THE WORK IS CARRIED OUT

At the Bureau headquarters the Director and his technical staff do their basic planning and coordination of activities.

Advisory programs to governments are in three broad areas:

1) STRENGTHENING OF HEALTH SERVICES,
2) EDUCATION AND TRAINING, AND
3) ERADICATION AND CONTROL OF COMMUNICABLE DISEASES.

The Organization also promotes research on important problems. In strengthening health services, activities are directed to improvement of basic health organization and services, at both national and local levels, maternal and child health, nutrition programs, environmental sanitation, statistical services, and programs in other specialized fields. Education and training are concerned with the basic professional education of physicians, nurses, and other health workers and are also a part of programs of integrated health services. Programs are in operation for the eradication of malaria, smallpox, yaws, and the Aëdes aegypti mosquito, and for the control of other communicable diseases.

Expectant mothers receive instruction in infant care in a PAHO/WHO-assisted health demonstration project.
The field activities of the Organization are administered from the six zone offices which maintain with the health authorities of Member Governments the close relationship and consultation essential for planning and implementation of well-balanced programs to meet the health needs and problems at national, inter-zone, and regional levels.

ZONES AND ZONE OFFICES

Zone 1 Office (Caracas, Venezuela) serves Venezuela, Puerto Rico and United States Virgin Islands, departments of France in the Americas, portions of the Kingdom of the Netherlands in the Americas, territories of the United Kingdom in the Americas, except British Honduras.

Zone II Office (Mexico, D. F., Mexico) serves Cuba, Dominican Republic, Haiti, Mexico.

Zone III Office (Guatemala City, Guatemala) serves British Honduras, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, Panama.

Zone IV Office (Lima, Peru) serves Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru.

Zone V Office (Rio de Janeiro, Brazil) serves Brazil.

Zone VI Office (Buenos Aires, Argentina) serves Argentina, Chile, Paraguay, Uruguay.

The Washington Office is responsible for relations with the United States and Canada. The Mexico-United States Border Field Office in El Paso, Texas, has as its primary function the coordination of health work along the Mexico-United States Border.
The Organization is concerned with three research and training centers.

1) The INSTITUTE OF NUTRITION OF CENTRAL AMERICA AND PANAMA (INCAP), located in Guatemala City. This is a cooperative venture of the five Central American governments and Panama, supported by assessments on these countries, and its objectives are to study the nutrition problems in the Member Countries and to work out methods for their solution.

Field trials of INCAPARINA—a new and cheap protein source developed by INCAP—are being undertaken.

2) The PAN AMERICAN FOOT-AND-MOUTH DISEASE CENTER, located in Brazil near Rio de Janeiro. This Center aids in the solution of problems regarding this major infectious disease of livestock which causes serious loss of essential foodstuffs and results in an important loss of income. It is financed by the Program of Technical Cooperation of the Organization of American States.

3) The PAN AMERICAN ZOOANOSES CENTER in Azul, Argentina. This was established in 1956 by special agreement between the Organization and the Government of Argentina, which makes a special contribution for its maintenance. Its objectives are to study and teach about the diseases transmitted between animal and man.

Demonstrating the brucellosis plate test during a Pan-American Zoonoses Center training course.
HOW IT IS FINANCED

The Pan American Health Organization derives its funds for operation from several sources. The first main source of support is from assessments on the 21 republics which are Member States of the Pan American Health Organization. For the year 1959 these assessments amounted to $3,500,000 (34 per cent of the total income of the Organization of 10 million dollars). An additional $100,000 for the regular budget is miscellaneous income and contributions of France, the Netherlands, and the United Kingdom.

In addition, funds are contributed for special purposes by governments and organizations in the Americas. The largest of these is a Special Malaria Fund to which voluntary contributions have been made by several governments. The United States of America has been the principal contributor to the Fund. The 1959 budget has provision for expenditure of nearly three million dollars from these contributions.

Since PASB also serves as the Regional Office of the World Health Organization, it received from the latter's regular budget in 1959 $1,613,817 and another $1,144,080 from Technical Assistance Funds of the United Nations.

For 1960 the total proposed budget from all sources is $11,332,000.

UNICEF cooperates with PAHO/WHO by providing supplies and equipment for health projects. This participation in the health program in the last three years has averaged $5,000,000 per year for malaria eradication and over $1,000,000 per year for other health projects.

| SOURCE OF FUNDS FOR PROGRAM OF THE PAN AMERICAN HEALTH ORGANIZATION, 1959 |
|-----------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|
|                             | U.S. DOLLARS    |                 |
|                             | 0               | 1,000,000       |
|                             | 2,000,000       | 3,000,000       |
| PAN AMERICAN HEALTH ORGANIZATION | 4,000,000       |                 |
|                              | Special Malaria |                 |
| WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION    |                  |                 |
|                              | Regular Budget  | INCAP DAS TA    |
|                              |                  | Other           |
|                              | Techni Asst Funds |                 |
STRENGTHENING HEALTH SERVICES

The objective of the Pan American Health Organization, like that of the World Health Organization, is the attainment by all peoples of the highest possible level of health. Controlling individual diseases, however widespread, cannot raise over-all levels of health unless supported by sound basic health services. PAHO therefore assists its Member Countries in strengthening national health services.

NATIONAL HEALTH PLANNING. PAHO has in recent years worked together with Member Governments in various aspects of national health planning relating to the national health structure, decentralization, and expansion of local health services.

INTEGRATED HEALTH SERVICES. The concept involved in creating integrated health services is founded on the principle that health involves man and his community. Most important components of a program of integrated health services are the development of a working plan to cover the basic health needs, the use of well-prepared personnel employed on a full-time basis for key positions, the development of a strong structure
Health Center in La Chorrera, Panama, where PAHO/WHO is helping to demonstrate integrated health services.

and organization at all administrative levels with proper coordination and, where appropriate, the development at the local level of services in a pilot or demonstration project. PAHO is helping projects in 16 countries to demonstrate the work of these integrated health services, which include local programs of health care for mothers and children and environmental sanitation, and which involve the work of physicians, engineers, public health nurses, and other health workers. Particular attention is also being placed on the diarrheal diseases of children, the chief cause of death in a number of Latin American countries.
Safe and abundant water supplies are the most urgent requirement of the thriving urban populations of the Americas.

Many rural communities are being provided with safe sources of drinking water.

ENVIRONMENTAL SANITATION.

PAHO is working together with many countries in bringing about better water supplies. It also continues to give assistance in providing better disposal of wastes, protection of milk and food, and the hygiene of housing and industry. The newer fields of air pollution and the environmental aspects of radiation will receive increasing attention as countries encounter such problems.

Demonstrating use of city garbage for land fill.
NUTRITION. PAHO works with countries in improving the nutritional levels in the Americas through programs of research and training, and by providing governments with advisory services in this field. Special attention is being given to the problem of protein malnutrition. One of the accomplishments of the Institute of Nutrition of Central America and Panama (INCAP) has been the development of a vegetable protein mixture of high biological value, from products grown locally, which is of particular importance in combating protein deficiency of young children.

PAHO is also active in the fields of HEALTH EDUCATION, STATISTICS, MENTAL HEALTH, PUBLIC HEALTH DENTISTRY, and MEDICAL CARE, including hospital planning and organization.
EDUCATION AND TRAINING

Efforts of PAHO are directed at improving training facilities within each country and giving training abroad which is not available in the home country.

Programs for strengthening training institutions include professional schools such as those of medicine, public health, nursing, sanitary engineering, dentistry, and veterinary medicine. Special programs have been designed for statisticians, nutritionists, health educators, and considerable attention is paid to training programs for nursing auxiliaries who, in Latin America, carry out the bulk of patient care.

Fellowship awards are made upon recommendations of their Governments to physicians, public health engineers, sanitarians, librarians, nurses, statisticians, laboratory workers, and other health workers.
The Organization also participates in the carrying out of conferences and seminars which permit teachers and public health workers in similar fields to compare experiences and exchange ideas.

Through the organization of a Medical Education Information Center in Washington, PAHO has encouraged the exchange of information among various governmental and private groups assisting medical education in the Hemisphere.
As one of its many services PAHO receives reports of quarantinable diseases and transmits the information to neighboring countries and to WHO Headquarters in Geneva, where it is broadcast as a service to shipping and is published in a weekly epidemiological report. Data on health and vital statistics are collected and published.
DISEASE CONTROL AND ERADICATION

Under the PAHO leadership, Member Countries are carrying out campaigns for the control and eradication of disease.

MALARIA. At the XI Annual Meeting of the Directing Council it was reported that more than 10 million square kilometers of the Hemisphere, housing an estimated population of 184 million persons, were free of malaria as of 1958. Total eradication has been achieved in the United States, Puerto Rico, Barbados, and Martinique. A majority of the nations of the Hemisphere are on the way toward eradicating the disease. The PAHO is working together with a number of governments to solve the problem of insect resistance to insecticides which has appeared in some limited areas.

The malaria eradication sprayman is a welcome visitor.
YELLOW FEVER. The carrier of yellow fever in cities, the Aedes aegypti mosquito, has been stamped out in 13 countries.

STATUS OF THE AÉDES AEGYPTI ERADICATION CAMPAIGN
DECEMBER 1959

Since vaccination is the only means of protecting populations against jungle yellow fever, PAHO assists the Carlos Finlay Institute in Bogota, Colombia, and the Oswaldo Cruz Institute in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, where 17D yellow fever vaccine is manufactured for free distribution to governments in the Americas.
SMALLPOX. Smallpox cases reported in the Americas dropped from 18,532 cases in 1949 to 4,311 in 1958. A systematic program of vaccination and revaccination is under way throughout the Hemisphere, while national laboratories in Argentina, Bolivia, Chile, Cuba, Ecuador, Mexico, Peru, and Venezuela are producing top quality vaccines for use under local climatic conditions.
YAWS. The Organization is assisting a number of American countries in stamping out yaws within their borders, looking toward the goal of eradication of the disease from the Americas. In 1949 yaws was Haiti's number one public health problem, but the Haitian Government, with the aid of PAHO/WHO and UNICEF, carried out a campaign which within five years virtually eliminated yaws from this Caribbean republic.

TUBERCULOSIS. From 1950 to 1958 PAHO has assisted in 26 tuberculosis control projects. They include establishment of BCG laboratories, BCG campaigns, and the training of professional personnel. Surveys are now being carried out as the first phase for new national programs for tuberculosis control. Field domiciliary and ambulatory demonstration programs for the control of tuberculosis through new drugs for cure and prevention are being carried out.
POLIOMYELITIS. Because of the growing importance of poliomyelitis in Latin America, and the need to find an inexpensive, long-acting, easily administered vaccine, PAHO has cooperated with the Governments of Colombia, Nicaragua, Haiti, and Costa Rica in carrying out live-virus, oral polio vaccination programs. In 1959 it sponsored, with financial assistance from the Sister Elizabeth Kenny Foundation, a live Poliovirus Vaccines Conference in Washington, D. C., for the purpose of enabling active workers in that field to pool their experience and to provide an opportunity for general discussion on that subject.

A house-to-house vaccination of pre-school children with orally administered poliomyelitis vaccine, San José, Costa Rica.

Work on tissue culture in Cali, Colombia, in a laboratory maintained for the study of live attenuated poliovirus vaccine.

Air shipment of iron lungs purchased with PAHO Emergency Procurement Revolving Fund for Government of Argentina during 1956 polio epidemic. (Governments reimburse this Fund for the cost of emergency supplies received.)

The Rehabilitation Training Center at the clinical hospital of the University of São Paulo will be attended by personnel from all Latin American countries.
PAHO/WHO assists national disease control services in controlling those diseases transmitted between man and animals. Primary attention is being given to the zoonoses of greater prevalence such as brucellosis, rabies and hydatidosis. Assistance is also provided in improving diagnostic techniques, in research and in the production of biologics. These activities are carried out by the Organizations' veterinary public health staff and the Pan American Zoonoses Center.
DIARRHEAL DISEASE. Mortality under 5 years of age is excessive in Latin American countries. Diarrheal disease is responsible for a large proportion of this mortality of infants and young children. Activities recommended by PAHO include the extension of water supplies to each house, teaching of personal hygiene to the family, early rehydration of children with diarrheal disease, and specific measures for improving diets of infants and young children to prevent gastrointestinal infection and to better their nutritional status.

The "BOLETIN DA LA OFICINA SANITARIA PANAMERICANA" is a scientific monthly which has entered its 37th year. The Pan American Sanitary Bureau also issues the WEEKLY EPIDEMIOLOGICAL REPORT and the quarterly HEALTH STATISTICS. Special scientific publications, which in 1958 numbered 16, include the quadrennial SUMMARY OF HEALTH CONDITIONS IN THE AMERICAS, a report collating and analyzing the information supplied by the Governments of the Americas. These publications complement the materials produced by the World Health Organization, which are also distributed in the Americas.

Copies of this booklet may be obtained from the PAHO/WHO Information Office, Washington, D. C.
The fundamental purposes of the Pan American Health Organization shall be to promote and coordinate efforts of the countries of the Western Hemisphere to combat disease, lengthen life, and promote the physical and mental health of the people.